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HOLY BIBLE.

THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

EDITED BY THE REV. THOMAS SCOTT.

WITH A COMMENTARY BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

REV. THOMAS SCOTT'S

COMMENTARY

ON THE HOLY BIBLE.

VOLUME III.

THE
HOLY BIBLE;

CONTAINING

THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS,

ACCORDING TO THE AUTHORISED VERSION;

WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES, PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS,
AND COPIOUS MARGINAL REFERENCES,

BY THE LATE REV.

THOMAS SCOTT,

RECTOR OF ASTON SANDFORD, BUCKS.

A NEW EDITION.

WITH THE AUTHOR'S LAST CORRECTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS; AND
EIGHTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIVE MAPS AND ENGRAVINGS.

VOLUME III.

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MDCCCLXVI.

THE BOOK

OF

J O B.

THAT division of the holy scriptures upon which we now enter, is called by the Jews *Chethubim*, writings; or, in Greek, *Hagiographa*, or *holy writings*. The book of Job, the Psalms, and the writings of Solomon, are properly classed in this division; but the Jews include several other books, without reason or propriety. In these parts of the sacred oracles there is greater depth and apparent difficulty, than in those which precede: but the instruction is in general more immediately prepared for use; and the real benefit of perusing the scriptural history, much depends upon the degree of our previous acquaintance with the books before us. In like manner, we shall read the records of our Saviour's miracles and discourses to edification, in proportion as we have understood the epistolary part of the New Testament; which, though more difficult in many respects, conveys instruction in more direct and explicit terms.—We begin with the book of Job, which some learned men have employed much pains, ingeniously, but very unwarrantably, to interpret as an allegory. The prophet Ezekiel mentions Job, Noah, and Daniel, as three persons of eminent piety: (*Ez.* xiv. 14. 20 :) and the apostle James illustrates the advantages of patience by the example of Job, as he had before done his doctrine of faith and works by the examples of Abraham and Rahab. (*Jam.* ii. 21—25. v. 11.) No reasonable doubt therefore can remain, that the narrative of this book is historical truth; though we may safely allow that, as the discourses of Job and his friends are recorded in poetical language, their sentiments and arguments alone are transmitted to us, and not the exact words which they used in conversation. But there is no sufficient ground for questioning, whether the transactions relating to the world of spirits, good and evil, actually for substance occurred. It is indeed evident, that this could not be known, except by revelation: but as the book itself records several supernatural visions, and a glorious appearance of God himself speaking from the whirlwind; this creates no difficulty to those who consider it as true, and as a part of the sacred canon. As such, the Jews have always regarded it, though not favourable to Job, because he was a Gentile, that is, not an Israelite, or descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: (*Note* i. 1 :) and St. Paul's manner of quoting it, with “It is written,” shews that he considered it as a part of the oracles of God. (*Comp.* *Job* v. 13. with *1 Cor.* iii. 19.)—A very high antiquity is generally ascribed to this book; nay, some think it the most ancient work now extant in the world. The long life to which Job attained; the great remains of patriarchal religion in the land of Uz; the worship of the sun and moon being the only idolatry mentioned in it; and no express allusion being made to the Mosaick law, or the wonderful works of God towards Israel; with several peculiarities in the style and composition of the work, give sanction to this opinion. Some learned men indeed, perceiving a similarity of sentiment between some parts of this book, and passages in the Psalms and Proverbs, would assign it a much later origin: but wise and pious persons will often, without copying from each other, give the same instructions, and be of the same opinion; and it is at least as probable, that David and Solomon alluded to the book of Job, as that the writer of that book alluded to their works, if any intended reference be supposed.—Indeed the date of the events which it records cannot be exactly ascertained: but it is very likely, that Job was in his first prosperity, between the time when Joseph died, and the appearance of Moses in Pharaoh's court as Israel's deliverer; and the language used by God himself, that “there was none like him in all the earth,” seems to give probability to this opinion; for there is no other eminent character mentioned in Scripture as flourishing during that period.—It is not agreed, who wrote this book. Some ascribe all of it to Job himself, except the conclusion. Some to Elihu, who in one place seems to address the reader concerning his auditory. (*Note*, xxxii. 15—17.) But others think that Moses was the author of it. The style has likewise induced an opinion, that it was written in the Arabick language: perhaps Elihu wrote it in Arabick, and Moses rendered it into Hebrew.—The first two chapters are in prose; the style of them is very plain; and they form an introduction to the poetical

part, which is in many places peculiarly figurative and sublime, and consequently more difficult to be interpreted. The latter part of the last chapter is a historical conclusion of the whole.—It cannot be clearly shewn, that this book contains any prophecies, properly so called; because the passages which might be adduced as prophetic, may also be considered as a profession of faith in the promised Redeemer, and concerning a future resurrection: but few parts of the Old Testament declare more explicitly the grand outlines of revealed truth, and even of evangelical doctrine; so that they who speak of it, as consisting chiefly of *natural religion*, seem to have entirely mistaken the scope of it.—It opens with an account of Job's piety and prosperity, the charge of hypocrisy and selfishness which Satan brought against him, and the permission which he obtained from God to reduce him to the deepest distress, as a trial of his integrity. It proceeds to relate how his former friends, witnessing his unprecedented sufferings, were led to condemn him as a wicked man. This gave rise to a warm controversy, whether heavy afflictions prove any person, who is apparently pious, to be a hypocrite. In disputing this point, the principles of true religion were argued from by all parties as undoubted truths, and many excellent things were spoken; but the whole had in it a sad mixture of human infirmity. When they could by no means come to an agreement upon the subject, Elihu, who had heard the debate, with great modesty and solemnity interfered; and, having first censured the other disputants for groundlessly condemning Job, he proceeded to reprove him for his improper eagerness in justifying himself, by which he had reflected on the justice of God. While he was discoursing, the Lord himself spake out of a whirlwind, and, by a discovery of his incomprehensible majesty and glory, made Job sensible of his presumption, and brought him to humble himself before him as a vile and polluted sinner. This being effected, he justified Job from the charge of hypocrisy, and condemned the conduct and language of his friends; and, having decided the controversy in favour of Job, he appointed him to sacrifice and intercede in their behalf, that they might be forgiven. The whole closes with an account of Job's deliverance, and redoubled prosperity, honour, and comfort.—It is a book full of caution and encouragement to the tempted and afflicted, and of warning to those who hastily judge their brethren. It throws great light upon the doctrine of Providence, and upon the agency and influence of evil spirits under the controul of God. We see in Job an eminent type of the suffering and glorified Saviour; and a pattern of the believer's "passing through much tribulation into the kingdom of God." In short, the whole is replete with most important instruction; and, among the rest, we are reminded of the ill effects of acrimonious religious dispute. These four pious men argued together, till, becoming angry, they censured and condemned each other, and uttered many things irreverent about the divine character and government; and, having lost their temper, would have also lost their labour, and have been more at variance than ever, if another method had not been taken of deciding the controversy.

B. C. 1550

CHAP. I.

The uprightness, piety, prosperity, and numerous family of Job, and his religious concern for his children, 1—5. Satan appearing before God, accuses Job, and obtains leave to try him, 6—12. Job, receiving successive accounts of calamities, which deprived him of all his substance, and all his children,

mourns with humble resignation, and worships God, 13—22. B. C. 1550.

THERE was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was ^b Job; and that man was ^c perfect and upright, and ^d one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

20, 21. Luke i. 6.

d Gen. xxii. 12. Prov. viii. 13. xvi. 6. 1 Pet. iii. 11.

a Gen. x. 23. xxii. 21. Huz. xxxv. 1. 28. 1 Chr. i. 17. 42. Jer. xxxv. 20. Lam. iv. 21. b Ez. xiv. 14. 20. Jam. v. 11. c 8. ii. 3. xxiii. 11, 12. xxxi. 1, &c. Gen. vi. 9. xvii. 1. 2 Kings xx. 3. 2 Chr. xxxi. 3. 2 Chr. xxxi. 3. 2 Chr. xxxi. 3.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. The land of Uz seems to have been a district of Arabia, to the south-east of Canaan; though some suppose, that it was situated in Idumea, and that Job was descended from Esau. (*Marg. Ref. a.*) Others think that he descended from Abraham by Keturah; yet it seems more probable that he was of the posterity of Huz, the son of Nahor. (*Gen. xxii. 21.*) He is supposed to have lived before any part of the scriptures was written: but he was acquainted with the truths and will of God, by tradition and immediate revelation; and so he was not a gentile, at least not a *stranger to revealed truth*, as many seem

to suppose. The religion of Job and of his friends was evidently the same as that of the patriarchs.—He was a man of most eminent piety, upright, fervent, and steadfast in religion, and exemplary in his whole conduct; one who regarded the authority of God, revered his majesty, and habitually worshipped and obeyed him. So that he carefully avoided sin and temptation, and "exercised himself to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man." His subsequent trials tended to his greater humiliation; but he was previously an eminent believer, and an excellent character.—'True, blameless, just, holy.' 'abstaining from every evil deed.' Sept.

2 And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.

3 His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.

4 And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters, to eat and to drink with them.

5 And it was so, when the days of

xlii. 18. Esth. v. 11. Ps. cvii. 38. cxxvii. 8—5. cxxviii. 3. Or, cattle. Gen. xii. 5. xlii. 6. xxxiv. 23. 2 Chr. xxxii. 29. xlii. 12. Gen. xlii. 16. Num. xxxi. 32—34. Judg. vi. 5. 1 Sam. xxv. 2. 2 Kings iii. 4. Prov. x. 22. Or, husbandry. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10. g xxix. 9. 10. 25. 2 Heb. sons of the east. Judg. vi. 3. vii. 12. viii. 10. 1 Kings iv. 30. h Gen. xxv. 6. xxix. 1. Num. xxxiii. 7. i Ps. cxxxiii. 1. Heb. xlii. 1.

their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt-offerings, according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

6 ¶ Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them.

k xli. 25. Gen. xxxv. 2. 3. Ex. xix. 10. 14. 1 Sam. xvi. 5. Neh. xii. 30. John xi. 55. Gen. xxii. 3. Ps. v. 3. Ec. ix. 10. m xlii. 8. Gen. viii. 20. Ex. xviii. 12. xxiv. 6. Lev. i. 3—6. n 1 Kings xviii. 31. Acts xxi. 26. o 2 Cor. xi. 2. p 11. ii. 9. Lev. xxiv. 10—16. 1 Kings xxi. 10. 13. q Gen. vi. 5. Jer. iv. 14. xvii. 9. 10. Mark vii. 21—23. Acts viii. 22. 1 Cor. iv. 5. r xxvii. 10. s Heb. all the days. Luke i. 75. xviii. 7. Eph. vi. 18. s ii. 1. Luke iii. 38. u Ps. ciii. 20. Matt. xviii. 10. xxii. 19—23. 1 Chr. xxi. 1. Zech. iii. 1. Rev. xii. 9, 10. in the midst of them. t xxxviii. 7. Dan. iii. 25. ¶ Heb. the adversary 1 Kings x John vi. 70. * Heb

V. 2, 3. (Marg. Ref.)—When the earth was but thinly inhabited, it was much easier to acquire land, than to cultivate it, or to procure cattle to feed on it; (as the case still is in several parts of America, and in newly discovered countries;) so that Job's wealth is reckoned by the number of his cattle, not by the extent of his lands. He was the principal person in that country; had abundance of every thing which constituted riches among them; and acted as a magistrate, or ruler: though it does not appear that he was, properly speaking, a king, as many suppose him to have been. (Εὐγενής, Noble. Sept.)

V. 4. The sons of Job, now grown up and settled in houses of their own, cheerfully enjoyed their abundance; and, as they lived in brotherly love, they were accustomed at certain seasons to entertain each other alternately. It does not appear, that Job made one at these feasts; (2 Sam. xiii. 24, 25;) but whenever his sons met, they invited their sisters to join their company, which both shewed a proper affection for them, and evinced that no indecency or riot attended their feasting.

V. 5. As Job had, no doubt, piously educated his children, and set them an excellent example, and offered many prayers for and with them; we may suppose that they were well affected to religion. Indeed, nothing is intimated to the disadvantage of their characters, and no feasting could be more inoffensive than their's seems to have been. Yet while their pious father could not but behold their harmony and comfort with satisfaction; his knowledge of the human heart suggested a jealous fear, lest their cheerfulness should betray them into some levity or excess, some vain conversation, or some injurious thoughts of God, either tending to infidelity, to dislike of his holy worship and service, or to idolatrous love of worldly enjoyments. When therefore their feastings were ended, acting as the priest of his family, "he sent and sanctified them," reminding them to examine themselves, to confess their sins, to seek forgiveness, and to prepare their hearts to attend the ordinances of God with seriousness and humble devotion; and he offered a burnt-offering for each of them. (Notes, 1 Sam. xvi. 5. 2 Chr. xxix. 5.) Thus he taught them, that even the secret unbelief, ingratitude, and rebellion of the heart, merited condemnation, and could only be expiated by the shedding of blood, and the offering of sacrifice, in repentance and humble faith. As he did this continually, we may thence understand his unremitting care

of his family, the tenderness of his conscience, his knowledge of the fallen state of man, and the depravity of human nature; his entire dependence on the mercy of God in the way which he had appointed, and his believing regard to the promised Redeemer.

Cursed God.] The word rendered "cursed," in this and several subsequent passages, in its usual meaning signifies to bless: yet it must be understood in a bad sense in this place, and when employed by Satan concerning Job. It is the same word as is used, when Naboth was accused of "cursing God and the king;" and consequently stoned as a blasphemer and traitor. 'Lest my sons in their mind have thought evil against God.' Sept. Some think this was substituted instead of the word which more generally signifies to curse, from reverence to God. Others suppose it signifies to salute, as men do when they meet, or part with others, and thus is used to denote, departing from God, or renouncing him. But the learned Mr. Leigh brings a quotation from Mr. Selden, which seems more satisfactory, and which I shall therefore translate. 'It is most certain, that the verb Barak signifies to execrate, or to curse, as well as to bless; and this, as I think, not by antiphrasis as some will have it; but almost from the very idiom of the sacred language, it may signify either way, according to the connexion in which it is used, as among the Latins sacrare and imprecari. For, as the first signifies at some times to devote any one by curses to destruction, and at others to consecrate any thing to God; and as we call for either good or evil upon others; so, Barak denotes what a man wishes or calls for, with an ardent mind, whether it be salvation or perdition. And when applied to the Deity, it either signifies addressing him by praises and thanksgivings, (which is more common,) or with revilings and reproaches; and the difference is to be collected from the nature of the case, and from the context.'—'Bless the gods, in their hearts.' El. Smith. But no mention is made in the book of Job, of any other god, or gods, except the true God; or any other idolatry, but the worship of the sun and moon. The original has not the article, and must be rendered either God, or gods, not the gods; and the clause is exactly the same as is used of the true God, in the next chapter (Note, ii. 9.)

V. 6. The holy angels no doubt are here meant by "the sons of God;" because they love him, and are be-

y ¹ ² 2 Kings v. 26. ⁷ And the LORD said unto Satan, ^z ¹ ² ³ ⁴ ⁵ ⁶ ⁷ ⁸ ⁹ ¹⁰ ¹¹ ¹² ¹³ ¹⁴ ¹⁵ ¹⁶ ¹⁷ ¹⁸ ¹⁹ ²⁰ ²¹ ²² ²³ ²⁴ ²⁵ ²⁶ ²⁷ ²⁸ ²⁹ ³⁰ ³¹ ³² ³³ ³⁴ ³⁵ ³⁶ ³⁷ ³⁸ ³⁹ ⁴⁰ ⁴¹ ⁴² ⁴³ ⁴⁴ ⁴⁵ ⁴⁶ ⁴⁷ ⁴⁸ ⁴⁹ ⁵⁰ ⁵¹ ⁵² ⁵³ ⁵⁴ ⁵⁵ ⁵⁶ ⁵⁷ ⁵⁸ ⁵⁹ ⁶⁰ ⁶¹ ⁶² ⁶³ ⁶⁴ ⁶⁵ ⁶⁶ ⁶⁷ ⁶⁸ ⁶⁹ ⁷⁰ ⁷¹ ⁷² ⁷³ ⁷⁴ ⁷⁵ ⁷⁶ ⁷⁷ ⁷⁸ ⁷⁹ ⁸⁰ ⁸¹ ⁸² ⁸³ ⁸⁴ ⁸⁵ ⁸⁶ ⁸⁷ ⁸⁸ ⁸⁹ ⁹⁰ ⁹¹ ⁹² ⁹³ ⁹⁴ ⁹⁵ ⁹⁶ ⁹⁷ ⁹⁸ ⁹⁹ ¹⁰⁰ ¹⁰¹ ¹⁰² ¹⁰³ ¹⁰⁴ ¹⁰⁵ ¹⁰⁶ ¹⁰⁷ ¹⁰⁸ ¹⁰⁹ ¹¹⁰ ¹¹¹ ¹¹² ¹¹³ ¹¹⁴ ¹¹⁵ ¹¹⁶ ¹¹⁷ ¹¹⁸ ¹¹⁹ ¹²⁰ ¹²¹ ¹²² ¹²³ ¹²⁴ ¹²⁵ ¹²⁶ ¹²⁷ ¹²⁸ ¹²⁹ ¹³⁰ ¹³¹ ¹³² ¹³³ ¹³⁴ ¹³⁵ ¹³⁶ ¹³⁷ ¹³⁸ ¹³⁹ ¹⁴⁰ ¹⁴¹ ¹⁴² ¹⁴³ ¹⁴⁴ ¹⁴⁵ ¹⁴⁶ ¹⁴⁷ ¹⁴⁸ ¹⁴⁹ ¹⁵⁰ ¹⁵¹ ¹⁵² ¹⁵³ ¹⁵⁴ ¹⁵⁵ ¹⁵⁶ ¹⁵⁷ ¹⁵⁸ ¹⁵⁹ ¹⁶⁰ ¹⁶¹ ¹⁶² ¹⁶³ ¹⁶⁴ ¹⁶⁵ ¹⁶⁶ ¹⁶⁷ ¹⁶⁸ ¹⁶⁹ ¹⁷⁰ ¹⁷¹ ¹⁷² ¹⁷³ ¹⁷⁴ ¹⁷⁵ ¹⁷⁶ ¹⁷⁷ ¹⁷⁸ ¹⁷⁹ ¹⁸⁰ ¹⁸¹ ¹⁸² ¹⁸³ ¹⁸⁴ ¹⁸⁵ ¹⁸⁶ ¹⁸⁷ ¹⁸⁸ ¹⁸⁹ ¹⁹⁰ ¹⁹¹ ¹⁹² ¹⁹³ ¹⁹⁴ ¹⁹⁵ ¹⁹⁶ ¹⁹⁷ ¹⁹⁸ ¹⁹⁹ ²⁰⁰ ²⁰¹ ²⁰² ²⁰³ ²⁰⁴ ²⁰⁵ ²⁰⁶ ²⁰⁷ ²⁰⁸ ²⁰⁹ ²¹⁰ ²¹¹ ²¹² ²¹³ ²¹⁴ ²¹⁵ ²¹⁶ ²¹⁷ ²¹⁸ ²¹⁹ ²²⁰ ²²¹ ²²² ²²³ ²²⁴ ²²⁵ ²²⁶ ²²⁷ ²²⁸ ²²⁹ ²³⁰ ²³¹ ²³² ²³³ ²³⁴ ²³⁵ ²³⁶ ²³⁷ ²³⁸ ²³⁹ ²⁴⁰ ²⁴¹ ²⁴² ²⁴³ ²⁴⁴ ²⁴⁵ ²⁴⁶ ²⁴⁷ ²⁴⁸ ²⁴⁹ ²⁵⁰ ²⁵¹ ²⁵² ²⁵³ ²⁵⁴ ²⁵⁵ ²⁵⁶ ²⁵⁷ ²⁵⁸ ²⁵⁹ ²⁶⁰ ²⁶¹ ²⁶² ²⁶³ ²⁶⁴ ²⁶⁵ ²⁶⁶ ²⁶⁷ ²⁶⁸ ²⁶⁹ ²⁷⁰ ²⁷¹ ²⁷² ²⁷³ ²⁷⁴ ²⁷⁵ ²⁷⁶ ²⁷⁷ ²⁷⁸ ²⁷⁹ ²⁸⁰ ²⁸¹ ²⁸² ²⁸³ ²⁸⁴ ²⁸⁵ ²⁸⁶ ²⁸⁷ ²⁸⁸ ²⁸⁹ ²⁹⁰ ²⁹¹ ²⁹² ²⁹³ ²⁹⁴ ²⁹⁵ ²⁹⁶ ²⁹⁷ ²⁹⁸ ²⁹⁹ ³⁰⁰ ³⁰¹ ³⁰² ³⁰³ ³⁰⁴ ³⁰⁵ ³⁰⁶ ³⁰⁷ ³⁰⁸ ³⁰⁹ ³¹⁰ ³¹¹ ³¹² ³¹³ ³¹⁴ ³¹⁵ ³¹⁶ ³¹⁷ ³¹⁸ ³¹⁹ ³²⁰ ³²¹ ³²² ³²³ ³²⁴ ³²⁵ ³²⁶ ³²⁷ ³²⁸ ³²⁹ ³³⁰ ³³¹ ³³² ³³³ ³³⁴ ³³⁵ ³³⁶ ³³⁷ ³³⁸ ³³⁹ ³⁴⁰ ³⁴¹ ³⁴² ³⁴³ ³⁴⁴ ³⁴⁵ ³⁴⁶ ³⁴⁷ ³⁴⁸ ³⁴⁹ ³⁵⁰ ³⁵¹ ³⁵² ³⁵³ ³⁵⁴ ³⁵⁵ ³⁵⁶ ³⁵⁷ ³⁵⁸ ³⁵⁹ ³⁶⁰ ³⁶¹ ³⁶² ³⁶³ ³⁶⁴ ³⁶⁵ ³⁶⁶ ³⁶⁷ ³⁶⁸ ³⁶⁹ ³⁷⁰ ³⁷¹ ³⁷² ³⁷³ ³⁷⁴ ³⁷⁵ ³⁷⁶ ³⁷⁷ ³⁷⁸ ³⁷⁹ ³⁸⁰ ³⁸¹ ³⁸² ³⁸³ ³⁸⁴ ³⁸⁵ ³⁸⁶ ³⁸⁷ ³⁸⁸ ³⁸⁹ ³⁹⁰ ³⁹¹ ³⁹² ³⁹³ ³⁹⁴ ³⁹⁵ ³⁹⁶ ³⁹⁷ ³⁹⁸ ³⁹⁹ ⁴⁰⁰ ⁴⁰¹ ⁴⁰² ⁴⁰³ ⁴⁰⁴ ⁴⁰⁵ ⁴⁰⁶ ⁴⁰⁷ ⁴⁰⁸ ⁴⁰⁹ ⁴¹⁰ ⁴¹¹ ⁴¹² ⁴¹³ ⁴¹⁴ ⁴¹⁵ ⁴¹⁶ ⁴¹⁷ ⁴¹⁸ ⁴¹⁹ ⁴²⁰ ⁴²¹ ⁴²² ⁴²³ ⁴²⁴ ⁴²⁵ ⁴²⁶ ⁴²⁷ ⁴²⁸ ⁴²⁹ ⁴³⁰ ⁴³¹ ⁴³² ⁴³³ ⁴³⁴ ⁴³⁵ ⁴³⁶ ⁴³⁷ ⁴³⁸ ⁴³⁹ ⁴⁴⁰ ⁴⁴¹ ⁴⁴² ⁴⁴³ ⁴⁴⁴ ⁴⁴⁵ ⁴⁴⁶ ⁴⁴⁷ ⁴⁴⁸ ⁴⁴⁹ ⁴⁵⁰ ⁴⁵¹ ⁴⁵² ⁴⁵³ ⁴⁵⁴ ⁴⁵⁵ ⁴⁵⁶ ⁴⁵⁷ ⁴⁵⁸ ⁴⁵⁹ ⁴⁶⁰ ⁴⁶¹ ⁴⁶² ⁴⁶³ ⁴⁶⁴ ⁴⁶⁵ ⁴⁶⁶ ⁴⁶⁷ ⁴⁶⁸ ⁴⁶⁹ ⁴⁷⁰ ⁴⁷¹ ⁴⁷² ⁴⁷³ ⁴⁷⁴ ⁴⁷⁵ ⁴⁷⁶ ⁴⁷⁷ ⁴⁷⁸ ⁴⁷⁹ ⁴⁸⁰ ⁴⁸¹ ⁴⁸² ⁴⁸³ ⁴⁸⁴ ⁴⁸⁵ ⁴⁸⁶ ⁴⁸⁷ ⁴⁸⁸ ⁴⁸⁹ ⁴⁹⁰ ⁴⁹¹ ⁴⁹² ⁴⁹³ ⁴⁹⁴ ⁴⁹⁵ ⁴⁹⁶ ⁴⁹⁷ ⁴⁹⁸ ⁴⁹⁹ ⁵⁰⁰ ⁵⁰¹ ⁵⁰² ⁵⁰³ ⁵⁰⁴ ⁵⁰⁵ ⁵⁰⁶ ⁵⁰⁷ ⁵⁰⁸ ⁵⁰⁹ ⁵¹⁰ ⁵¹¹ ⁵¹² ⁵¹³ ⁵¹⁴ ⁵¹⁵ ⁵¹⁶ ⁵¹⁷ ⁵¹⁸ ⁵¹⁹ ⁵²⁰ ⁵²¹ ⁵²² ⁵²³ ⁵²⁴ ⁵²⁵ ⁵²⁶ ⁵²⁷ ⁵²⁸ ⁵²⁹ ⁵³⁰ ⁵³¹ ⁵³² ⁵³³ ⁵³⁴ ⁵³⁵ ⁵³⁶ ⁵³⁷ ⁵³⁸ ⁵³⁹ ⁵⁴⁰ ⁵⁴¹ ⁵⁴² ⁵⁴³ ⁵⁴⁴ ⁵⁴⁵ ⁵⁴⁶ ⁵⁴⁷ ⁵⁴⁸ ⁵⁴⁹ ⁵⁵⁰ ⁵⁵¹ ⁵⁵² ⁵⁵³ ⁵⁵⁴ ⁵⁵⁵ ⁵⁵⁶ ⁵⁵⁷ ⁵⁵⁸ ⁵⁵⁹ ⁵⁶⁰ ⁵⁶¹ ⁵⁶² ⁵⁶³ ⁵⁶⁴ ⁵⁶⁵ ⁵⁶⁶ ⁵⁶⁷ ⁵⁶⁸ ⁵⁶⁹ ⁵⁷⁰ ⁵⁷¹ ⁵⁷² ⁵⁷³ ⁵⁷⁴ ⁵⁷⁵ ⁵⁷⁶ ⁵⁷⁷ ⁵⁷⁸ ⁵⁷⁹ ⁵⁸⁰ ⁵⁸¹ ⁵⁸² ⁵⁸³ ⁵⁸⁴ ⁵⁸⁵ ⁵⁸⁶ ⁵⁸⁷ ⁵⁸⁸ ⁵⁸⁹ ⁵⁹⁰ ⁵⁹¹ ⁵⁹² ⁵⁹³ ⁵⁹⁴ ⁵⁹⁵ ⁵⁹⁶ ⁵⁹⁷ ⁵⁹⁸ ⁵⁹⁹ ⁶⁰⁰ ⁶⁰¹ ⁶⁰² ⁶⁰³ ⁶⁰⁴ ⁶⁰⁵ ⁶⁰⁶ ⁶⁰⁷ ⁶⁰⁸ ⁶⁰⁹ ⁶¹⁰ ⁶¹¹ ⁶¹² ⁶¹³ ⁶¹⁴ ⁶¹⁵ ⁶¹⁶ ⁶¹⁷ ⁶¹⁸ ⁶¹⁹ ⁶²⁰ ⁶²¹ ⁶²² ⁶²³ ⁶²⁴ ⁶²⁵ ⁶²⁶ ⁶²⁷ ⁶²⁸ ⁶²⁹ ⁶³⁰ ⁶³¹ ⁶³² ⁶³³ ⁶³⁴ ⁶³⁵ ⁶³⁶ ⁶³⁷ ⁶³⁸ ⁶³⁹ ⁶⁴⁰ ⁶⁴¹ ⁶⁴² ⁶⁴³ ⁶⁴⁴ ⁶⁴⁵ ⁶⁴⁶ ⁶⁴⁷ ⁶⁴⁸ ⁶⁴⁹ ⁶⁵⁰ ⁶⁵¹ ⁶⁵² ⁶⁵³ ⁶⁵⁴ ⁶⁵⁵ ⁶⁵⁶ ⁶⁵⁷ ⁶⁵⁸ ⁶⁵⁹ ⁶⁶⁰ ⁶⁶¹ ⁶⁶² ⁶⁶³ ⁶⁶⁴ ⁶⁶⁵ ⁶⁶⁶ ⁶⁶⁷ ⁶⁶⁸ ⁶⁶⁹ ⁶⁷⁰ ⁶⁷¹ ⁶⁷² ⁶⁷³ ⁶⁷⁴ ⁶⁷⁵ ⁶⁷⁶ ⁶⁷⁷ ⁶⁷⁸ ⁶⁷⁹ ⁶⁸⁰ ⁶⁸¹ ⁶⁸² ⁶⁸³ ⁶⁸⁴ ⁶⁸⁵ ⁶⁸⁶ ⁶⁸⁷ ⁶⁸⁸ ⁶⁸⁹ ⁶⁹⁰ ⁶⁹¹ ⁶⁹² ⁶⁹³ ⁶⁹⁴ ⁶⁹⁵ ⁶⁹⁶ ⁶⁹⁷ ⁶⁹⁸ ⁶⁹⁹ ⁷⁰⁰ ⁷⁰¹ ⁷⁰² ⁷⁰³ ⁷⁰⁴ ⁷⁰⁵ ⁷⁰⁶ ⁷⁰⁷ ⁷⁰⁸ ⁷⁰⁹ ⁷¹⁰ ⁷¹¹ ⁷¹² ⁷¹³ ⁷¹⁴ ⁷¹⁵ ⁷¹⁶ ⁷¹⁷ ⁷¹⁸ ⁷¹⁹ ⁷²⁰ ⁷²¹ ⁷²² ⁷²³ ⁷²⁴ ⁷²⁵ ⁷²⁶ ⁷²⁷ ⁷²⁸ ⁷²⁹ ⁷³⁰ ⁷³¹ ⁷³² ⁷³³ ⁷³⁴ ⁷³⁵ ⁷³⁶ ⁷³⁷ ⁷³⁸ ⁷³⁹ ⁷⁴⁰ ⁷⁴¹ ⁷⁴² ⁷⁴³ ⁷⁴⁴ ⁷⁴⁵ ⁷⁴⁶ ⁷⁴⁷ ⁷⁴⁸ ⁷⁴⁹ ⁷⁵⁰ ⁷⁵¹ ⁷⁵² ⁷⁵³ ⁷⁵⁴ ⁷⁵⁵ ⁷⁵⁶ ⁷⁵⁷ ⁷⁵⁸ ⁷⁵⁹ ⁷⁶⁰ ⁷⁶¹ ⁷⁶² ⁷⁶³ ⁷⁶⁴ ⁷⁶⁵ ⁷⁶⁶ ⁷⁶⁷ ⁷⁶⁸ ⁷⁶⁹ ⁷⁷⁰ ⁷⁷¹ ⁷⁷² ⁷⁷³ ⁷⁷⁴ ⁷⁷⁵ ⁷⁷⁶ ⁷⁷⁷ ⁷⁷⁸ ⁷⁷⁹ ⁷⁸⁰ ⁷⁸¹ ⁷⁸² ⁷⁸³ ⁷⁸⁴ ⁷⁸⁵ ⁷⁸⁶ ⁷⁸⁷ ⁷⁸⁸ ⁷⁸⁹ ⁷⁹⁰ ⁷⁹¹ ⁷⁹² ⁷⁹³ ⁷⁹⁴ ⁷⁹⁵ ⁷⁹⁶ ⁷⁹⁷ ⁷⁹⁸ ⁷⁹⁹ ⁸⁰⁰ ⁸⁰¹ ⁸⁰² ⁸⁰³ ⁸⁰⁴ ⁸⁰⁵ ⁸⁰⁶ ⁸⁰⁷ ⁸⁰⁸ ⁸⁰⁹ ⁸¹⁰ ⁸¹¹ ⁸¹² ⁸¹³ ⁸¹⁴ ⁸¹⁵ ⁸¹⁶ ⁸¹⁷ ⁸¹⁸ ⁸¹⁹ ⁸²⁰ ⁸²¹ ⁸²² ⁸²³ ⁸²⁴ ⁸²⁵ ⁸²⁶ ⁸²⁷ ⁸²⁸ ⁸²⁹ ⁸³⁰ ⁸³¹ ⁸³² ⁸³³ ⁸³⁴ ⁸³⁵ ⁸³⁶ ⁸³⁷ ⁸³⁸ ⁸³⁹ ⁸⁴⁰ ⁸⁴¹ ⁸⁴² ⁸⁴³ ⁸⁴⁴ ⁸⁴⁵ ⁸⁴⁶ ⁸⁴⁷ ⁸⁴⁸ ⁸⁴⁹ ⁸⁵⁰ ⁸⁵¹ ⁸⁵² ⁸⁵³ ⁸⁵⁴ ⁸⁵⁵ ⁸⁵⁶ ⁸⁵⁷ ⁸⁵⁸ ⁸⁵⁹ ⁸⁶⁰ ⁸⁶¹ ⁸⁶² ⁸⁶³ ⁸⁶⁴ ⁸⁶⁵ ⁸⁶⁶ ⁸⁶⁷ ⁸⁶⁸ ⁸⁶⁹ ⁸⁷⁰ ⁸⁷¹ ⁸⁷² ⁸⁷³ ⁸⁷⁴ ⁸⁷⁵ ⁸⁷⁶ ⁸⁷⁷ ⁸⁷⁸ ⁸⁷⁹ ⁸⁸⁰ ⁸⁸¹ ⁸⁸² ⁸⁸³ ⁸⁸⁴ ⁸⁸⁵ ⁸⁸⁶ ⁸⁸⁷ ⁸⁸⁸ ⁸⁸⁹ ⁸⁹⁰ ⁸⁹¹ ⁸⁹² ⁸⁹³ ⁸⁹⁴ ⁸⁹⁵ ⁸⁹⁶ ⁸⁹⁷ ⁸⁹⁸ ⁸⁹⁹ ⁹⁰⁰ ⁹⁰¹ ⁹⁰² ⁹⁰³ ⁹⁰⁴ ⁹⁰⁵ ⁹⁰⁶ ⁹⁰⁷ ⁹⁰⁸ ⁹⁰⁹ ⁹¹⁰ ⁹¹¹ ⁹¹² ⁹¹³ ⁹¹⁴ ⁹¹⁵ ⁹¹⁶ ⁹¹⁷ ⁹¹⁸ ⁹¹⁹ ⁹²⁰ ⁹²¹ ⁹²² ⁹²³ ⁹²⁴ ⁹²⁵ ⁹²⁶ ⁹²⁷ ⁹²⁸ ⁹²⁹ ⁹³⁰ ⁹³¹ ⁹³² ⁹³³ ⁹³⁴ ⁹³⁵ ⁹³⁶ ⁹³⁷ ⁹³⁸ ⁹³⁹ ⁹⁴⁰ ⁹⁴¹ ⁹⁴² ⁹⁴³ ⁹⁴⁴ ⁹⁴⁵ ⁹⁴⁶ ⁹⁴⁷ ⁹⁴⁸ ⁹⁴⁹ ⁹⁵⁰ ⁹⁵¹ ⁹⁵² ⁹⁵³ ⁹⁵⁴ ⁹⁵⁵ ⁹⁵⁶ ⁹⁵⁷ ⁹⁵⁸ ⁹⁵⁹ ⁹⁶⁰ ⁹⁶¹ ⁹⁶² ⁹⁶³ ⁹⁶⁴ ⁹⁶⁵ ⁹⁶⁶ ⁹⁶⁷ ⁹⁶⁸ ⁹⁶⁹ ⁹⁷⁰ ⁹⁷¹ ⁹⁷² ⁹⁷³ ⁹⁷⁴ ⁹⁷⁵ ⁹⁷⁶ ⁹⁷⁷ ⁹⁷⁸ ⁹⁷⁹ ⁹⁸⁰ ⁹⁸¹ ⁹⁸² ⁹⁸³ ⁹⁸⁴ ⁹⁸⁵ ⁹⁸⁶ ⁹⁸⁷ ⁹⁸⁸ ⁹⁸⁹ ⁹⁹⁰ ⁹⁹¹ ⁹⁹² ⁹⁹³ ⁹⁹⁴ ⁹⁹⁵ ⁹⁹⁶ ⁹⁹⁷ ⁹⁹⁸ ⁹⁹⁹ ¹⁰⁰⁰

and said, 'Doth Job fear God for nought?

10 Hast not thou made ^han hedge about him, and about his house, and ⁱabout all that he hath on every side? ^kThou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his ^lsubstance is increased in the land:

11 But ^lput forth thine hand now, and ^mtouch all that he hath, ⁿand he will ⁿcurse thee to thy face.

† Or, cattle. Gen. xxx. 43. 1 ¹² ii. 5. Is. v. 25. m iv. 5. xix. 21. Gen. xxvi. 11. Ps. ev. 15. Zech. ii. 8. † Heb. if he curse thee not. 21. n 5. See on ii. 9.—Is. viii. 21. Mal. iii. 13, 14. Rev. xvi. 9. 11. 21.

loved of him, as his children. (*Marg. Ref. t.—Note, xxxviii. 4—7.*) They are here introduced to our notice, as on some special occasion presenting themselves before the Lord, to give an account of their late services; and to receive further commands, in delightful obedience to which their happiness greatly consists: and Satan, the adversary of God and of his whole creation, is represented as intruding himself among them. Without determining any thing about the place or way, in which this evil spirit appeared before God, or associated with his angels; or whether the transactions of the invisible world be not described in language, adapted rather to our conceptions than to their real nature; we hence learn, that Job's extraordinary afflictions originated from the malice and agency of Satan, by divine permission for wise and holy purposes: and many truths, respecting the character and influence of the devil and his angels, are thus emphatically proposed to our attentive consideration. These apostate spirits are continually intruding into the company of the children of God on earth, especially when they meet in his ordinances, or approach his mercy-seat. And they would dare to intrude even into heaven, the habitation of God's holiness, if access were allowed them, to join the company of his holy angels: yet this would not in the least degree change their evil nature; for wherever they go, they are instigated by malice, and seeking to do mischief. But, as God is every where present, (though in heaven his glory is especially displayed,) all that is spoken upon these subjects may be *literally* understood, without supposing that they are ever admitted into that holy place. (*Note, 1 Kings xxii. 19—23.*)—'The sons of perdition came to set themselves against JEHOVAH, and the Satan (enemy) also 'came among them.' *E. Smith.* This most adventurous alteration, made on untenable grounds, even by the confession of Dr. Randolph the editor, contrary to the concurrent opinion of all preceding versions, critics, and expositors, shews the dangerous extent to which the sacred oracles may be altered, by an attachment to new notions, and a slight consideration of the subject.—The LXX read Οἱ ἀγγελοι τοῦ Θεου "The angels of God."

V. 7. When the holy angels had given an account of their services; Satan is represented as interrogated, Whence *he* came, and what he had been doing? And his answer seems to have implied an arrogant claim to be "the god and prince of this world;" and, in the spirit of pride and self-vindication, he avowed that he had been traversing his dominions, without exceeding the bounds

assigned him. It also denoted his restless malice, and unwearied endeavours to do mischief. (*Notes, 1 Pet. v. 8, 9.*)

V. 8. Satan seemed to advance a claim to the earth as if it had been all his own; but the Lord gave him to understand, that he had a remnant of servants there: and, as this accuser had always something to urge against every believer, he was asked, whether he had fully considered Job's character and conduct. (*Notes, Zech. iii. 1—4. Rev. xii. 7—12.*)—The express attestation of God to Job's integrity and piety, as the most faithful servant he had at that time on earth, is sufficient to demonstrate, that he was not a self-righteous Pharisee before his afflictions; as some persons, from undue regard to system, have ventured to speak of him.

V. 9—11. Satan could not deny the excellency of Job's conduct: but he artfully insinuated, that he was mercenary in his religion, and served God, not from love to him or his ways, but for what he could get; or at least, that in his present circumstances the contrary could not be demonstrated. It was worth his while to keep up a regard to religion; for he grew rich, prosperous, and honourable by it. He had no temptation to fraud or oppression; for he had all that he could wish, in a more safe and creditable manner. He had nothing to ruffle his temper, or to render him distrustful or discontented; and therefore the reality of his faith, meekness, and acquiescence in the will of God, might fairly be questioned. In short, if duly tried, he would be found a different man: and if the Lord would himself "put forth his hand, and touch" (that is, take from him, or embitter to him,) "all that he had;" he would not only murmur and fret, which a true believer might be tempted to do; not only indulge hard thoughts of God, as Job suspected that his sons might have cursed God in their hearts; but he would *openly* blaspheme God and renounce religion. (*Note, 5.*) The last clause is literally, "If he curse thee not to thy face;" which implies that more was meant than expressed: 'If it be not so, I am greatly mistaken, or I will consent to be punished as a false witness.'—God had declared Job to be the most eminent saint upon earth; and if Satan could have succeeded in this attempt, he would really have made out his claim to the dominion over the whole human race: and though he failed, he yet had an opportunity of gratifying his malice in Job's sufferings. But with inward anguish he was constrained to confess, that he was not able to break through the hedge of continual protection, which God had placed round the person, substance, and family

12 And the LORD said unto Satan, "Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; ^ponly upon himself put not forth thine hand. ^aSo Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

13 ¶ And there was a day ^rwhen his sons and his daughters were eating, and drinking wine, in their eldest brother's house:

14 And there came a ^smessenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them;

15 And the ^tSabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; ^uand I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

16 While he was yet speaking, ^vthere came also another, and said, [†]The fire of God is fallen from heaven,

and hath burnt up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

17 While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, ^xThe Chaldeans made out three bands, and ^zfell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and ^yI only am escaped alone to tell thee.

18 While he was yet speaking, ^zthere came also another, and said, ^aThy sons and thy daughters were ^beating, and drinking wine, in their eldest brother's house:

19 And, behold, there came ^ca great wind ^dfrom the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and ^eit fell upon the young men, and ^fthey are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

o 1 Kings xxii. 22.
Luke viii. 32.
xxii. 31, 32.
John xix. 11.
2 Cor. xii. 7.
* Heb. hand. Gen.
xvi. 6. Jer.
xxxviii. 5. John
iii. 25, 26.
p ii. 4—6. Ps lxxvi.
10. Is. xxvii. 8.
1 Cor. x. 13.
q ii. 7. Luke viii.
33.
r 4. Prov. xxvii. 1.
Ec. ix. 12. Luke
xii. 19, 20. xvii.
27—29. xxi. 34.
s 1 Sam. iv. 17.
2 Sam. xv. 13.
Jer li. 31.

t Gen. x. 7. 28.
xxv. 3. Ps. lxxii.
10. Is. xlv. 14.
Ez. xxii. 42.
Joel iii. 8.
u 16, 17, 19, 1 Sam.
xxii. 20, 21.
v Gen. xix. 24.
Lev. ix. 24.
1 Kings xviii. 33.
2 Kings i. 10, 12.
14. Amos vii. 4.
Rev. xiii. 13.
† Or, A great fire.
Ex. ix. 28. 1 Sam.
xiv. 15. Marg.

x Gen. xi. 28. Is.
xxiii. 13. Hab. i.
6.

z Heb. rushed.

y 15. 2 Sam. i. 3.

z vi. 2, 3. xvi. 14.
xix. 9, 10. xxiii.
2. Is. xxviii. 19.
Jer li. 31. Lam.
i. 12. Amos iv.
6—11.
a viii. 4. xxvii. 14.
Ps. xxxiv. 19.
Ec. ix. 2.
b 2 Sam. xiii. 28.

c Jer. iv. 11, 12.
Eph. ii. 2.
d Heb. from aside,
&c.

d Judg. xvi. 30.
1 Kings xx. 30.
Matt. vii. 27.
Luke xiii. 1—5.
Acts xxviii. 4.
e Gen. xxxvii. 32,
33. xlii. 26.
2 Sam. xviii. 33.

of his servant; or to give the least disturbance to the peace and blessings which Job enjoyed in his favour, and under the watchful care of his over-ruling providence.

Curse thee. (11) 'Whether to thy face he will not bless thee.' E. Smith.—'Certainly to thy face he will bless thee.' Sept. (Note, 5.)

V. 12. Thus the Lord gave Satan permission to deprive Job of all those comforts and possessions, for the sake of which he was supposed to serve him. But he would not allow the enemy to wound or to kill his body; or even to assail his soul with those horrid temptations, which evidently formed a principal part of his subsequent trials. This permission was granted, not because Job had any special need of chastisement; but that his integrity, and the power of divine grace in him, might be manifested to Satan's confusion, the real benefit of Job, the edification of the church in future ages, and the glory of God in all these respects.

V. 13. Satan knew how fearful Job was lest his sons should sin amidst their festivity; and he seems to have chosen this day for his purpose, that the calamities might be construed into divine judgments.

V. 14, 15. One messenger was spared to carry the tidings of each calamity, that the sudden and certain information, which Job received, might overwhelm his mind at once; and that he might not have time to recover himself from his consternation, or to seek support from God, of which a more gradual information would have admitted.—The servants were at their work, and lost their lives in defending their master's property.—The Sabeans were a tribe of the Arabians, who were freebooters, and infested those regions; but it is uncertain whether descended from Abraham, either by Ishmael, or Keturah. (Marg. Ref. t.)

V. 16. This servant naturally called the extraordinary lightning, which consumed all the flocks of sheep, "the fire of God;" and the expression might aid Satan's temptation, as it seemed to imply that God fought against

Job, and was become his enemy. If this fire had destroyed the Sabeans with their ill-gotten booty, the divine justice would have been manifest: but that *they* should escape, while the servants of pious Job were slain, and the flocks destroyed, from which so many burnt-offerings had been sacrificed to the Lord, seemed very mysterious and perplexing.—We cannot determine, in what manner this and other effects were produced by Satan, who is "the prince of the power of the air;" (Note, Eph. ii. 1, 2;) and is, no doubt, able, when permitted, to cause any such phenomena. (Note, Deut. xiii. 1—5.) It is generally agreed that the tremendous appearances on mount Sinai were produced by the ministration of holy angels: and though fallen angels have lost their holy dispositions and moral powers, they retain their natural capacities; and doubtless could, if they were allowed, produce similar effects: at least, it is impossible to prove the contrary, seeing we cannot explain the manner, or ascertain the boundaries, of their operations. But they are absolutely in the Lord's hands, and can exercise their powers only by his permission; and this alone is the security of our bodies, minds, relatives, friends, and possessions.

V. 17. The Chaldeans seem at this time to have been an inconsiderable roving tribe; but they afterwards became a powerful nation. (Notes, Is. xxiii. 13. Hab. i. 5—7.)

V. 18, 19. This greatest affliction was reserved for the last, that it might drive Job desperate, when the hand of God seemed to be thus gone forth against him. The loss of one child has often been more than an affectionate parent could support with decent resignation: but for a whole flourishing family, educated with pious care, and for years insinuating into their father's affections; who were all now grown up, living in harmony, affluence, and credit, and likely to perpetuate his name and prosperity; to be all cut off at once, suddenly, and, as it appeared, by the immediate hand of God, when they were feasting, and not at their sacrifices;—this, added to all the preceding unpre-

f Gen. xxxvii. 29.
34. Ezra ix. 3.
* Or, robe.
g Deut. ix. 19.
2 Sam. 12. 16—
20. 2 Chr. vii. 3.
Matt. xxvii. 39.
1 Pet. v. 6.
h Gen. iii. 19. Ps.
xlix. 17. Ec. v.
15. xiii. 7. 1 Tim.
vi. 7.

20 Then Job arose, and ^frent his ^{*}mantle, and shaved his head, and ^gfell down upon the ground, and worshipped;

21 And said, ^hNaked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I

return thither: 'the LORD gave, and ⁱthe LORD hath taken away; 'blessed be the name of the LORD.

22 ^mIn all this Job sinned not, nor [†]charged God foolishly.

28. 1 11. 1 Sam. iii. 18. 2 Kings xx. 19. Ps. xxxiv. 1. Is. xxiv. 17 Eph. v. 20
1 Thes. v. 18. m ii. 10. Jam. i. 4. 12. 1 Pet. i. 7. † Or, attributed folly to
God. xxxiv. 10. 18, 19. xl. 4—8. Rom. ix. 20.

i ii. 10 Gen xxx
2. Ec. v. 19 Jam
i. 17.
k Gen. xlv. 5
2 Sam. xvi. 12.
1 Kings xii. 15.
Ps. xxxix. 9. 1s
xlii. 24. xlv. 7
Amos iii. 6. Matt.
xx. 15. Acts iv.
xx. 15. Acts iv.

cedented misfortunes, was sufficient to drive most men distracted, or to urge them to bitter complaints, or even desperate imprecations. When we have endeavoured to conceive aright of Job's circumstances, comforts, and prospects, on the morning of this eventful day, and of the dreadful change which took place before evening; and when we realize, from experience and observation, the feelings of the human heart under trials comparatively trivial; we shall be able to form some faint idea of the immense load, which was at once laid upon this eminent servant of God: and the strength of his faith and grace appears, in the manner in which he supported it. And though, afterwards, the still accumulating weight extorted from him some impatient expressions, which many have *inconsiderately* objected to the scriptural commendation of his patience; yet, probably, no mere man ever suffered so much and so long, with equal resignation and constancy.

V. 20—22. Job acted as one who felt the weight of his afflictions; but he did not sink under them, or lose possession of his soul. (*Note, Luke xxi. 19.*) He expressed his inward anguish in the customary manner; and behaved, not like one furious or distracted, but with silent and reflecting sorrow. Having rent his mantle and shaved his head, he prostrated himself, and worshipped the Lord. He acknowledged, that he came into the world naked and indigent, and was no poorer after all his losses, than when he was born. He recollected that he should soon leave the world, and restore his body to the earth, from which it was taken, as the common parent of all; and that he could carry nothing away with him. He had received all from the unmerited bounty of God, who had seen good to remand his substance and his children, a little before the time when otherwise he must have left them: and his body and soul, his faith and hope, his heavenly inheritance and his God, still remained to him. Whoever were the instruments, the Lord was acknowledged as the Author of his calamities: he had no heart to revile the Sabeans and Chaldeans, and others concerned in his losses. He was assured in his judgment, whatever his feelings were, that God had a sovereign right to dispose of him and his, as he pleased; and that he had done nothing inconsistent with his infinite wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness. Instead therefore of blaspheming, as Satan had predicted, he praised, blessed, and thanked the Lord, in faith, love, and humble resignation.—Thus far he stood the trial most honourably, and did not even utter a single expression, which in any measure reflected upon the divine conduct. (*Marg. reading.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

"In every nation he that feareth God, and worketh "righteousness, is accepted of him:" (*Note, Acts x. 34,*

35 :) and he will have some even of the wealthy and prosperous of the world to serve him; "for with God all things "are possible." (*Note, Matt. xix. 23—26.*)—When the heart is upright and devoted to God, the general conduct will be holy, and he will be served with the whole man; for the genuine fear of his name will produce habitual hatred of sin, and watchfulness against it.—We receive our children, as well as every other comfort, from the Lord: we ought therefore carefully to train them up for him, and to keep them from the contagion of this evil world: and we cannot but rejoice to see them grow up, living in peace and love. We should, however, be careful not to set our hearts too much upon them, as we know not how soon they may be torn from us, or made the occasions of our deepest distress; but we ought to commit them to God by constant prayer, and seek his grace to enable us to be submissive, however he may dispose of them.—It cannot be expected, but that young people will pay attention to things not directly sinful, for which their pious parents may have no relish; it is not evil in itself to rejoice in the bounty of Providence, and to use hospitality towards our friends and relatives; and it is a pleasant sight to behold the several branches of a family love and enjoy each other's company. Yet every indulgence disposes us to unwatchfulness, and forgetfulness of God: and we seldom feast together in the most friendly and decent manner, without having cause to repent of some part of our conduct and conversation; or at least of the thoughts and temper of our hearts. All that of which we are thus conscious must be washed away in the atoning blood of Christ, or it will rise up against us in judgment at the last day. We have therefore cause for continual self-examination; and after every social interview, we must bestow pains to bring our hearts into due frame for the ordinances of God. Parents also should watch over their children, and exhort, instruct, and assist them, in thus seeking an interest in the great Redeemer, and in preparing to commemorate his death at the Lord's table. The higher men are advanced in rank or authority, the more important is it, that they pay regard to these duties, for an example to their inferiors: but alas! how few of our nobles and rulers, in this Christian land, imitate Job, in this open profession of godliness, and this strict attention to religion in his family! Yet the consistent believer will attend on these things continually

V. 6—12.

No man is proved to be a true Christian by being found in company with the children of God, even when they appear before him in his house, or at his table. Could Satan enter heaven, and associate with angels, he would still remain a liar and a murderer, ambitious, subtle, envious, and malignant: and while holy spirits delighted in the service of their God, he would be plotting mischief against

CHAP. II.

Satan again appears before God, and obtains permission still farther to try Job, 1—6. He smites him with

sore boils from head to foot, 7, 8. His wife moves him to curse God and die; but he rebukes her, 9, 10. Three of his friends visit him; and, overwhelmed with surprise and grief, they keep silence seven days, 11—13.

his cause and people. We should therefore enquire, not only whither we go, and what company we keep; but also, what our intentions and dispositions are.—We ought likewise to expect temptations, and that offences will continue in the church: and we should chiefly look to ourselves; for we must every one give an account of himself to God.—May we then imitate those holy and loving angels, who are “all worshipping spirits, sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation!”—Satan claims this earth as his domain; and alas! he has hitherto had too much ground for his arrogant pretensions: and as he continually “goeth about seeking whom he may devour,” we ought to be always sober and vigilant. But there is a remnant who are rescued from his tyranny, and are the servants of God, in whom he is glorified, and over whom he rejoices.—Those who are disposed to represent the most blameless professors of godliness, as hypocritical or mercenary; to put a bad construction upon harmless or even good actions; and to insinuate some suspicion or objection, in order to detract from the commendations bestowed upon pious and useful men; may easily know whose children they are, whose example they follow, and whose work they do. For they resemble, in every feature, Satan, the envenomed slanderer and “accuser of the brethren.” It is indeed true, that God will not suffer his people to serve him for nought. Their best interests are secured; no good thing they do shall lose its reward; and he will give them as many worldly comforts as he sees good for them. Yet every believer serves God from love, gratitude, and zeal, and delights in his holy commandments. When called to it, he will part with every temporal possession for his sake: and it is impossible that he, who loves God above all things, should fail of being eternally happy in the enjoyment of him. But *untried* faith is not much to be depended on. If ease, wealth, and pleasure uniformly attended piety; if there were no cross, self-denial, or temptation, to serve as a touchstone, or a furnace; it would be very difficult to distinguish the believer from the hypocrite: and therefore Satan is often allowed to sift and prove the people of God, that he may be the more confounded. (*Notes*, xxiii. 8—12. *Luke* xxii. 31—34. *Jam.* i. 2—4. 12. 1 *Pet.* i. 6, 7. iv. 12—16.) He means to destroy, defile, or distress them: but the Lord intends to demonstrate the reality and power of his grace in them, for his own glory and their important good.—Little do we know what plots are forming against us in the invisible world; nor are we sufficiently sensible of the number, power, malice, and subtlety of our unseen adversaries. We bolt and bar to keep out a few ruffians of our own species, who might come to plunder or murder us while we sleep; but there are legions of infernal spirits, whom we can by no means exclude, and who are able in a moment to distract, torment, or destroy us. Blessed be the Lord, his power limits the operations of these malicious foes; and the protection which he affords to ungodly men against their destructive rage, is a most wonderful instance of his patience

and loving-kindness. Yet, as they generally disbelieve or disregard the being and agency of evil spirits, they are “taken captive by them at their will,” and are hurried on in rebellion against God. But they who love the Lord are assured of protection. Their enemies can never break through the hedge, which the Almighty God hath made around them; and even when he permits them to be tempted, neither the devil nor his emissaries can exceed the limits assigned them.

V. 13—22.

It is the delight of Satan and of all his servants to do mischief: they will go to the full length of their chain; and we do not know how far they may be permitted to practise and prosper against us. We see in the example before us, to what an extent they may be successful; and, though they are seldom allowed to proceed so far, we should be thankful that they can go no farther, and should prepare for the worst. One calamity may succeed another, and each be heavier than the preceding; they may come on us from all quarters, with every circumstantial aggravation; we may be entirely impoverished and bereaved; indeed, none can say all that we may suffer; and yet our grand interest may be safe, and all things working together for our good. But, if in all our troubles we look to our gracious God, he will repress our murmurs and support us under our afflictions. However unjust the instruments of our correction may be, he is righteous in all that is laid upon us. Our all is from his gift, we have forfeited it by sin, and ought not to complain if he take any part of it from us. We have received all our possessions, since we “came naked into this world;” and we must leave every earthly comfort and advantage when we go out of it: for they were only imparted to bear the expences of our journey, and to assist our fellow-travellers. Soon will our bodies be conveyed to the earth whence they were taken, and our souls into the eternal world: and should we be spoiled of all, and bereaved of our beloved children or friends, before we depart; we shall not live long to feel our loss, and the hopes and earnest of heaven will support us under it. May we then be enabled to “choose the good part which shall never be taken from us;” to “set our affections on things above,” and to “possess our souls in patience.” May we, after the example of Job, learn, under our *lighter* trials, to repress every rebellious passion; to humble ourselves before God; to adore his wise and righteous sovereignty, and to praise him for remaining mercies and prospects; and by all our troubles, to get nearer to his mercy-seat, in communion with him. Then Satan will miss his aim, and not be able by affliction to prevail with us to sin, or “charge God foolishly.” And may the malice and power of these our enemies render more precious to us that gracious and condescending Saviour, “who came to destroy the works of the devil,” and who, in order to effect our salvation, was willing to *suffer* from that enemy, far more than Job suffered, or than we can possibly conceive.

^a See on i. 6.—^{19.} **AGAIN** ^athere was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them, to present himself before the LORD.

^b Gen. xvi. 8. ² And the LORD said unto Satan, ^b From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the LORD, and said, ^c From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

^d See on i. 1. 8.—³ And the LORD said unto Satan, ^d Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is* none like him in the earth, a perfect and ^e an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he ^f holdeth fast his integrity, although ^g thou movedst me against him, to ^h destroy him, ^h without cause.

ⁱ Esth. vii. 3, 4. ⁴ And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin; yea, ⁱ all that a man hath will he give for his life:

^j i. 11. xix. 21. 1 Chr. xxi. 17. Ps. xxxii. 3, 4. xxxviii. 2—7. xxxix. 10. ⁵ But ^j put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and ^k he will curse thee to thy face.

⁶ And the LORD said unto Satan, ^l Behold he *is* in thy hand; ^m but ^m save his life.

⁷ So ⁿ went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with ^o sore boils, ^p from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

⁸ And he ^q took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal: and ^r he sat down among the ashes.

⁹ ¶ Then said ^s his wife unto him, Dost thou still ^t retain thine integrity? ^u curse God, and die.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—3. (Notes, i. 6—19.)—*Still he holdeth fast, &c.* (3) Satan had been permitted to prove Job's sincerity, by the most overwhelming and sudden loss of his whole substance, and of all his children. But instead of *cursing*, he blessed and worshipped God. Thus he held fast his integrity, and shewed the simplicity and piety of his heart. (Note, i. 20—22.) Satan had “without cause,” moved the Lord thus to afflict his servant: for there was not the least ground for the charge of selfishness which he had lodged against him: and nothing in Job's character rendered such severe afflictions necessary, either to preserve him from ruin, or to vindicate the honour of the divine government: yet, doubtless, the Lord had wise and good reasons for his conduct; and Job, as a sinner, deserved worse than any temporal afflictions.—The word rendered *destroy*, signifies to *swallow up*; and may refer to Job's substance and family: but Satan aimed to destroy his soul also.—“But thou spakest to destroy his ‘substance in vain.’ Sept.

V. 4, 5. Satan construed Job's holy resignation into an evidence of his insensibility; as if he had been destitute of affection for his children, and regard for his servants. His life and health were preserved, and he would give any one's skin to preserve his own: he was willing therefore to compound, and part with all to save his life; so that he still kept up his religion, expecting that his other losses would be made up. Nothing could be more unreasonable and malignant than this insinuation: yet it illustrates the subtlety of that enemy, who was able plausibly to put a bad construction on Job's most unexceptionable conduct, and to impute to the basest principles, what sprang from the noblest of which the human heart is susceptible.

V. 6. ‘To prove the falsehood and malice of Satan's insinuation, God granted him permission to afflict Job in his body, in any way he chose; only he was to “save his

“life.” The word is often rendered *soul*, and probably means that he was to preserve to him the possession of his understanding; for if he were driven distracted, and in his frenzy blasphemed, it would not be a fair trial. (Notes, i. 9—12. Ps. lxxvi. 10. Luke xxii. 31—34.)

V. 7, 8. No doubt the disease, which Satan inflicted on Job, was as painful and loathsome as it could be made. (Notes, Matt. viii. 28, 29. Luke xiii. 10—17. P. O. 10—21.) Sore boils or ulcers, (one of which is often found sufficient to exercise all our patience,) covered Job from head to foot: so that his excessive torture must have been incapable of relief from change of posture; and he would be so offensive that few would come near him. Being deprived of other relief, he took a potsherd to cleanse his sores: or perhaps when any of the boils began to die away, the itching became as intolerable, as the pain before had been; so that “he took a potsherd to scrape himself “withal:” and by this improper treatment, his disease was probably increased and prolonged, and one kind of misery alternately exchanged for another. (Notes, xxx. 15 31.)—He also “sat down among ashes.” The Septuagint renders it ‘upon a dunghill,’ and he is generally represented in that situation: the original, however, only means that he assumed the posture of a mourner and a supplicant. (Marg. Ref. r.)

V. 9. When Satan deprived Job of his children, he reserved his wife to be his tempter; perhaps knowing her to be a woman of an impatient spirit, who had great influence with her husband. She had shared the former afflictions with him; yet it is probable that she was full of hard and rebellious thoughts, though she did not openly give vent to them. But when this additional calamity oppressed Job, she was driven to despair of help, and to upbraid him as preposterous in adhering to his religion, seeing God rewarded his fidelity and resignation, with nothing but one dire calamity after another.—The meaning of her advice has been much disputed, for the Hebrew word sig-

10 But he said unto her, * Thou speakest ^y as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? ^z shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? ^a In all this did not Job sin with his lips.

11 ¶ Now when Job's three ^b friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the ^c Temanite, and Bildad the ^d Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an

x Gen. iii. 17.
2 Sam. xix. 22.
Matt. xvi. 23.
y 2 Sam. vi. 20,
21 xiii. 13. xxiv.
10. 2 Chr. xvi.
9. Prov. ix. 6. 13.
Matt. xxv. 2.
z i. 1—3. 10. 21.
2 Sam. xix. 28.
Lam. iii. 38—41.
John xviii. 11.
Rom. xii. 12.
Heb. xii. 9—11.
Jam. v. 10, 11.
a i. 22. Ps. xxxix.
1. lix. 12. Matt.
xii. 34—37. Jam.
iii. 2.
b vi. 14. xvi. 20.
xix. 19. 21. xlii.
7 Prov. xviii. 17.
xviii. 24. xxviii.
10.
c vi. 19. xv. 1.
Gen xxxvi. 11. 15 Jer. xlix. 7. d viii. 1. xviii. 1. Gen. xxv. 2. 1 Chr i. 32.

nifies both to bless and to curse. (Note, i. 5.) But her counsel was evidently suggested by Satan, who spake by her, as he had spoken by the serpent to Eve, and by Eve to Adam: and it was therefore coincident with his temptation: (Notes and P. O. Gen. iii. 1—6;) and both her preface and Job's answer prove, that it was desperate, and not pious, advice which she gave. It is probable therefore, that our translation gives the true sense: and that Job's wife, being herself driven desperate, instigated him to despair and blasphemy, to "curse God," though he should die for so doing; or even in order to provoke the Lord thus to terminate his sufferings; or as an introduction to suicide, to which Satan no doubt would tempt him.—It is well known, that the Gentiles, under great calamities, frequently vented their rage by curses against the gods, whom at other times they worshipped.

V. 10. Considering Job's situation, nothing can be more admirable than this reply. He reproved his wife with firmness, yet with temper; and neither the anguish of his mind, nor the baseness of her suggestion, dictated any opprobrious language. He did not even address her, as a foolish, or wicked, woman; for he would not for one crime, however great, condemn her as a hypocrite. She spoke indeed "as one of the foolish women:" but he would hope it was the effect of violent temptation, and the exceeding distress of her heart; and that she would repent of this her heinous sin. "What?" says he, in astonishment at her desperate language, "shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" "Shall we, guilty, polluted, worthless creatures, receive so many unmerited blessings from a just and holy God; and shall we refuse to accept of the punishment of our sins, when we suffer so much less than we deserve, and are yet allowed to hope for a happy event? Rather let us receive the evil also, with patient submission, and even as a pledge of his love, and a means of our good."—Thus far he most honourably stood the trial, and appeared the brightest in the furnace of affliction: and the testimony here borne to his conduct, shews that he did not speak the language of passion, as many seem to think; but that of soberness and piety.—It is not said, what reception his reply met with: but the temptation was repulsed and the tempter baffled; and we read little more of his wife. (xix. 17.)

V. 11. These friends of Job seem to have been persons eminent for their rank in life, as well as for their wisdom and piety. The Septuagint call them kings, but no evidence can be adduced that they were so. Eliphaz is

appointed together to come ^e to mourn with him, and to ^f comfort him.

12 And when they lifted up their eyes afar off, and ^g knew him not, ^h they lifted up their voice and wept; and ⁱ they rent every one his mantle, and ^k sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven.

13 So ^l they sat down with him upon the ground ^m seven days and seven nights, and ⁿ none spake a word unto him: for they saw that his grief was very great.

e xlii. 11. Gen. xxxvii. 35. 1s. ii. 19. John xi. 19.
f Rom. xii. 15.
g 1 Cor. xii. 26.
h Heb. xlii. 3.
i xlii. 4. xvi. 2.
j xix. 14. Ruth i. 19—21. Lam. iv. 7, 8.
k Gen. xxvii. 34. Judg. ii. 1. 1 Sam. xi. 4. xxx. 4. 2 Sam. xiii. 36. Esth. iv. 1.
l i. 20.
m Neh. ix. 1. Lam. ii. 10. Ez. xxvii. 30. Rev. xviii. 19.
n Ezra ix. 3. Neh. i. 4. 1s. iii. 26. xlvii. 1.
o Gen i. 5. 8.
p iv. 2. Ps. lxxvii. 4.

supposed to have descended from Teman, the grandson of Esau, by Eliphaz, whose name this his descendant bore; (Gen. xxxvi. 11. 1 Chr. i. 36:) and Bildad, from Shuah, Abraham's son by Keturah. (Gen. xxv. 2. 1 Chr. i. 32.) Zophar also sprang from some of the families, descended from Abraham. For true religion seems to have continued a considerable time in the different branches of that favoured family, even among those who were excluded from the covenant made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.—These persons, having heard of Job's great affliction, made an appointment to go to visit him and sympathize with him. Their intentions were humane, friendly, and pious; and they had doubtless been the associates of his religion in more prosperous days: yet, by their mistake of his case, they not only greatly increased his anguish; but unintentionally concurred with Satan, in tempting him to despair, and to blasphemy as its never failing effect.

V. 12, 13. Job seems to have been at this time in the open air; when his friends, astonished at what they saw, and perceiving him so altered that they could not know him, expressed their grief by every emphatical token, and burst out into loud lamentations. It should not, however, be concluded from the language here used, that he and his friends remained together in the same place, all the time preceding their debate, and during its continuance. At proper seasons they came to Job, and sat by him as mourners; but they were so affected by a view of his misery, that they remained silent before him. It is probable, they suspected that his unprecedented calamities were judgments on him for some enormous crimes, which he had veiled under a hypocritical profession of religion: but they did not choose to augment his grief, by abruptly bringing this charge against him; yet they could not use the ordinary topicks of consolation. Perhaps they conferred among themselves on the subject, and agreed to wait and observe his conduct, and to take an opportunity of speaking, as circumstances might appear to them. Perhaps also Job suspected the cause of their silence; and his anguish on that account, might give Satan an occasion of tempting him to use the passionate language recorded in the ensuing chapter, which confirmed his friends in their harsh suspicions, and gave rise to the subsequent debate.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Holy angels are not more unwearied in serving God and in doing good, than evil spirits are in rebellion and mis-

C

CHAP. III.

Job vehemently curses the day of his birth, 1—10. He

complains, because he died not from the womb; and expatiates on the quietness of the grave, 11—19. He longs for present death, and bemoans his misery, 20—26.

chief: and when baffled in their attempts, they are pushed on, by pride and enmity, to still further disappointment and disgrace.—As Satan persists in accusing the people of God, notwithstanding the evidences which they give of piety and integrity: so will his servants upon earth persist in slandering them, in defiance of demonstration itself. From “their father” they learn to put a bad construction upon the best actions of good men, and to ascribe them to base motives. (*Notes, John viii. 37—47.*) The piety of believers is called hypocrisy; their self-denial, affectation; their liberality, ostentation; their resignation, want of natural affection; their meekness, want of spirit; and their contempt of worldly pleasure, and dislike to trifling and profane company, are ascribed to want of taste, and to a morose, unsociable disposition. But the Lord will vindicate the character of his servants; and he delights in their constancy and submission amidst trials and temptations, because they glorify the power of his grace. He will therefore, at some times, without any other peculiar cause, give their enemies permission to prove them in various ways. *They* mean to destroy them; but *he* intends to purify their hearts, to exalt their graces, and to enhance their glorious recompence: and, though the trial may be severe; yet it is the post of honour, and the event will be unspeakably happy. (*Notes, Gen. i. 20. Is. x. 7. Hab. i. 12—17. Rom. viii. 35—39. 1 Pet. iv. 12—16.*)—The insinuations of Satan and his factors are most dangerous, when most plausible, and when they are sophistical inferences from undoubted truths. Men are indeed naturally selfish, and prone to disregard all others in comparison of themselves, their own ease, interest, or indulgence. Hence it is evident we all need an inward and gracious change, that we may learn to love God and our neighbour. And as men will give all they have to save their lives; we should argue, that it is true wisdom to part with our property, or liberty, or country, nay, with our very lives, to secure the salvation of our immortal souls. But to infer, that all men are alike mercenary, and that the most excellent actions of pious persons spring from the same carnal and selfish principles, as the most atrocious crimes of the profane; manifests the malice of Satan himself, tends to render the vilest characters contented in their wickedness, subverts the cause of infidelity, and insinuates that all religion is pretence and imposture. Yet, who does not often hear such suggestions, from those who would not be thought to stand forth as the avowed advocates of impiety or atheism? To confute such accusations by stubborn facts, the Lord is pleased to give leave to malice, to exert her utmost power, in putting this matter to the trial; in the midst of afflictions and persecutions he enables the believer to retain his integrity; and, while the men of the world give up honour, conscience, and their souls, to save their lives, the servant of God renounces all, and even lays down his life, rather than disobey and dishonour his Lord. Thus, in innumerable instances, have the patient and constant sufferings of godly men confounded, rather than gratified, the malice of their slanderous persecutors; and proved to a demonstration an essential difference between those, who are *only* “born of the flesh,” and those who

“are born again of the Spirit.”—We cannot know how far the Lord, in his unsearchable counsels may see fit to suffer our enemies to prevail. They may be permitted, not only to tear from us all earthly comforts, and to fill our bodies and souls with most exquisite agony; but even to seduce our beloved friends to become our tempters, or accusers: we should therefore stand prepared for trials, and “rejoice with trembling” in every external advantage.—When we are most healthy and vigorous, we should remember to what loathsome diseases our bodies are liable; and that they may shortly become a mass of putrefaction, which could scarcely be known or endured by our most affectionate friends. Instead then of being vain of them, or bestowing pains in decorating or pampering them; let us seek for the incorruptible ornaments and unfading beauties of holiness. Let us be thankful for our present measure of health, or the attendance which we receive in sickness: and let us look through the grave, to the risen and glorified Jesus, and expect his second coming, when “he shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working, whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.”—In humiliating circumstances, a humble deportment should be observed: and when we are in great pain and sickness, deserted, insulted, destitute of necessities or convenient attendance, or labouring under a complication of every distress; we should meditate on the sufferings of Job, on his patience, on the love of God to him, and on his happy deliverance: and we should also look unto the suffering Saviour, and compare our light afflictions with his *unknown* sufferings, “lest we be wearied and faint in our minds.” (*Notes, Heb. xii. 2, 3. Jam. v. 7—11.*)

V. 9—13.

The temporal comforts reserved to us, when others are removed, often prove the sources of our severest anguish. The enemy knows how to suit his temptations to our circumstances, and to send them by those persons that possess most influence over us: we should then consider, not *who* proposes, but *what* is proposed to us. (*Note, Matt. xvi. 21—23. P. O. 21—28.*)—No temptation is so dangerous to the afflicted, as that to despair. When a man is induced to regard God as an irreconcilable enemy, his heart naturally rises in enmity, and vents this in blasphemy; every means of grace is neglected, any crime ventured on with eagerness, and suicide may probably close the horrid career. Let us then “watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation.” (*Notes, 1 Sam. xxviii. 12—25. xxxi. 3—6. Matt. xxvii. 3—5. 2 Cor. ii. 5—11.*)—We ought not to judge of the Lord’s love to us, by outward events or present feelings, but should rest our hopes upon his holy word; and consider every hard thought of God, as a “fiery dart” of the enemy, which must be “quenched” without a moment’s delay, by whatever means it may have been excited. It is also desirable, to possess our souls in meekness, and to answer even our tempters with calmness and reason, as well as with decided abhorrence of sin.—None but the foolish will *habitually* say, that there is no ground for hope in God, nor any benefit in serving him:

^a 1. 22. ii. 10. ^b AFTER this ^b opened Job his mouth, and ^c cursed his day.

^c 3. i. 11. ii. 5. 9. 2 And Job * spake, and said,

^d 3 ^d Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man-child conceived.

^e 4 Let that day be ^e darkness; let not ^f God regard it from above, neither let the light shine upon it.

^f 5 Let darkness and ^g the shadow of death ^h stain it; ⁱ let a cloud dwell upon it; ^j let the blackness of the day terrify it.

^k 6 As for that night, let darkness

seize upon it: ^l let it not be joined unto the days of the year; let it not come into the number of the months.

7 Lo, let that night be ^m solitary; let no joyful voice come therein.

8 Let them curse it that curse the day, ⁿ who are ready to raise up ^o their mourning.

9 Let the stars of the twilight thereof be dark; let it ^p look for light, but have none; neither let it see ^q the dawning of the day:

10 Because ^r it shut not up the doors of my mother's womb, nor ^s hid sorrow from mine eyes.

Or, let it not rejoice among the days

Is. xlii. 20—22. xxiv. 8. Jer. vii. 34. Rev. xviii. 22, 23.

2 Chr. xxxv. 25. Jer. ix. 17, 18. Am. v. 16. Matt. xi. 17. Mark v. 38.

Or, a Leviathan. xli. 1. 10.

xxx. 26. Jer. viii. 15. xlii. 16

Heb. the eye-lids of the morning.

xli. 18.

m x. 18, 19. Gen. xx. 18. xxix. 31.

32. 1 Sam. i. 5.

Ec. vi. 3—5. Jer. xx. 17, 18.

n vi. 2, 3. x. 1.

xxiii. 2. Ec. xi. 10

none but the ungodly can deliberately persuade us to despair, blasphemy, or self-murder. But if any one who has appeared to be a pious Christian, should *once*, under urgent distresses, drop a hint which tends to such conclusions; we should remind him, whose work he is doing, and whose language he speaks.—Did we duly remember our sins against God, we should not wonder, that amidst our many blessings, we had also heavy afflictions: we should rather say, “It is of the LORD’s mercies that we “are not consumed;” and receive the severest of them with thankfulness as well as patience: and thus they would become our richest gain.—Those friends, who crush the afflicted believer with hard censures and suspicions, are as *real tempters*, as those who persuade him to blasphemy and apostasy.—It is an indispensable duty of the Christian to visit and comfort his afflicted brethren, as he has opportunity; for it is equally useful *to him*, as *to them*: and the greatest as well as the meanest should attend upon it, without shrinking from inconveniences, or disagreeables. But alas! we often prove miserable comforters of each other, augmenting instead of alleviating one another’s grief. So that our whole dependence for consolation, must be placed on God alone.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. Here the style of the book is changed to poetry, which is adorned by bold figures, according to the genius of the East. For seven days Job’s friends had come, and sat by him, without either speaking consolation to him, or mentioning their suspicions: but doubtless their distant and reserved behaviour increased his inward anguish. At the same time, we may suppose, Satan assaulted his mind with all possible temptations, to fill him with hard thoughts of God, as if he were severe, unjust, and his enemy; to shake his confidence and hope; and, by filling him with horror and dismay, to urge him to “curse God to his face.” His permission seems to have extended to this, as well as to the torturing of his body; provided he did not kill him, or deprive him of reason.—In this, Job was an especial type of Christ, whose inward sufferings, both in the garden and on the cross, are generally allowed to have been far the most dreadful, and in a great degree occasioned by the assaults of the devil in that

hour of darkness: (Notes, Matt. xxvi. 36—39. Luke xxii. 39—53 :) and when Job’s trial was come to its extremity, we may conclude, that he was deprived of all comfortable sense of God’s favour, and filled with dread of his wrath. Unless we bring these inward trials into the account, we shall not readily comprehend the change which took place in his conduct, from the entire resignation of the preceding chapters, to the impatience which appears here, and in the subsequent part of the book. But this consideration solves the difficulty: Job’s inward conflict and anguish, added to all his outward sufferings, caused in-dwelling sin to work powerfully, and at length it burst forth in many improper expressions. He had long repressed the thoughts of his heart: but at last “he opened his mouth;” not, (as that expression generally imports,) to utter wise instructions, deliberately and gravely, but bitter execrations upon the day of his birth. For he vainly hoped to ease his mind by giving vent to the fire which burned within.—The experienced believer, however, knows that a few drops of this bitter cup are more dreadful than the sharpest afflictions, under which he is preserved from inward temptation, and favoured with the sweet sense of the love and presence of God. He will not therefore be much surprised, to find that Job proved himself “a man of like “passions” with others, and prone to folly and impatience; but will rejoice that Satan was disappointed, and could not prove him a hypocrite: for though he cursed the day of his birth, he did not curse his God. (Note, i. 9—11.)

V. 2—10. Here we find Job giving utterance to his anguish, by a variety of curses on the day of his birth, (a day generally remembered on its annual return, with tokens of joy,) because he would thus declare a vain wish that he had never been born. He would have the day and night, on which he was born, to the joy of his parents, expunged from the year; or at least to be one continued and dreary night. He would have it marked with tokens of God’s abhorrence, and by every terrifying appearance; that men might dread its approach, spend it in solitude, and rejoice when it was over; that it might even be such a season, as the Egyptians experienced during the plague of darkness. (Notes, Ex. x. 21. 23. Ps. lxxviii. 46—49.) He would have it cursed by those, who superstitiously marked certain days as ominous; and employed in wailings, by those who

o Ps. lviii. 8. Jer. xv. 10. Hos. ix. 14.

p Ps. xxii. 9, 10. lxxi. 6. cxxxix. 13—16. Is. xlv. 2.

q Gen. xxx. 3. 1. 23. Is. lxvi. 12. Ez. xvi. 4, 5.

r Ec. vi. 3—5. ix. 10.

s xxx. 23. 1 Kings ii. 10. xi. 43. Ps. xlix. 6—10. 14. lxxxix. 48. Ec. viii. 8. Is. xiv. 30—16. Ez. xxvii. 18—32.

t xv. 28. Is. v. 8. Ez. xxvi. 20.

u xxii. 25. xxvii. 16. Num. xxii. 18. 1 Kings x. 27. Is. ii. 7. Zeph. i. 18. Zech. ix. 3.

x Ps. lviii. 8. 1 Cor. xv. 8.

y xiv. 13. Ps. lv. 5—8. Matt. x. 28. Luke xii. 4. 2 Thes. i. 6, 7. 2 Pet. ii. 8.

11 ¶ Why ° died I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghost ° when I came out of the belly?

12 Why did ° the knees prevent me? or why the breasts that I should suck?

13 For now should I have lain still, and been quiet: I should have slept; then had I been at rest,

14 With ° kings and counsellors of the earth, which ° built desolate places for themselves;

15 Or with princes that had gold, who ° filled their houses with silver:

16 Or as ° an hidden untimely birth I had not been; as infants which never saw light.

17 There ° the wicked cease from

troubling; and there ° the weary be ° at rest.

18 There the prisoners rest together; ° they hear not the voice of the oppressor.

19 ° The small and great are there; ° and the servant is free from his master.

20 ° Wherefore is ° light given to him that is in misery, and life unto ° the bitter in soul?

21 ° Which ° long for death, but it cometh not; and ° dig for it more than for hid treasures:

22 Which rejoice exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave?

23 Why is light given to a man ° whose way is hid, and whom God hath ° hedged in?

* Heb. wearied in strength.
z Is. lvii. 1, 2. Heb. iv. 9. 11. Rev. xiv. 13.

a Ex. v. 6—8. 15—19. Judg. iv. 3. Is. xiv. 3, 4.

b xxx. 23. Ps. xlix. 2, 6—10. Ec. vii. 8. xli. 5, 7. Luke xvi. 22, 23. Heb. ix. 27.

c Ps. xlix. 14—20. d vi. 9. vii. 15, 16. e 16. xxxiii. 28.

f vii. 15, 16. 1 Sam. i. 10. 2 Kings iv. 27. Prov. xxxi. 6.

g Num. xi. 13. 1 Kings xix. 4. Jon. iv. 3. 8. Rev. ix. 6.

h Heb. wait. Prov. ii. 4.

i Is. xl. 27. k xii. 14. xix. 8. Ps. xxxi. 8. Lam. iii. 7, 9. Hos. ii. 6.

were engaged to mourn at funerals; or, as some interpret it, spent in horrid incantations, by those who dealt with Satan, and brought him up by their witchcrafts: for the original is literally, “those who are ready to raise up *Le-viathan.*” (Note, Is. xxvii. 1.) And all this, because the day did not prevent his being born, and, by making his mother’s womb his grave, preserve him from his present misery. (Note, Jer. xx. 14—18.)—The wildness, absurdity, and impossibility of these wishes, denote the tempest of his soul: the cruelty to his mother, whose miserable death should, as he thought, have prevented his wretched life; and the ill will to mankind to whom he would bequeath such a dreadful day, may properly be noticed: but such exclamations, being the language of passion, cannot be measured by the standard of reason. They imply, however, an ungrateful contempt of God’s gifts, and rebellion against his will; and are utterly unbecoming a sinner under a dispensation of mercy, or a believer in a state of grace. But during inward darkness and temptation, Satan so stirs up the corruption of the heart, that the plainest truths and promises are forgotten; former and present mercies are disregarded; future prospects are clouded; and the soul verges to despondency and blasphemy. Yet it is held back by the counteracting efficacy of divine grace, which subsists and operates, though it does not decidedly prevail; and thus the more dreadful effects are prevented, and in time the soul recovers its composure. (Note, Gal. v. 16—18.)—Doubtless, Job was afterwards heartily ashamed of this language: but what must his judgment of it be now, in the full enjoyment of unchangeable felicity! Does he now curse the day of his birth? Does he now wish that he had never been born? His own reproof of his wife belonged also to himself, though not in the same degree: for on this occasion he spake, as “one of the foolish men,” (Note, ii. 10;) and thus he confirmed his friends in their unfavourable opinion of him.

V. 11—19. When Job had exhausted his rhetoric in cursing the day of his birth, he next enquired, why he did not die as soon as he was born: and thus he not only murmured against God for sparing his life; but expostulated with those who were present at his birth, as if now before

him, for their tender attention to him in that helpless state! For had none nursed and suckled him, when a new-born infant, he should not have lived to endure his present sufferings. The event of his afflictions, to himself, and to the church, through successive ages, fully resolves his questions, and shews for what important purposes he was preserved. But under this temptation, he thought of nothing but relief from anguish and distress: he knew that in the grave no pain was felt, and, for the moment, he scarcely looked any further; though in more lucid intervals, he expressed a faith and hope concerning the eternal world. (Notes, xiv. 7—12. xix. 23—27.) His present misery made him, at the time, think insensibility most desirable: and he amused himself with imagining, that if he had died from the womb, he should have lain as quiet in the grave, as the most mighty monarchs, conquerors, or politicians; or as the most wealthy princes, who retained nothing of their acquisitions but a desolate tomb, and were not a whit superior to a still-born infant: he considered labourers, prisoners, and slaves, as there rescued from their oppressors, free as their masters, and at rest from their labour and pain. His words indeed contain important truths: but if exemption from present suffering were all that can be expected, there would be little reason to look forward to death with comfort, or to want deliverance from the sorrows of this present life.

Built desolate places, &c. (14) Many explain this of the sepulchres, which princes and nobles often built for themselves. (Notes, Is. xxii. 16. Matt. xxvii. 57—61.)

V. 20—23. Finding the vanity of his impossible wishes, Job next complained that he was still forced to live, though weary of life: and he enquired the reason, why light, that is, life, was given to the miserable. He did not mention the name of God, perhaps out of reverence to him, for his better judgment checked the vehemence of his passion; but he evidently reflected upon him as unkind, in not at once terminating his sufferings by death. He dared not rush uncalled into the presence of his Judge, by an act of desperate rebellion and murder: (Notes, ii. 9, 10;) but he should exceedingly rejoice, if the Lord would cut him off, and be more glad of a grave than of hid treasures; and he

l vii. 19. Ps. lxxx.
5. cii. 9.
* Heb. *my meat*.
m Ps. xxii. 1, 2.
xxxii. 3. xxxviii.
8. ls. lix.
Lam. iii. 8.
† Heb. *I feared a
fear and it came
upon me*.
n i. 5. xxxi. 23.

24 For ^lmy sighing cometh before
* I eat, and ^mmy roarings are poured
out like the waters.

25 For [†]the thing which I greatly
feared is come upon me, and ⁿthat

which I was afraid of is come unto
me.

26 ~~I was not in safety, neither had I~~
rest, neither was I quiet; ^o yet trouble ^{o xxxviii. 9. Ps. cxliiii}
came. 11.

supposed that many others were of the same judgment. (Note, vi. 8—13.) He could not conceive, that any good end could be answered by the continuance of his life: for every thing in Providence, and in the frame of his mind, was so dark and dismal, that he was like a man who had lost his way, or who was so inclosed by powerful enemies on every side, that he had no prospect of escape.—The tempter seems to have kept the thought of the eternal world from his mind: but the event fully shewed, why the Lord continued his life, both for his own good, and for that of millions.

V. 24—26. By way of apology for his vehement complaints, Job at length mentioned the excess of his sufferings. Nothing but sighs and groans occupied his time: his very food, which prolonged his miserable life, was mingled with groans, and even roarings; (Notes, Ps. xxii. 1. xxxii. 3—5;) and they flowed forth incessantly, like waters from a fountain. He was, however, conscious, that in prosperity he had not indulged carnal security; he had feared a change, and watched against those sins, in himself and his family, which might provoke the divine displeasure: (Note, i. 5:) yet his solicitude had not prevented his calamities, which equalled the worst of his fears.—His former expectation of trials, and preparation for them, should have been a comfort to him under his sufferings: but, through the power of Satan and the prevalence of corruption, this seemed an aggravation of his misery. (Note, xxvii. 7—10.)

I was not, &c. (26) This is rendered by some interrogatively; “Was I not in safety? had I not rest? was I not quiet? yet trouble came.”—This is very pathetick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

There is an essential difference between the true believer, and every hypocrite; and the former will not finally apostatize or despair: yet under urgent troubles and temptations, the evil of the heart frequently bursts forth in very culpable words and actions. None but the Saviour ever endured the extremity of anguish and temptation, without any abatement of his love, any mixture of sin, or any indications of impatience.—The pious reader will doubtless recollect seasons when, under afflictions comparatively light, his heart has risen into the same kind of peevishness, ingratitude, rebellion, and despondency, which Job discovered. Many will with shame remember, that they have conceived and uttered rash and foolish wishes not wholly dissimilar to those of Job: nay, some will be conscious, that half the burden which was laid on Job would have extorted from them still more desperate complaints; and these reflections should lay us low in humiliation before God. We should also take shame to ourselves, when we consider the folly and impossibility of those things, for which we have often wished. In our sober moments we should meditate on the consequences

which would have resulted, had our vain and impatient wishes been granted, to ourselves, our relatives, and our neighbours; and we shall often find that they were unnatural and cruel, as well as impious, and destructive to our own happiness. Indeed, the habit of wishing is altogether foolish and sinful. Those wishes which respect the past, can only express our impatience: and, if the object of our desires at the present, or for the future, be lawful, we should make it the subject of our prayers; if not, we should silence ourselves and the tempter, by saying, “It is written, Thou shalt not covet.”—When our passions overpower reason, the soul becomes as a ship in a violent storm, without compass, rudder, or pilot; and, if it be possible, we ought to cast anchor till the storm subsides. Profound silence, interrupted only by ejaculations, should be observed: as we can in such a case do no good, but must get harm, by either speaking or acting; though we shall naturally be very earnest in both.—Indeed, we are born in sin, and to sorrow; and, if left to ourselves and the tendency of our own corruptions, without remedy or mercy, it “had been good for us, if we had not been born:” yet even in that case it would be diabolical rage and enmity, to charge our guilt and misery upon God, from whom “every good and perfect gift,” and nothing else, can proceed. But, blessed be his name! even “the earth is full of his goodness.” This present life may be made very tolerable, if we accommodate ourselves to our circumstances, and attend to our duty: and we are under a dispensation of mercy, and may hope for the favour of God and eternal felicity, whatever our former lives have been, if now willing to accept of Jesus Christ, as our Saviour from wrath and from sin. By “giving diligence to make “our calling and election sure,” we may obtain good evidence that we are “born of God:” and his children are heirs of everlasting glory. In that case we certainly can have no cause to “curse the day of our birth;” and if a thought of that kind intrude, we should treat it as a temptation of the enemy, and reject it immediately.—But what a day, or rather what an *eternal night*, will that be which awaits impenitent sinners! Condemned to outer darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth; banished for ever from the favour and presence of God; surrounded with horror and despair; employed in curses and imprecations; wearied of existence, and in vain longing for annihilation; and associated with the devil and his angels! That day “God will not regard from above,” no light will shine upon it for ever. Who then can help feeling the propriety, yea the necessity, of praying, “From this destruction, good Lord, deliver us!” May all, who read these remarks, take warning “to flee from the wrath to “come, and lay hold for refuge on the hope set before “us” in the gospel!

V. 11—26.

If, in this accepted time and day of salvation, we in good earnest seek and serve God, we may regard the

CHAP. IV.

Eliphaz reproves Job for impatience, and want of confidence in God, 1—6. He states that divine judgments come not on the righteous, but on the wicked, 7—11. He relates his vision, confirming this doctrine, 12—21.

a ii. 11, xv. 1 xxii.

1. xlii. 9.

b iii. 1, 2. vi. 1.

viii. 1.

* Heb. a word.

c 2 Cor. ii. 4—6.

vii. 8—10.

† Heb. refrain

from words.

xxxii. 18—20.

Jer. vi. 11. xx. 9.

Acts iv. 20.

d Gen. xviii. 19.

Prov. x. 21. xv.

7. xvi. 21. Is. 1.

4. Eph. iv. 29.

Col. iv. 6.

THEN ^a Eliphaz the Temanite ^b answered and said,

2 If we assay ^{*} to commune with thee, ^c wilt thou be grieved? but who can [†] withhold himself from speaking?

3 Behold, ^d thou hast instructed

formation of our bodies, the gift of our immortal souls, the care taken of us in infancy and childhood, and all the Lord's protection of us and long-suffering towards us ever since, as being in order to our everlasting happiness. Then indeed we may well cease to envy kings or princes, and all the wise and wealthy of the world; who will soon be levelled in the grave, with the infant which died from the womb, but who will have an awful account to render of their stewardship, before the tribunal of God. (*Notes and P. O. Luke xvi. 1—13.*) We should indeed habituate ourselves to view the grave without terror; for we shall there feel no pain or uneasiness, and be out of the reach of every oppressor and persecutor. But "there remaineth a" better "rest for the people of God;" a rest from sin, temptation, and conflict, and from sorrows and labours, in the immediate presence and ineffable enjoyment of God. Thence both wicked men and evil spirits will be excluded, and cease from troubling us for ever; "there the weary" will indeed "be at rest," and the poor slave and prisoner enjoy "the glorious liberty of the children of God." Nay, as far as we trust and obey the Lord Jesus, we here find rest to our souls; though "in the world we have tribulation." It is indeed far "better to depart, and to be" "with him;" but we must not undervalue life, though spent in sufferings; seeing they will work for our good at last, and some way or other subserve his glory and the good of our brethren. Let us then learn to keep the eternal world more constantly in view; that we may not be much disconcerted about temporal things.—And should any take up these pages, who are longing for death, and tempted to suicide; let them compare their present sufferings, *not with the quiet of the grave*, but with the scriptural declarations of *the state of the damned*; which must be the lot of all, who die in rebellion and despair, and by an act of deliberate murder. (*Note, Ex. xx. 13, conclusion.*) Let them remember that this desperation is the suggestion of the "old liar" and "murderer from the beginning;" it is the very object at which he aimed, in respect of Job, by all his temptations. Let them stop their ears to his suggestions, and hearken to the Saviour's inviting voice: let them come to him with their burdens and sorrows; and they shall find rest to their souls, and learn to bless God for temporal life as the means of eternal salvation.—Finally, in prosperity let us all watch against carnal security: and under trials let us pray for patience; looking to him, "who" "suffered being tempted, that he might be able to succour" "them that are tempted." Then, though for a season our way seem stopt, and our hope lost; we shall ere long be

many, and ^e thou hast strengthened the weak hands.

4 Thy words have ^f upholden him that was falling, and thou hast strengthened the ^g feeble knees.

5 But now ^h it is come upon thee, and ⁱ thou faintest; ^j it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled.

6 Is not *this* ^k thy fear, ^l thy confidence, ^m thy hope, and ⁿ the uprightness of thy ways?

1 xvii. 15. 1 Pet. i. 13. 17.

xxxii. 1, &c.

m i. 8. xvi. 17. xxiii. 11, 12. xxvii. 5, 6. xxix. 12—17

e xvi. 5. Deut. iii. 28. Ezra vi. 22. Ez. xiii. 22. Luke

xxii. 32. 43.

f Ps. cxlv. 14. Prov

xii. 18. xvi. 23.

24. 2 Cor. ii. 7.

vii. 6. 1 Thes. v.

14.

† Heb. bowing

knees. Is. xxxv

3. 4. Dan. v. 6.

Heb. xii. 12.

g iii. 25, 26

h Prov. xxiv. 10.

2 Cor. iv. 1. 16.

Heb. xii. 3. 5.

i i. 11. ii. 5. xix.

21.

j i. 1. 9. 10. 2 Kings

xx. 3.

k xiii. 15. Prov

iii. 26. xiv. 26.

enabled to declare from our own experience, that "they" "who wait for the LORD shall never be ashamed."

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. It is probable, that Job's friends had previously conferred upon his case; and suspected from his extraordinary sufferings and impatient wishes, that he was a wicked man: they therefore thought it incumbent upon them to charge this home on his conscience, in order to induce him to repentance; and Eliphaz, who seems to have been the senior of them, undertook to open the matter to him. (*Note, ii. 12, 13.*)—Thus, when Satan failed of proving his charge against Job, he suggested to his friends this suspicion of his hypocrisy, that they might grieve and tempt him by it. For the argument between Job and his friends, was precisely on the same point, which, at Satan's instigation, was to be decided by his behaviour under affliction; namely, whether he was a truly pious man, or a hypocrite. Satan undertook to prove him a hypocrite by afflicting him; and his friends concluded him one, because he was afflicted, and shewed impatience under his extreme sufferings. This we must keep continually in mind, if we would clearly understand the ensuing debate. (*Notes, Luke xiii. 1—5.*)

V. 2. Eliphaz introduced his discourse with apparent modesty; yet the abrupt manner, in which he addressed Job, shewed that he was about to censure and reprove him. He purposed to converse with Job on the subject of his extraordinary sufferings, and his despondency under them; but he was afraid he would be grieved at his words. The case, however, was urgent: for who, in such circumstances, "could refrain from words?" (*Marg.*) This intimated, that he thought Job extremely culpable, nay, in danger of final destruction.

V. 3—6. It seems that Job had possessed a singular talent of giving seasonable counsel and encouragement, as circumstances required. He knew how, by animating exhortations, to strengthen and comfort the desponding, that with renewed alacrity they might resume their work. He was also capable of giving suitable cautions to those, who were ready to fall into sin, and to excite them to resist the temptation. And he had assiduously improved his talent; thus becoming a blessing to many. (*Notes, xxix. 7—17. Prov. x. 20, 21. xv. 4. 7. 23. xxv. 11, 12. Is. xxxv. 3, 4.*) This Eliphaz allowed: and, along with due commendation, he might very properly have given Job a plain, but gentle reproof, for his present impatience, and for seeming to abandon all hope. But his application of it was too

n ix. 22, 23. Ps.
xxxvii. 25. Ec.
vii. 15. ix. 1, 2.
Acts xxviii. 4.
2 Pet. ii. 9.
o Ps. vii. 14—16.
Prov. xxii. 8.
Jer. iv. 18. Hos.
viii. 7. x. 12, 13.
2 Cor. ix. 6.
Gal. vi. 7, 8.
p Ex. xv. 8. 10.
2 Kings xix. 7.
Ps. xviii. 15.
* That is, by his
anger. xv. 30.
Is. xi. 4. xxx.
33. 2 Thes. ii. 8.
Rev. ii. 16.
q xxix. 17. Ps. iii.
7. lvii. 4. lviii. 6.
Prov. xxx. 14.
r xxxviii. 39. Gen.
xlix. 9. Num.
xxiii. 24. xxiv. 9.
Ps. vii. 2. Jer. iv.
7. Hos. xi. 10.
2 Tim. iv. 17.
s Ps. xxxiv. 10.
t i. 19. viii. 3, 4.
xxvii. 14, 15.

7 Remember, I pray thee, "who ever perished, being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off?

8 Even as I have seen °they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.

9 By p the blast of God they perish, and * by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.

10 The roaring of the lion, and the voice of the fierce lion, and °the teeth of the young lions are broken.

11 The 'old lion 'perisheth for lack of prey, and 'the stout lion's whelps are scattered abroad.

12 ¶ Now " a thing was † secretly brought to me, and mine ear received x a little thereof.

13 In 7 thoughts from the visions of the night, when 2 deep sleep falleth on men,

14 ° Fear † came upon me, and trembling, which made 'all my bones to shake.

15 Then b a spirit passed before my face: °the hair of my flesh stood up:

16 It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes; †there was silence, and I heard a voice, saying,

u Ps. lxii. 11.
† Heb. by stealth.
x 1 Cor. xiii. 12.
y xxxiii. 14—16.
Gen. xx. 3.
xxviii. 12. xxxi.
24. xlv. 2. Num.
xii. 6. xxii. 19.
20. Dan. ii. 19.
28, 29. iv. 5.
z Gen. ii. 21. xv.
12. Dan. viii. 18.
x. 9.
a vii. 14. Ps. cxix.
120. Is. vi. 5.
Dan. x. 11. Hab.
iii. 16. Luke i.
12, 29. Rev. i. 17.
† Heb. met me.
‡ Heb. the multi-
tude of. xxxiii.
19.
b Ps. civ. 4. Matt.
xiv. 26. Luke
xxiv. 37—39.
Heb. i. 7. 14.
c Is. xlii. 8. xxi.
3, 4. Dan. v. 6.
¶ Or, I heard a
still voice. 1 Kings
xix. 12.

harsh; and more suited to dishearten, and even exasperate, one in Job's situation, than to convince and humble him. He certainly made much too light of Job's afflictions, as if not much greater than those, under which he had comforted others. "It is come upon thee." "It toucheth thee." He seems to have also spoken too strongly of Job's impatience. He indeed bitterly complained, and uttered many vain and rebellious wishes: but he did not faint; for then he would have yielded to Satan's temptation, and followed the counsel of his wife. (Notes, ii. 9, 10.) And in the question Eliphaz proposes: "Is not this thy fear, &c?" he appears to have expressed himself in a manner suited to give Job the idea, that he considered his former reputation for piety, confidence in God, and integrity of life, as unmerited: seeing he had now cast off all reverence of God, and hope in his mercy; and had broken out into the language of despair and rebellion. (Notes, Prov. xxiv. 10. Rom. ii. 17—24. Heb. xii. 2—8.)—Some indeed think, that Eliphaz only meant to expostulate with him on the inconsistency of his conduct; and to exhort him to reduce to practice the counsel, which he had given others; and in this emergency to support the character that he had before acquired, but was now in danger of forfeiting: but the language employed, and the subsequent speeches of him and his friends, by no means favour this interpretation.

V. 7—11. Most expositors suppose, that Eliphaz intended, in this passage, to bring a direct charge of hypocrisy and iniquity against Job; which he had only insinuated in the preceding verses. 'Eliphaz, incensed at the complaint of Job, instead of condoling with him, and pitying the miseries, which had put him into this agony, and applying fit lenitives to his anguish; bluntly rebukes him for not following the good advice he had given to others in their adversity: and tells him he had reason to suspect his piety, because the innocent were not wont to suffer such things; but only wicked oppressors, whom, though never so mighty, God had always humbled.' Bp. Patrick.—'Is not this thy storming and fretting at the hand of God a plain argument, that all thy religion, or pretended fear of God, was only upon a confidence that he would still bless and prosper thee?—I have seen and observed that men speed according to their actions, and reap the fruit of their evil doings, in evil sufferings.' Bp.

Hall. Some however think, that he did not mean to decide on his character, though his language was harsh, and implied strong suspicions; but to shew him, that, if he was not a wicked man, he had no occasion to despond, as the innocent and righteous were never left to perish; and indeed the counsel he afterwards gives, favours this interpretation. (v. 8. 17, 18.)—By "innocent," and "righteous," Eliphaz meant believers, godly men, in opposition to the profane or hypocritical. But his questions seem to imply that no such persons ever were cut off by sudden judgments, so as to perish even in this world: and thus the restoration of Job to health and prosperity, was made the test of his sincerity, or hypocrisy! Doubtless, the righteous never finally and eternally perish: but righteous Abel had been slain by wicked Cain, and many godly men had been greatly afflicted in this world: so that his general rule admitted of numerous exceptions. (Notes, ix. 22—24. xxiv. 1—12. xxvii. 13—23. Gen. iv. 6—9. Ps. lxxiii. 2—14. Ec. ix. 1—3. Jer. xii. 1—4. Ez. xxi. 2—5.)—It is indeed often seen "that they who plow iniquity and sow wickedness," (that is, who labour to be rich and great by fraud, oppression, and iniquity,) meet with a recompence in this world: the breath, or anger, of the Lord blasting all their prosperity, and consuming all their substance. And though they have been strong, courageous, and fierce as lions; yet they have been strangely defeated of their aim, and brought to ruin, with their posterity, whom they sought to exalt by cruelty and rapine. But it is not always so; nor are they the only persons who meet with grievous calamities in this life: and therefore it was uncandid to insinuate, without any proof, (as Eliphaz evidently did, though in figurative language,) that Job got his wealth by wickedness; and was spoiled of it, and bereaved of his children, by the just judgment of God upon him. (Notes, viii. 4—7. xviii. 5—21. Ez. xix. 2—9. xxii. 27, 28.)

V. 12—16. Before there was any written word of God, believers received their knowledge in divine things, either by tradition, or immediate revelation: and there is reason to conclude, that when necessary, they were generally directed in the latter way, either personally, or by their brethren. (Marg. Ref.—Note, xxxiii. 14—18.) Accordingly Eliphaz, perhaps while meditating on the case of Job, had a remarkable vision, which he supposed to be a

^d viii. 3. i. c. 2. ^{xxxv.} 2. xl. 8. ^{Gen.} xviii. 25. ^{Ps.} cxliii. 2. cxlv. 17. ^{Ec.} vii. 20. ^{Jer.} xiii. 1. ^{Rom.} i. 5. iii. 4-7. ^{κ.} 20. xi. 33. ^e ix. 30. 31. xiv. 4. xv. 14. xxv. 4. ^{Jer.} xvii. 9. ^{Mark} vii. 20—23. ^{Rev.} iv. 8. ^f xv. 15. 16. xxv. 5. 6. ^{Ps.} ciii. 20. 21. ^{civ.} 4. ^{Is.} vi. 8. ^g ^{Or, nor in his angels in whom he put light.} 2 Pet. ii. 4. ^{Jude} 6. ^g x. 9. xiii. 12. xxxiii. 6. ^{Gen.} ii. 7. iii. 19. xviii. 27. ^{Ec.} xii. 7. ^{2 Cor.} v. 1.

17 ^d Shall mortal man be more just than God? ^e shall a man be more pure than his Maker?

18 Behold, ^f he put no trust in his servants; ^{*} and his angels he charged with folly:

19 How much less ⁱⁿ them that dwell in houses of clay, whose founda-

tion ^{is} in the dust, ^{which} are ^h crushed before the moth!

20 They are [†] destroyed [†] from morning to evening: ^k they perish for ever [†] without any regarding ^{it}.

21 Doth not their ^m excellency, ^{which} is in them, go away? they ⁿ die, even without wisdom.

^m Ps. xxxix. 5. 11. xlix. 14. ^{Is.} xiv. 16. ^{Luke} xvi. 22, 23. ^{Jam.} i. 11. ^{Ps.} xlix. 20. ^{Luke} xii. 20.

^h xiii. 22. xiv. 2. ^{Ps.} xxxix. 5. ^{xc.} 5-7. ^{ciii.} 15, 16. ^{cxlvi.} 4. [†] Pet. i. 24. [†] Heb. *beaten in pieces.* ^{2 Chr.} xv. 6. ^{margin.} ⁱ Is. xxxviii. 12, 13. ^k xiv. 14. xvi. 22. ^{Ps.} xxxix. 15. ^{xcii.} 7. ^{xviii.} 17. ^{xx.} 7. ^{2 Chr.} xxi. 20. ^{Ps.} xxxvii. 36. ^{Prov.} x. 7. ⁿ xxxvi. 12.

divine confirmation of his doctrine: for the instruction was brought to him unexpectedly, and seemed apposite to the present case, as far as he was enabled to receive it.—When musing in retirement on various subjects, or on former visions with which he had been favoured, at a time when others were asleep; he was suddenly seized with excessive consternation and amazement at what he saw and heard; for a spirit, or angel, passing before him, stood still in his presence. He could not indeed describe what he had seen; but he remembered the words which were distinctly uttered, amidst the silence of the night.—It is observable that the very idea of appearances, from the world of spirits, is terrifying to the heart of fallen man: sin has broken off our original communication with it; and we instinctively dread evil from that quarter.

V. 17—21. These verses seem to contain the precise words of the spirit, who appeared to Eliphaz.—If God should punish those who did not deserve it, the *innocent* sufferer would be more *just* than his Judge, and man would be more pure, or free from blame, than his Maker. Some render it, “just before God:” but that idea is differently expressed in the original. (ix. 2. xxv. 4. Heb.—*Note*, xxxii. 2—5.)—And, as this supposition would be blasphemy, it must be allowed, even when we cannot perceive it, that every one deserves all that he does or shall suffer, on earth or in hell. It is therefore evidently very wrong to complain under afflictions, as if we were unjustly dealt with; or to justify our whole conduct before God, who has condemned us as sinners: and on this ground Eliphaz might fairly have reproved Job’s impatience; and exhorted him to submit to the justice of God, and to hope in his mercy, under his sufferings. Again, he was shewn, that God put no trust in any of his servants, but even “charged his angels “with folly.” Though glorious and holy creatures, they are fallible and mutable, except as upheld and confirmed by the Lord. They execute his wise and righteous counsels; but would soon shew their want of wisdom, if trusted to manage any part of the government of the world, according to their own mind. Nay, compared with the infinite knowledge and wisdom of God, they are chargeable with ignorance, being utterly unable to comprehend the vast designs of the great Creator and Lord of the universe; except as he pleases to unfold them. How much less then may man be trusted! How much more may he be charged with ignorance and folly! He dwells imprisoned in a body of clay, chained to the earth from whence it was taken, and to which it must soon return; as a poor cottage which is mouldering to the mean materials of which it is built, and about to mingle with the dust on which it has its foundation. (*Note*, 2 Cor. v. 1—4.) The feebleness of mankind should also be considered: they may be crushed as

easily as a moth, or destroyed by the meanest insect: the destruction of the species is perpetual; men perish from the earth for ever, without any one greatly noticing so common an event. Then all their excellency vanishes: and they die without having had time to make much observation, or acquire extensive knowledge, compared with that of other intelligent beings; and very commonly without being made “wise unto salvation.” And shall such creatures presume to fathom the mysteries of Providence, to arraign the appointments of God, to charge him with injustice, or to venture an opinion on subjects, of which they can know little or nothing!—The vision was full of instruction; but the use Eliphaz seemed disposed to make of it was contrary to its leading design. Instead of condemning Job because of his sufferings; he should have inferred, that he and his friends were incompetent to decide upon the case, or to understand the deep designs of God in this mysterious dispensation.

He put no trust, &c. (18) ‘If not in his servants he will confide, and *not even* to his angels he will ascribe praise: ‘how much less, &c.’ *Ev. Mag.* Dec. 1809, p. 498. As the word rendered *folly*, differently pointed, is generally translated *praise*, perhaps this might be supported.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

We ought not needlessly to grieve the afflicted; yet, if we wisely love them, we cannot refrain from speaking those things, which we judge conducive to the good of their souls. In attempting this, however, we should aim to unite tenderness with faithfulness.—Just commendations excellently introduce needful reproofs, by preparing the mind to receive them as the result of love, and as forming a striking contrast between different parts of a man’s behaviour. But if the application is overcharged; or, if that is imputed to impiety, which springs from infirmity; it will lose its effect. It requires therefore much heavenly wisdom, to instruct, encourage, and reprove those, who are tempted and perplexed, who have fallen into sins or sufferings, and who are ready to faint, or turn aside, or yield to despondency, through disappointments and discouraging trials. Those who possess gifts suited to this work, should be diligent in it, as they have opportunity, whatever be their circumstances or employments: and the communication from the treasure of wisdom and knowledge, which God has committed to some, for the instruction and consolation of many, is at least as useful and acceptable, as the wealth that is bestowed in providing for the destitute. Yet it is more easy to counsel than to practise: and we all find, that our own arguments, encouragements, and exhortations to others, are sometimes insufficient to calm and

CHAP. V.

Elipha: proceeds to shew the close connexion between wickedness and misery, and that man is born to

trouble, 1—7. He recommends seeking to God in affliction, by declaring his power and wonderful works, 8—16. He speaks of the benefit of correction; and the privileges of those who duly improve it, 17—27.

support our own souls, in seasons of darkness and distress. It behoves us therefore to watch and pray, that we may not by our conduct defeat the effect of our instructions, and expose ourselves and the truths of God to reproach and contempt. For men will expect from us in proportion to our profession; and make fewer allowances for those who have instructed many, than for others.—Even pious friends will not always enter into our feelings, under distresses and temptations; but will count that *a touch*, which we feel as a *mortal wound*: and our infirmities may give occasion to those of our brethren, whom we most love, to suspect and censure us as hypocrites. This is one of the sharpest trials that can befall a true believer; but we should prepare to meet it. The best are fallible, and often defective in judgment and tenderness; Satan can easily poison their minds with suspicions, and the Lord may permit it for our humiliation. When this is the case, all apparent good in a man's conduct will be ascribed to corrupt motives; and all that is evil, aggravated: an irreverent expression, dictated by sudden passion, will be deemed a deliberate "casting off the fear of God;" an angry word will be termed revenge or hatred; a desponding wish will be construed into rebellion and despair; and the apparent uprightness, and professed hope in God, maintained for years, will be at once considered as presumption, selfishness, or hypocrisy. We should surely be very cautious not to concur with Satan, in thus "accusing our brethren," and urging them to renounce their confidence in God. But if it be our trial to be thus suspected and condemned, we need not wonder: better men than we have been so treated; and if we are conscious of sincerity in the midst of our infirmities, the Lord will at length plead our cause, and "make our righteousness as the noon-day." (*Notes*, xxiii. 8—12. *Ps.* xxxvii. 5—8.)—Our most dangerous mistakes are occasioned by our deducing false inferences from undeniable truth. It is certain that none ever perished being innocent; that no godly person was ever finally miserable, no impenitent sinner finally happy; that according as a man sows, so shall he reap; (*Note*, *Gal.* vi. 6—10;) and that many tyrants and oppressors, and their posterity, have been wonderfully destroyed. But it is equally true that many righteous men are heavily afflicted through life, and are suddenly cut off, and taken to heaven: while numbers of the wicked live long and prosper, die in outward peace, and leave their riches to their children; being "themselves reserved to the day of judgment to be punished." It is therefore as absurd to judge of a man's character by his outward circumstances; as to decide upon it from one single action, which is contrary to the general tenour of his life.

V. 12—21.

The written word of God speaks to us without those terrifying circumstances, which would attend an immediate communication with the world of spirits, and which even faith and communion with God would not enable us entirely to overcome: and we can review it from day to day, that we may fully receive the instruction contained in it. We may therefore be thankful for this method of

knowing the will of God; nor should we regret, that we may not expect immediate revelation, and do not witness those wonders which holy men of old did. Yet the knowledge of divine truth is of such vast importance, that no terror could counterbalance the advantage of it; and they who lay aside their Bibles, or forsake the preaching of the gospel, because these make them tremble at the prospect of their guilt and danger, seem to think it better to *feel*, than to *fear*, the wrath of God.—Retirement is favourable to our intercourse with heaven: and though we must now judge of every thing by the scriptures; yet if a dream suggest a profitable hint, we should receive it with gratitude. Assuredly, were our hearts more holy, both our waking and sleeping thoughts would be more pure and heavenly.—Revelation from God is not intended to satisfy curiosity, but to excite our attention to those truths and duties, which before we knew not, or neglected. Among other important lessons we are peculiarly concerned to understand the scriptural declarations of the infinite majesty, wisdom, justice, and goodness of God; of the comparative ignorance, meanness, and weakness of the most exalted creatures; and of the guilt, pollution, folly, and frailty of fallen man; the shortness of his continuance here, and the future consequences of his conduct in this world. These truths, if well digested, will cause us to adore with profound reverence the glorious Lord of all, and to abase ourselves in the dust before him. We shall then learn to cease from all dependence on our own wisdom, strength, and righteousness, and become calm and resigned under afflictions: our objections and excuses will be silenced, and we shall be teachable and simple as little children; being disposed gladly to trust the Lord's mercy, to accept of his salvation, to yield ourselves to his will, to take the place and do the work assigned us, to prepare for death and judgment; and not to meddle with those deep matters, which are out of our reach, and beyond our scanty comprehension. But for want of this knowledge, how daringly do men impeach the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God! How do they object, murmur, justify themselves, quarrel with Providence, and reject, or explain away, the truths and precepts of revelation; as if they were more wise, righteous, and holy than their Maker! Yet it would be presumption in an arch-angel, to deem himself competent to decide on the propriety of God's unfathomable counsels, or to comprehend his vast designs; much more to find fault with his dispensations, and to dictate what it is right for him to do. "He putteth no trust in his angels," and, instead of making them his counsellors, or submitting his conduct to their judgment, he charges them with folly. How awful then is the pride and presumption of man! How great the patience of God!—But let us leave the infidel and the proud reasoner to dispute against their Maker, and the men of the world to heap up their treasures; and to obtain those supposed excellences, and climb those eminences, from which death will soon hurry them. They with these perish for ever, and die without wisdom, while scarcely and duly regard it. And let us consider, what we are, where we are, and whither we are going; and let us act accordingly;

CALL now, if there be any that will answer thee; ^a and to which of ^b the saints wilt thou ^c turn?

2 For ^c wrath killeth ^d the foolish man, ^e and ^f envy slayeth the ^g silly one.

3 I have seen the foolish ^h taking root: but suddenly I ⁱ cursed his habitation.

4 His ^j children are far from safety, and ^k they are crushed in the gate, neither is there any to deliver them.

5 Whose ^l harvest the hungry eateth up, and taketh it even out of ^m the thorns, and ⁿ the robber ^o swalloweth up their substance.

6 Although ^p affliction cometh not

forth of the dust, neither ^q doth trouble ^r spring out of the ground;

7 Yet ^s man is born unto ^t trouble, as ^u the sparks fly upward.

8 I would ^v seek unto God, and ^w unto God would I commit my cause:

9 Which ^x doeth great things and ^y unsearchable; ^z marvellous things ^{aa} without number:

10 Who ^{ab} giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the ^{ac} fields:

11 To ^{ad} set up on high those that be low; that ^{ae} those which mourn may be ^{af} exalted to safety.

xxxvii. 5. Ps. lxxii. 18. lxxxvi. 10. cxlv. 3. Rom. xi. 33
search. Is. xl. 28. Eph. iii. 8. y xxvi. 5—14. * Heb. and there is no
Ps. xl. 5. cxxxix. 18. z xxviii. 26. Ps. lxx. 9—11. cxlvii. 8. Jer. v. 24. x. 13.
xiv. 22. li. 16. Am. iv. 7. Acts xiv. 17. † Heb. out places. xxxviii. 26—28.
a 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. Ps. xci. 14. cvii. 41. cxiii. 7, 8. Ez. xvii. 24. Luke i. 52, 53.
b Luke vi. 21. Jam. i. 9. iv. 6—10. 1 Pet. v. 10. c Deut. xxxiii. 27—29
1 Pet. i. 3—5.

that when our houses of clay fall into the dust, our souls, having obtained true wisdom in the knowledge and experience of God's salvation, and the excellency of holiness, may ascend to the world of angels and "the spirits of just men made perfect:" and there at the fountain-head, satisfy without danger our appetite for knowledge, by contemplating the works and perfections of God, with unceasing delight, and with further discoveries of his glory, through the countless ages of eternity.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1. *Call now, &c.*] Eliphaz here challenges Job to refute his arguments, or the doctrine of his vision, by the example or opinion of any of the saints and servants of God. Let him call forth his evidence, who might answer for him in this cause; but to what saint, who ever lived on earth, would he appeal? Had any of them been so visited by divine judgments, or behaved so rebelliously under affliction?—'Nay, if an angel should appear to thee, (says Eliphaz,) as one did to me, thou wouldst have no other information but this.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 2. The wrath and jealousy, or indignation, of God bring destruction on foolish and wicked men, and not on the righteous. (*Note, Prov. xxvii. 4. Jam. iii. 13—16.*) Or perhaps Eliphaz, perceiving Job to be greatly agitated by his discourse, intimated that his *wrath, envy, and fretfulness*, would only increase his torment and shorten his days; as they often produced these effects on foolish and wicked men. (*Marg. Ref. Notes, xviii. 2—4. Jon. iv. 9—11.*)

Envy.] *ἔνεα, indignation. (marg.)* This word is rendered *jealousy*; Num. v. 14, &c. xxv. 11. Prov. vi. 34; and in most other places:—*envy*; Prov. xiv. 30. xxvii. 4. Ec. iv. 4. *marg. &c.*: and *zeal*; Num. xxv. 11. *marg. 2 Kings xix. 31. Is. lix. 17, &c.*—The LXX usually render it by *ζηλος*, which is in the N. T. translated by various words; and among the rest by *indignation*; Acts v. 17. *marg. Heb. x. 27*: and *jealousy*; 2 Cor. xi. 2.

V. 3—5. In these verses, Eliphaz declared the result of his former observations. He had seen wicked men, who

foolishly despised the favour, and defied the wrath, of God, very prosperous for a time: but "suddenly Eliphaz "cursed," or predicted the ruin of, "their habitation:" and accordingly he had witnessed the destruction of their families, and the spoiling of their substance by hungry free-booters, notwithstanding all their care to fence it around and preserve it.—An allusion was evidently made to Job's former prosperity, to the death of his children by the falling of the house upon them, and the ruin of his substance by the Sabeans and Chaldeans. (*Notes, i. 13—19. iv. 7—11.*) But the most notorious wickedness does not prove, that temporal calamities will befall the perpetrator: and the application certainly was unfair and severe. (*Notes, xii. 6—10. xxiv. 2—20.*)

V. 6, 7. These verses may be rendered, "For affliction cometh not forth of the dust; ... Although man be born to trouble."—Man is born to labour and sorrow, as certainly, and from as natural a cause, as the sparks of fire mount upward into the air: yet the measure and duration of them result neither from chance, nor necessity, nor second causes; but from the wise and righteous appointment of God. This is a certain truth: but it does not follow that heavy afflictions are a proof of great wickedness: for the future world is the state of retributions; and afflictions in this world in general are merciful corrections, and not the effects of vindictive wrath. (*Notes, 17. 2 Pet. ii. 4—9.*)

V. 8—11. (*Marg. Ref.*) Whatever Eliphaz suspected concerning Job's previous character, it is evident he did not mean that his case was hopeless: and the advice here given was salutary and seasonable; though the manner of introducing it implies a censure, and savours of self-preference. Instead of complaints and vain wishes, Eliphaz, if in Job's case, would seek unto God, and commit his cause to him. This, on any supposition, was Job's duty and wisdom: and the subsequent discourse on the works of God was suited to remind him, that the great Lord of all could easily restore him to peace and prosperity. From the unsearchable and wonderful operations of God in the natural world, which are without number, Eliphaz selected his giving rain unto the earth. This is so common that it is scarcely

^d xii. 16, 17. Neh iv. 15. Ps. xxxiii. 10, 11. Prov. xxi. 30. Is. viii. 10. xix. 3. 11—14. ^e Ps. xxi. 11. lxxvi. 5. Is. xxxvii. 36. Acts xii. 11. xxxiii. 12, 13. ^f Or, any thing. 2 Sam. xv. 31. 24. xvi. 23. Esth. vi. 4—11. vii. 10. ix. 25. Ps. vii. 15, 16. ix. 15, 16. xxxv. 7, 8. cxli. 10. Luke i. 51. 1 Cor. i. 19, 20. 27. iii. 19, 20. ^g Ps. xviii. 26. Prov. iii. 32. viii. 13. ^h Or, run into. xii. 25. Deut. xxviii. 29. Prov. iv. 19. Is. lix. 10. Am. viii. 9. ⁱ Ps. x. 14, 17, 18. xxxv. 10. lxxii. 4, 12, 13. cvii. 41. cix. 31. cxl. 12. ^k 1 Sam. ii. 8. Ps. ix. 18. Is. xiv. 32. Zech. ix. 12. Luke iv. 18. ^l Ex. xi. 7. Ps. lxxiii. 11. cvii. 42. Rom. iii. 19. ^m Ps. xciv. 12. Prov. iii. 11, 12. Jer. xxxi. 18—20. Heb. xii. 5—11. Jam. i. 12. v. 11. Rev. iii. 19. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6, 7. Ps. cxlvii. 3. Is. xxx. 26. Hos. vi. 1.

12 He ^d disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that ^e their hands cannot perform ^f their enterprise.

13 He ^f taketh the wise in their own craftiness; and the counsel ^g of the froward is carried headlong.

14 They ^h meet ⁱ with darkness in the day-time, and grope in the noon-day as in the night.

15 But ^j he saveth the poor from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the mighty.

16 So ^k the poor hath hope, and ^l iniquity stoppeth her mouth.

17 Behold, ^m happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty:

18 For ⁿ he maketh sore, and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole.

19 He shall ^o deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall ^p no evil touch thee.

20 In ^q famine he shall ^r redeem thee from death: and ^s in war from the ^t power of the sword.

21 Thou shalt ^u be hid ^v from the scourge of the tongue: ^w neither shalt thou be afraid of destruction when it cometh.

22 At destruction and famine thou shalt ^x laugh: neither shalt thou be ^y afraid of the beasts of the earth.

23 For ^z thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field; and ^a the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee.

24 And ^b thou shalt know that ^c thy tabernacle shall be in peace; and ^d thou shalt visit thy habitation, and shalt not ^e sin.

^o Ps. xxxiv. 19. xci. 3—7. Prov. xxiv. 16. 2 Cor. i. 8—10. 2 Pet. ii. 9. ^p Ps. xci. 7—10. ^q Gen. xiv. 7—11. 1 Kings xvii. 6. 9. 14, 15. Ps. xxxiii. 19. xxxiv. 9, 10. xxxvii. 19. Prov. x. 3. Is. xxxiii. 16. Hab. iii. 17, 18. ^r Ps. xlix. 7. 15. ciii. 4. Hos. xiii. 14. ^s Ps. xxvii. 3. xci. 5. cxliv. 10. Matt. xxiv. 6. ^t Heb. hands. ^u Ps. xxxi. 20. 1v. 21. lvii. 4. Prov. xii. 18. Is. liv. 17. Jer. xviii. 18. Jam. iii. 5—8. ^v Or, when the tongues scourgeth. ^w Ps. xci. 5—7. ^x 2 Kings xix. 21. ^y Is. xxxv. 9. Ez. xxxiv. 25. ^z Ps. xci. 12, 13. Hos. ii. 18. Rom. viii. 38, 39. ^a Lev. xxvi. 6. Ez. xiv. 15, 16. Dan. vi. 22. ^b xviii. 6. 15. 21. xxi. 7—9. 1 Sam. xxx. 3. Is. iv. 5, 6. ^c Deut. xxviii. 6. Ps. xci. 10. ^d Or, peace is thy tabernacle. Ps. xxv. 13. marg. cxxi. 7, 8. ^e Or, err. Ps. cvii. 4. 40.

noticed: and yet the manner, in which the water is conveyed, originally from the briny ocean, and distilled in small drops fit for use all over the earth, and the effects which are thus produced, are worthy of our highest admiration and most ardent gratitude. (Notes, xxxvi. 22—33. xxxvii. 1—13. Gen. i. 9. Ps. lxxv. 9—13.) By this, the barren earth, being made to yield a large increase, the poor, and those who are mourning through the dread of starving, are supplied, placed in safety, and even exalted.

V. 12—16. The speaker next noticed especially the surprising method, in which the politick counsels of worldly wise men are disappointed by divine providence; and their crafty devices, instead of accomplishing the end proposed, are turned against themselves. Being carried headlong by some unexpected incident, they involve them in utter ruin; so that they are taken in a net, and plunged into darkness or despair, just when they think success is sure: nay, they hesitate, and are bewildered, or fall into fatal errors, in the plainest matters, as if they had lost their senses. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Esth. v. 13, 14. vi. vii. 1 Cor. iii. 18—23.) By thus infatuating or ruining proud oppressors, God preserves the poor who are about to be devoured, and gives them hope of better days; while their oppressors are silenced, confounded, and dismayed, at beholding his work. As therefore, such interpositions accorded to the ordinary method of Providence, Job might with confidence expect deliverance, if he ceased from his rebellious murmurs, and humbled himself before God.

V. 17. To take vengeance on a criminal, for a warning to others, and, to correct an offender for his own good, are very distinct things, which Eliphaz had not before expressly distinguished. Job's extraordinary calamities had led Eliphaz to speak as if he had been visited in judgment: but here he indulged a hope, that he was corrected of God for his good; and if so he was a happy man, and ought not to despond under his afflictions. He exhorted him therefore, "not to despise the chastening of the Almighty."

He, who appointed his sorrows, was able to destroy and to deliver, as he pleased: Job ought therefore to consider the hand of God in these chastisements, and thankfully receive them as a token of love, and seek to profit by them. (Notes, Ps. xciv. 12—14. Prov. iii. 11, 12. Heb. xii. 4—11.)—*Almighty.*] Note, Gen. xvii. 1—3.

V. 18, 19. Eliphaz next shewed the benefits, which would result from a proper behaviour under afflictions, and mentioned the happiness of God's people, in language similar to that used in other parts of the Old Testament. (Marg. Ref.—Note, Lev. xxvi. 3, 4.) He observed that every wound was from the hand of God, and he alone could effectually heal it: as the skilful and tender surgeon probes and cuts in order to heal, and then binds up the wound with emollient ointments. When God smites his servants with afflictions, he heals them with consolations, or by returning ease and prosperity; and when he wounds sinners with deep convictions, he binds up the wound by a sweet sense of forgiveness, after he hath prepared them for so great a mercy. (Notes, 1 Sam. ii. 4—8. Hos. vi. 1—3.) If then Job humbly sought to God under his troubles, he would certainly be delivered: and though he might be tried repeatedly, yet he would still find relief; so that no evil would eventually come upon him.—*Six* troubles, and *seven*, denote many, one succeeding another. (Prov. vi. 16. Ec. xi. 2.)

V. 20—23. In famine, war, or perils from false witnesses and malicious slanders against his life or reputation, or amidst the ravages of wild beasts, Job might be assured of support and protection, and might smile in the midst of the most terrifying appearances: for God would so order every dispensation, that the whole animate and inanimate creation should appear to be in league with him. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps. xci. 3—13. Hos. ii. 18—20. Rom. viii. 28—39.)

V. 24. 'Wheresoever thou pitchest thy tent, thou shalt find it in safety: and when thou takest an account

d xlii. 13—16.
Gen. xv. 5. Lev.
xxvii. 9. Deut.
xxviii. 4. Ps.
cxii. 2. cxxvii. 3
—5. cxxviii. 3—
6.
• Or, much.
e Ps. lxxii. 16.

25 Thou shalt know also that ^d thy seed *shall be* ^e great, and thine offspring ^e as the grass of the earth.

26 Thou shalt come to *thy* grave ^f in

f xlii. 16, 17. Gen. xv. 15. xxv. 8. Ps. xci. 16. Prov. ix. 11. x. 27.

a full age, like as a shock of corn [†] cometh in in his season.

27 Lo this, ^g we have searched it, so ^g it is; hear it, and know thou *it* [†] for thy good.

† Heb. ascendeth.
g viii. 8—10. xii
2. xv. 9, 10. 17
xxxii. 11, 12.
† Heb. for thyself
xxii. 2. Deut. x.
13.

‘ of thy estate, all things shall answer beyond thy expectation.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—The word rendered “sin,” may mean *wander*, or *be disappointed*: and perhaps the verse may imply, that when the believer goes from home, he may commit himself and family to the care of God, assured that no tempests, fires, or robbers shall come near his habitation; and that he shall be brought back in peace, without losing his way, or being disappointed at his return, by finding his family ruined, or murdered, or fallen into calamity. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 25—27. In case Job committed his cause to God, he might also be confident that his posterity would be prosperous, that he would live long, and die in peace, when fully ripe for heaven. (*Notes*, xlii. 10—17. 1 Chr. xxix. 26—28.) These principles Eliphaz recommended, as the result of his own experience and observation, and those of his friends, and concluded with admonishing Job to regard them for his good, and to make them his own by a practical use of them.—They are indeed good general rules, but they admit of many exceptions: for, though the believer is under the peculiar protection of God in his person, character, family, and all relating to him, and should commit all to his keeping; the Lord often sees good to withhold the temporal comfort, in order to confer a spiritual blessing of greater value. Indeed, Job’s sufferings, so far from being proofs of hypocrisy, were not so much as corrections for any particular offence; but trials of his singular faith, piety, and constancy: so greatly did his friends mistake his case! They spoke general truths according to the light of that dispensation; but they erred in their application of them. The Holy Spirit has recorded their debate, as infallibly true in point of matter of fact: but we must decide from the general tenour of the scripture, whether they maintained right principles, and deduced legitimate consequences; and whether their arguments were or were not conclusive. (*Note*, xlii. 7—9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

It is generally dangerous to deviate from the sentiments and practices of the saints of God, and it is very discouraging to be constrained to act contrary to their judgment. But it is common for men to boast, as if believers, in all ages and nations, were of their mind, when they are far from having even a majority in their favour. And at last the word of God is our all-sufficient rule, and not the sentiments of any number of fallible men: so that, in fact, they have sometimes been found right, who seemed not only to have all the world, but almost all the church, against them.—We should watch ourselves, and caution others, against the tormenting and malignant passions of envy and anger; which rule in the hearts of weak and foolish men with most fatal energy, and not only expose them to the wrath of God, but to the temptations of Satan, and to various species of guilt and misery. But we must not rashly represent every gust of passion or agitation of

spirit under trials, reproaches, and temptations, as an evidence of a malevolent disposition: for we should not choose to have our own infirmities treated with such severity; and we might reasonably expect that they would not.—We may predict the final ruin of wicked men, as exposed to the awful curse of God, even in the zenith of their prosperity, when all around are congratulating and envying them. Their temporal success will soon vanish: and what is got by fraud, oppression, or cruelty, commonly entails a curse on their families and estates. Yet a man’s wickedness must be very notorious, to authorize us to interpret his afflictions, or those of his posterity, into divine judgments upon him—As we are born in sin, and soon run into actual transgression, we are naturally exposed to almost innumerable troubles: but they are all directed by the unerring hand of God, for some wise and righteous purpose; and we should regulate our conduct accordingly.

V. 8—16.

It is easy to say, what we would do in trying circumstances; but perhaps we should find it more difficult to observe our own rules, than we now imagine. We ought, however, to give proper advice, and to leave the event to God: and it becomes us under all our trials to seek unto him, and to commit our cause into his hands. Whatever difficulties may be in our case, the Lord knows how to extricate us, by a thousand ways that we never thought of. All his works are wonderful and unsearchable: we see *what* is wrought, and can discover his wisdom, power, and goodness, in the connexion of causes and effects in nature; but we cannot comprehend *how* he works. And too often the great Author of all our comforts, and the manner in which they are conveyed to us, are alike unnoticed, because they are received as things of course. He exalts or depresses, afflicts or comforts, as he pleases, with irresistible power, but in perfect justice, wisdom, and goodness.—Those who are perverse and ungodly, and proud of their abilities and sagacity, are generally made to feel, or to expose, their own folly and impotency. “Professing themselves wise, they become fools:” they are often bewildered by their own fancies, and rendered the dupes of their own false reasonings or refined politicks; they run into the grossest absurdities, commit the most egregious mistakes, are bewildered in uncertainty in the plainest matters, and grope at noon day as if it were midnight; for “God takes them in their own craftiness,” and makes “foolish the wisdom of this world.” Idolaters and atheistical philosophers of old; scepticks, infidels, and materialists of modern days, are awful proofs of these truths: and so are politick persecutors and oppressors of the church, in every age.—In vain have learning, wisdom, authority, cruelty, and every device of men and devils united, to subvert the church of God, and extirpate his poor despised people. The schemes of these enemies have been frustrated, “their hands have not been able to perform their enterprize;” their “counsels have been carried headlong,”

CHAP. VI.

Job shews that his sufferings were very great, and his complaint natural, 1—7. He prays for death, as the only comfort which he could hope for, 8—13. He reproves his friends, as unkind and unfaithful, 14—30.

BUT Job ^a answered and said,

2 Oh, that my grief were ^b thoroughly weighed, and my calamity ^c laid in the balances together!

3 For now it would be ^e heavier than the sand of the sea; therefore ^f my words ^d are swallowed up.

^a iv. 1.

^b iv 5. xxiii. 2.

^c Heb. *lifted up*.
^c Prov. xxvii. 3.
Matt. xi. 28.

^f That is, *I want words to express my grief*. Ps. lxxvii. 4.

^d xxxvii. 19, 20.
Ps. xl. 5.

and they have been taken in their own snare, infatuated, and driven to destruction; and all their successors may expect the same fate. For the poor and despised people of God, though deemed weak, foolish, and defenceless, can neither be overcome, nor assaulted with impunity. The church still subsists; "the poor" in spirit "have hope," and expect to triumph at the destruction of their enemies, when the boastings and blasphemies of the wicked will be for ever silenced, or turned into shame and anguish.

V. 17—27.

"Happy is the man, whom God correcteth!" We should therefore consider our afflictions, as so many kind warnings to examine ourselves, confess our sins, seek mercy from God, and walk more diligently in his ways: we should humble ourselves before him, and neither despise his rod, nor seek help or relief from any one else. He alone can effectually remove temporal afflictions, and give peace to the wounded conscience, or relief to the troubled spirit. And when we have found pardon, peace with God, and deliverance from the power of sin, we may without reserve venture our all in his hands. He will provide for our real wants, and protect us in the way of duty, so that no evil can hurt us; and deliver us from all the troubles with which he may please to prove us. Our reputations may be torn by the scourge of the slanderer's tongue; but he will hide us from the effects of such accusers, and clear up our characters in due time. Our habitations, families, and the time and circumstances of our death, may be safely trusted to him; all creatures shall be instruments of good to us, though perhaps contrary to their nature or intention; all events will benefit us; and we may smile, nay exult, when others tremble. We may go out and come in, lie down and rise up, without distrustful fear, assured of the special care of heaven, till the Lord see good to call us home. We are not authorized to expect great wealth, long life, flourishing families, or exemption from tribulations: but we are assured that all will be ordered in the best manner possible, and that we shall not be summoned by death till we are ripe for glory, and have lived as long as it is good for us in this world. This has been the confidence, observation, and experience of godly men, in all ages: may we hear it and know it for our good!

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—4. Job, conscious of integrity, and

4 For ^e the arrows of the Almighty ^e are within me, the poison whereof ^f drinketh up my spirit: ^g the terrors of God do set themselves in array ^f against me.

5 Doth the wild ass bray ^a when he hath grass? or ^b loweth the ox over his fodder?

6 Can ⁱ that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there ^{any} ^k taste in the white of an egg?

7 The things *that* my soul refused to touch ^{are} ^l as my sorrowful meat.

1 1 Kings xvii. 12. xxii. 27. Ps. cii. 9. Ez. iv. 14, 16. xii. 18, 19. Dan. x. 3

xvi. 12—14.
Deut. xxxii. 23.
42. Ps. vii. 13.
xxiii. 14. xxi. 12.
xxxviii. 2. xlv.
5. Lam. iii. 12,
13.
Deut. xxxii. 24.
Ps. cxliii. 7.
Prov. xviii. 14.
Mark xiv. 33, 34.
xv. 34.
g ix. 17. xxx. 15.
xxxi. 23. Ps.
lxxxviii. 15, 16.
2 Cor. v. 11.
† Heb. *at grass*
Ps. civ. 14.
h Ps. xlii. 1. Jer.
xiv. 6. Joel i. 18
—20.
i 25. xvi. 2. Lev.
ii. 13. Luke xiv.
34. Col. iv. 6.
k 30. xii. 11, xxxiv.
3. Ps. cxix. 103.
Heb. vi 4, 5
1 1 Kings xvii. 12. xxii. 27. Ps. cii. 9. Ez. iv. 14, 16. xii. 18, 19. Dan. x. 3

displeased, rather than convinced, by the reasonings of Eliphaz, replied, by wishing that his miseries might be impartially balanced against his complaints, assured that he should not have been so harshly censured, if his sorrows had not been made too light of: for, in fact, they were so numerous and weighty, that he could find nothing adequate with which to compare them; and all his words fell very short of fully describing them. In addition to his external troubles, the inward sense of the wrath of God, and the dread of his almighty vengeance, like poisoned arrows, infected his soul, and exhausted his courage and resolution; or, like a powerful army placed in array against him, they cut off his hope of escape, and almost drove him to distraction. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Doubtless, this was the effect of Satan's temptations, who endeavoured, by every horrible impression on his imagination, to drive him to curse God, or blaspheme, as he had declared that he would, if fully tried; (*Notes*, i. 9—11. ii. 4, 5. 12, 13;) while the Lord was pleased to favour the trial, by withholding from him all sensible comfort, and leaving him in darkness and dismay.—In this he was a type of Christ, when agonizing in the garden; and when upon the cross he exclaimed, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" (*Notes*, *Matt.* xxvi. 36—39. xxvii. 46.)

V. 5—7. In these verses Job intimated, that his friends, being free from trouble and temptation, did nothing more, in being contented, than the wild ass or the ox does, when at ease and plentifully fed. But he must be allowed to express his anguish by groans and complaints; which were no more to be censured, than the braying of the wild ass, or the lowing of the ox, when destitute of provender. And indeed the discourse of Eliphaz had so little of the savour of wisdom and kindness, and was so unsuitable for the occasion, that it was impossible he should relish it: yet this, as "sorrowful meat" was all he had to feed his soul upon, under his affliction and depression; though at any time he should have entirely disregarded it.—Some think he meant, that it was as natural to expect encouraging words under heavy trials, as it is to ask for salt to eat with the white of an egg; whereas the discourse of Eliphaz tended to render his trials more burdensome than they were before. It is plain, however, that he rejected and undervalued the good advice which had been given; because of the injurious reflections on his character, with which it was introduced. (*Notes*, v. 2—7.)

^a Heb. my expectation. 11—13. xvii. 14—16. Ps. cxix. 81. m iii. 20—22. vii. 15, 16. xiv. 13. Num. xi. 14, 15. 1 Kings xix. 4. Jon. iv. 3, 8. Rev. ix. 6. n xix. 21. Ps. xxxii. 4. Is. xxxviii. 10—13. o iii. 22. xxi. 33. p ix. 4. q Deut. xxix. 20. Rom. viii. 32. 2 Pet. ii. 4, 5. r xxiii. 12. Ps. xxxvii. 30. xl. 9. 10. lxxi. 17, 18. cxix. 13. Acts xx. 27. s Lev. xix. 2. 1 Sam. ii. 2. Is. xxx. 11, 12. lvii. 15. Hos. xi. 9. Hab. i. 12. iii. 3. Rev. iii. 7. iv. 8. t vii. 5—7. x. 20. xiii. 25. 23. xvii. 1. 14—16. Ps. xxxix. 5. xc. 5—10. cii. 23. ciii. 14—16. † Heb. brazen. xl. 18. xli. 24. u xix. 28. 2 Cor. i. 12. Gal. vi. 4. x xii. 2, 3. xiii. 2. y iv. 3, 4. xvi. 5. xix. 21. Prov. xvii. 17. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26. 2 Cor. xi. 29. Gal. vi. 2. Heb. xiii. 3. xxiii. 40. xxx. 14. Mic. vii. 5, 6. John xiii. 18. xvi. 32.

8 Oh, that I might have my request; and that God would grant *me* the thing that I long for!

9 Even ^m that it would please God to destroy me: ⁿ that he would let loose his hand, and cut me off!

10 Then ^o should I yet have comfort; yea, ^p I would harden myself in sorrow: ^q let him not spare; for I ^r have not concealed the words of ^s the Holy One.

11 ^t What is my strength, that I should hope? and what is mine end, that I should prolong my life?

12 ^u Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh ^v of brass?

13 ^w Is not my help in me? ^x and is wisdom driven quite from me?

14 To ^y him that ^z is afflicted pity should be shewed from his friend; but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.

15 ¶ ^a My brethren have dealt deceit-

[†] Heb. melteth. 2 Gen. xx. 11. Ps. xxxvi. 1—3. Luke a xix. 19. Ps. xxxviii. 11. xli. 9. lv. 12—14. lxxxviii. 18. Jer. ix. 4, 5. xxx. 14. Mic. vii. 5, 6. John xiii. 18. xvi. 32.

fully as a brook, and ^b as the stream of ^b Jer. xv. 18. Jude 12. brooks they pass away;

16 Which are blackish by reason of the ice, and wherein the snow is hid:

17 What time they wax warm, they ^c vanish; ^d when it is hot, they are consumed out of their place.

18 The paths of their way are turned aside; they go to nothing, and perish.

19 The troops of ^e Tema looked, the companies of ^f Sheba waited for them.

20 They ^g were confounded, because they had hoped: they came thither, and were ashamed.

21 For now ^h ye ⁱ are ^j nothing; ^k ye see ^l my casting down, and are afraid.

22 Did I say, ^m Bring unto me? or, Give a reward for me of your substance?

23 Or, Deliver me from the enemy's hand? or, ⁿ Redeem me from the hand of the mighty?

[§] Heb. are cut off. ^{||} Heb. in the heat thereof they are extinguished. 1 Kings xvii. 7. c Gen. xxv. 15. Is. xxi. 14. Jer. xxv. 23. d Gen. x. 7. xxv. 3. 1 Kings x. 1. Ps. lxxii. 19. Ez. xxvii. 22, 23. e Jer. xiv. 3, 4. xvii. 13. Rom. v. 5. ix. 33. ^{*} Or, ye are like to them. Heb. to it. 15. xiii. 4. f Ps. lxii. 9. Is. ii. 22. Jer. xvii. 5, 6. [†] Heb. not. g ii. 11—13. Ps. xxxviii. 11. Prov. xix. 7. Jer. li. 9. Matt. xxvi. 31. 56. 2 Tim. iv. 16. Rev. xviii. 9, 10, 17, 18. h xlii. 11. 1 Sam. xii. 3. Acts xx. 33. i v. 20. Lev. xxv. 48. Neh. v. 8. Ps. xlix. 7, 8. 15. cvii. 2. Jer. xv. 21.

V. 8—13. The passionate earnestness, with which Job here requested to die, and the vehement language which he used, were very unbecoming. It seemed as if God could bestow on him no greater favour than instantaneous death, in whatever manner it should come. (Notes, Num. xi. 11—15. 1 Kings xix. 3, 4. Jon. iv. 1—8.) This was his chief desire and request, and almost his only one: but it was very rash in him to speak of God's "destroying," or "crushing," or "letting loose his hand" and "cutting him off," and "not sparing him;" and of his "hardening himself in sorrow," and being "comforted" in the prospect of immediate dissolution. Alas! he knew not what he said; for who, during a single hour, could endure the wrath of the Almighty, if he spared not, but let loose his hand against him?—Relief from lingering misery was Job's great object; yet he evidently thought of a future world, when he declared that "he had not concealed the words of the Holy One." He meant, that he was no hypocrite; but as he had professed the words of the holy God, so he had believed and obeyed them, as the avowed and real rule of his conduct. He seems, however, to have spoken too much in a way of self-justification, and despondency; and not simply, as stating the ground of his desire to leave this world, and go to a better.—He added that he had no strength left, which could inspire a hope of a termination to his afflictions, except in death; and if he had the strength of stones or brass, his sufferings would soon wear it out: but his understanding, and the testimony of a good conscience, were continued to him; he knew what he was discoursing of, and his wisdom was not quite driven from him; yet his friends despised his words.—Though Job thus longed and prayed for death, he did not think that he was authorized to commit suicide: a heathen philosopher, or a modern unbeliever, would

not have been so scrupulous. (Notes, ii. 9, 10. iii. 20—23.)

V. 14. He, who does not compassionate his afflicted friend, but reproaches him, casts off his regard to the authority of God, as well as love to his brother. (Marg. Ref.)—Some, however, understand the verse, as Job's representation of the behaviour of his friends to him; in which sense it may be rendered, "They say of him that is afflicted more than his neighbour, He hath forsaken mercy, and the fear of the Almighty." (Note, iv. 3—6.)

V. 15—23. The friends of Job had appeared very affectionate to him, when prosperous; and in his calamity he had hoped for support and consolation from their visit: but he had been miserably disappointed. This he represented by an appropriate simile. In those countries, the ice and snow, melting upon the mountains, at certain seasons filled the brooks with water, so that they appeared like rivers, swelled and discoloured with the inundation: and the Arabian companies, or caravans, travelling through the deserts, marked the course of these brooks, which were full of water when it was not wanted. But when in the heat of summer, they were parched with thirst, and resorted thither in hopes of a supply, they found that these brooks were entirely dried up, and this filled them with distress and confusion. (Note, Jer. xv. 15—18.) Thus Job's expectations from his friends came to nothing, and he was ashamed of his former confidence. (Notes, Is. xxviii. 16. xlv. 15—17. Joel i. 11.) For when his friends looked on his miseries, they seemed afraid lest he should become a burden or a disgrace to them; and therefore they treated him with unkindness. But had he ever requested them to make up his losses by presents? to rescue or ransom his substance from the Sabeans and Chaldeans?

24 ^k Teach me, and ^l I will hold my tongue: and ^m cause me to understand wherein I have erred.

25 How ⁿ forcible are right words! but ^o what doth your arguing reprove?

26 Do you imagine to ^p reprove words, and the speeches of ^q one that is desperate, which *are* ^r as wind?

27 Yea, ye ^s overwhelm ^t the father-

k v. 27. xxxii. 11. 15, 16. xxxiii. 1. 31-33. xxxiv. 32. Ps. xxxii. 8. Prov. ix. 9. xxv. 12. Jam. i. 19. Ps. xxxix. 1, 2. Jam. iii. 2. m x. 2. Ps. xix. 12. n iv. 4. xvi. 5. Prov. xii. 18. xvi. 21-24. xviii. 21. xxv. 11. Ec. xii. 10, 11. o xiii. 5. xvi. 3, 4. xxi. 34. xxiv. 25. xxxii. 3. p ii. 10. iii. 3, &c. iv. 3, 4. xxxiv. 3-9. xxxviii. 2. xl. 5. 8. xlii. 3. 7. Matt. xii. 37. q 4. 9. x. 1. r viii. 2. Hos. xii. 1. Eph. iv. 14. s xxii. 9. Ex. xxiv. 3. 9. xxix. 12. xxxi. 17. 21. Ex. xxii. 22-24. Ps. lxxxii. 3. Prov. xxiii. 10, 11. Ez. xxii. 7 Mal. iii. 5. Jam. i. 27.

less, and ^t ye dig *a pit* for your friend.

28 Now therefore, be content: look upon me: for *it is* ^u evident unto you, ^v if I lie.

29 ^w Return, I pray you, let it not be iniquity; yea, return again, ^x my righteousness *is* ^y in it.

30 Is there ^z iniquity in my tongue? ^a cannot my ^b taste discern perverse things?

Ps. vii. 13. lvii. 6. Jer. xviii. 20. 22. Heb. before your face. u xi. 3. xiii. 4. x xvii. 10. Mal. iii. 18. y xxvii. 4-6. † That is, in this matter. z xxxiii. 8-12. xlii. 3-6. a 6. xii. 11. xxxiv. 3. Heb. v. 14. § Heb. palate.

or even to protect him from further violence? indeed he chiefly wanted consolation to his soul.

V. 24, 25. Job was unwilling, that his friends should suppose he refused to receive instruction, or reproof. If therefore they would mildly teach him any useful lesson, or point out his mistakes, he would silently hearken. For "right words," or salutary truths, proposed with conclusive proofs and fair application, were powerfully convincing; but the unfounded suspicions and uncandid censures of Eliphaz could not be received as just reproof.

V. 26. Eliphaz had nothing explicit, for which he could reprove Job, except some passionate words, which excess of anguish had extorted from him, when almost driven to desperation. (Notes, ii. 12, 13. iii.) These ought therefore to have been no more regarded, than a sudden gust of wind, which is soon followed by a calm: or, as some understand the passage, the rest of his discourse should not on that account have been treated with contempt, as empty sound.—Had Eliphaz calmly shewed Job, that his passionate language was unbecoming his character for piety, in the manner that the latter had reproved his wife, he might have submitted to the rebuke: (Note, ii. 10:) but his intimations, that Job had been a hypocrite, entirely defeated this end, and made Job think himself excusable.

V. 27—30. In Job's opinion, his friends acted as cruelly, as if they had oppressed a fatherless child, who had none to defend him; and as ungratefully and unfaithfully, as if they had digged a pit for their friend to fall into and perish. He therefore intreated them to be content with his sufferings, which they might perceive to be very great, and not to aggravate them by reproaches; and to favour him by reconsidering his cause, examining it more accurately, and deciding upon it more candidly. If he had spoken any falsehood, they might easily confute him: if he were a wicked man, they might detect him. If they could not do either of these, let them retract their sentence, and not impute his sufferings to his iniquity; for he was conscious that he was upright in the sight of God, which would be made evident by fuller investigation. He thought he could savour what was true and good, and distinguish what was perverse and profane: and though he allowed he had spoken rash words, he was not conscious, that there had been iniquity in his tongue.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

In deciding on the conduct of those who seem impatient, we should carefully consider the number and aggravations of their distresses, which often appear to the sufferer even

greater than his heaviest complaints, and beyond the power of words to express. A heart, wounded with the fear or sense of the wrath of God, assaulted with grievous temptations, filled with horror, and verging to despair, is far more dreadful and intolerable, than any external afflictions: yet, these "pains of hell" have often taken hold of the most beloved servants of God. (Notes, 2 Sam. xxii. 5, 6 Ps. cxvi. 3.) Mere spectators cannot estimate trials of this kind; and few pious men have sufficient wisdom, experience, and tenderness, to deal properly with those, who are thus deserted, oppressed, and overwhelmed.—What then did the Saviour endure in the garden and on the cross, when "he bare our sins," and his soul was made a sacrifice to divine justice for us! and what will sinners, who neglect so great salvation, for ever endure in the regions of darkness and despair! There, indeed, "the arrows of the Almighty are within them, the poison whereof drink-eth up their spirit. The terrors of God set themselves in array against them," and they can neither escape nor endure them.—Those who know no want, and feel no pain, may easily be composed, and critically comment on the words and actions of such, as are in overwhelming trouble: but their discourses are generally insipid, and often distressing. Indeed, these in general appear worse than they really are: for in anguish a man loses his relish for truths which before were palatable; he is disposed to be fretful and fastidious; and a little which galls him sets him against all that might comfort him. This should be well considered by those, who discourse with persons in great distress: and, except they can command evident affection, sympathy, and caution, it is better to let the storm subside before they speak at all, lest they cause it to rage with still greater impetuosity.—Furious passions are peculiarly culpable when they dictate prayers; for men seldom wish or pray for death, except when they are in a rebellious frame of spirit. We should indeed be habitually ready and willing to depart; and indifferent about earthly objects, which may so soon render life itself a burden. But surely we may find something more excellent to request of God, than to be delivered from present suffering: and it ill suits our state and character, to speak of *hardening* our hearts under the strokes of the Almighty, if he should "not spare," but "let loose his hand to cut us off." Rather we should humble ourselves under his mighty hand; bow down in submission to his will; hope in his mercy; and intreat him to lighten the weight of his chastisements, and to consider how frail we are. In his favour we may yet have comfort, let our outward condition be ever so bad; whether he please to be with us in the furnace of affliction on earth,

CHAP. VII.

Job excuses his desire of death, by representing the vanity, misery, and uselessness of his life, 1—6. He expostulates with God, in a mixture of complaints and petitions; and concludes with confessing that he had sinned, and asking forgiveness before his death, 7—21.

^a ^{ziv} 5. 13, 14. Ps. xxxix. 4. Is. xxxviii. 5. John xi. 9, 10.

^{*} Or, a warfare. Ec. viii. 8.

^b xiv. 6. Lev. xxv. 50. Deut. xv. 18. Is. xxi. 16. Matt. xx. 1—15.

[†] Heb. *gapeth* ^b after. Ps. cxix. 131. cxliii. 6.

^c Jer. vi. 4. ^d Lev. xix. 13. Deut. xxiv. 15. Mal. iii. 5. Jam. v. 4.

IS ^a there not ^{*} an appointed time to man upon earth? *are not* his days also like the days of an hireling?

2 As a servant [†] earnestly desireth ^c the shadow, and as ^d an hireling looketh for the reward of his work:

until he take us unto himself, or to restore us to peace and prosperity: for “the things that are impossible with man, are possible with God.”—We may easily see that we *ought* to act thus under every possible trial; but if we were tempted as Job was, we know not how we should behave.—The testimony of conscience to our integrity in our past conduct, as professed Christians, may properly be our rejoicing: yet it may be so pleaded, as to savour of pride, rebellion, and despondency. It is also a mercy under severe diseases to retain the exercise of our reasoning faculties: but sometimes men use them with perverse ingenuity, to argue against their own comfort, and to vindicate their unbelief and impatience. Persons of this description, however, are entitled to our peculiar compassion; their wounds require healing balm, not sharp corrosives: and if we do not behave with tenderness to the afflicted, we despise the authority of God, and fail of our duty to him.

V. 15—30.

It is our duty and wisdom to “cease from men:” (*Notes*, Ps. cxlvi. 3, 4. P. O. Is. ii. 22. P. O. 10—22, close:) the nearest friends and relatives, though wise and pious, through mistake and prejudice, often disappoint our expectations. They may be exceedingly kind and attentive, while we are at ease and in affluence: yet, in adversity, we shall find most of them like the brook, which by the land-flood became a torrent, but in the drought of summer proves a dry channel, and disappoints the hopes of the fainting traveller. But they who trust in God shall never be ashamed of their confidence; for he will be peculiarly helpful to them, when all other helpers and comforts fail: yea, though “flesh and heart fail, he will be the Strength of their hearts, and their Portion for ever.”—When men see their friends cast down, they too commonly fear being involved with them, and exposed to danger, expense, and trouble; and so they appear shy of them, and perhaps unjustly criminate their conduct, to excuse their own. Yet sometimes the afflicted suspect their friends without cause.—It is our duty to help others to the utmost of our ability; but it is generally our wisdom to bear our own losses and difficulties as well as we can, and to avoid becoming a burden to our friends. Prudence therefore requires us, when prosperous, to avoid needless indulgences, and to inure ourselves to some degree of hardship; that if a change should take place, (and none can know “what a day may bring forth,”) we may not have to say, “the

3 So am I made to possess ^e months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed to me.

4 When I lie down, I say, ‘When shall I arise, and ^f the night be gone? and I am full of ^g tossings to and fro, unto the dawning of the day.

5 My ^h flesh is clothed with worms and clods of dust; my skin is broken, and become ⁱ loathsome.

6 My days are ^k swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, and are spent ^l without hope.

^e xxix. 2. Ps. xxxix. 5. Ec. i. 14. ^f 13, 14. xxx. 17. Deut. xxviii. 67. Ps. vi. 6. lxxvii. 4. cxxx. 6. [†] Heb. *the evening be measured.* ^g Ps. cix. 23. Is. liv. 11. ^h ii. 7, 8. xvii. 14. xix. 26. xxiv. 20. xxx. 18, 19. Ps. xxxviii. 5—7. Is. i. 6. xiv. 11. Acts xii. 23. ⁱ ix. 31. Is. lxvi. 24. Ez. xx. 43. ^k ix. 25. xvi. 22. xvii. 11. Ps. xc. 5, 6. cii. 11. ciii. 15, 16. cxliv. 4. Is. xxxviii. 12, 13. xl. 6, 7. Jam. i. 11. iv. 14. ^l Pet. i. 24. ¹ vi. 11. xvii. 15. Prov. xiv. 32. Jer. ii. 25. Eph. ii. 12. ¹ Pet. i. 13.

“things, that my soul refused to touch, are become as my sorrowful meat.—A wise man will, at all times, be glad to be counselled, and convinced of his errors, by right words, which forcibly rectify his judgment and impress his heart. But most of us are apt to be too impatient, when we hear men argue inconclusively, especially when their discourse bears hard on our sentiments and conduct. Indeed rash expressions, dictated by anguish of spirit, should not be severely criticised: but, though they do not prove us hypocrites, they evince that we are far from humbly acquiescing in the divine will. It is, however, still more unbecoming to retaliate on reprovers, and to charge them with malice, when perhaps they spoke from genuine love. Yet, if we have rashly condemned any one, we ought to review the evidence with impartiality and candour, and to retract our censure if found unmerited. We do not love to be treated as *hypocrites*, contrary to evidence, or the testimony of our consciences; and we should not thus condemn others. But it is best to commit our character to him who keeps our souls: and to appeal to that day, when he will “bring to light the hidden things of darkness, “and make manifest the counsels of all hearts;” and then shall every upright believer “have praise of God.”

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1—6. Job here represented the life of man on earth, to be like the *appointed time of warfare to the soldier*, (for so the expression may be interpreted,) or the labourer’s day for his work. The one earnestly wished for his discharge, that he might be exempted from further labours and perils; the other looked with desire for the shadows of the evening, when he should receive his wages and go to rest: and why might not Job wish for death to terminate his sorrows, and bring him to that happier state for which he yet hoped? (*Note*, 2 Tim. iv 6—8.) This was the more allowable, as his life was now both joyless and useless, and full of tedious sufferings, without any remission even by night; for that season which brings rest to others, was spent by him in agony, and in longing for the dawning of the day: (*Deut.* xxviii. 67:) nay his disease was so noisome, that it made him like a putrefied corpse even before his death. (*Notes*, ii. 7, 8. xxx. 15—19.) All this had come upon him so suddenly, that his happier days were gone instantaneously; and his remnant of life, which in itself was exceedingly short and transient, was vanishing without hope of returning health and comfort.

7 Oh, ^m remember that ⁿ my life is wind: mine eye shall ^{*} no more see good.

8 The ^o eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more: ^p thine eyes are upon me, and [†] I am not.

9 As ^q the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so ^r he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.

10 He ^s shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more.

11 Therefore ^t I will not refrain my mouth: I will speak in ^u the anguish of my spirit; I will complain in ^x the bitterness of my soul.

12 Am ^y I a sea, or ^z a whale, that thou settest a watch over me?

13 When I say, ^a My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint;

14 Then ^b thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions:

15 So that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my [†] life.

16 ^d I loathe it; I would not live away: ^e let me alone; for ^f my days are vanity.

17 ^g What is man, that thou shouldst ^h magnify him? and that thou shouldst ⁱ set thine heart upon him?

18 And ^j that thou shouldst ^k visit him every morning, and ^l try him every moment?

19 ^m How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone, till I swallow down my spittle?

20 I ⁿ have sinned: what shall I do unto thee, ^o O thou Preserver of men? ^p why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that ^q I am a burden to myself?

21 And ^r why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and ^s take away mine iniquity? for now shall I ^t sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me ^u in the morning, ^x but I shall not be.

^c 2 Sam. xvii. 23. Matt. xxvii. 5.
^t Heb. bones.
^d iii. 20—22. vi. 9
^x 1. Gen. xxvii. 46. 1 Kings xix. 4. Jon. iv. 3. 8
^e x. 20. xiv. 6. Ps. xxxix. 10. 13.
^f Ps. lxxviii. 33. cxliv. 4. Ec. vi. 11, 12.
^g Ps. viii. 4. cxliv 3. Heb. ii. 6.
^h 12. 1 Sam. xxiv. 14.
ⁱ xxxiv. 14, 15.
^k Ex. xx. 5. xxxii. 34. 1s. xxvi. 14. xxxviii. 12, 13.
^l Gen. xxii. 1. Deut. viii. 16. Jer. ix. 7. Dan. xii. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 7.
^m ix. 18. Ps. vi. 3. xiii. 1—3. xciv. 3. Rev. vi. 10.
ⁿ ix. 29—31. xiii. 26. xiv. 16, 17. xxii. 5. xxxi. 33. xxxiii. 9. 27.
^o Neh. ix. 6. Ps. xxxvi. 6.
^p 12. vi. 4. xvi. 12—14. Ps. xxi. 12. Lam. iii. 12.
^q 11. iii. 24.
^r x. 14. xiii. 23, 24. Is. lxiv. 9. Lam. iii. 42—44. v. 20—22.
^s 2 Sam. xxiv. 10. Hos. xiv. 2. John i. 29. Tit. ii. 14. 1 John iii. 5.
^t iii. 13. xvii. 14. xxi. 32, 33. Ec. xii. 7. Is. xxvi. 19. Dan. xii. 2.
^u 18.
^x Ps. xxxvii. 36.

Spent, &c. (6) 'Finished for want of thread.' *E. Smith.*
—The original will admit this translation, and several criticks have adopted it as keeping up the simile.

V. 7—11. In the middle of this discourse with his friends, Job seems to have lifted up his thoughts to God, and mingled some actings of faith and hope with his fretfulness and despondency. He desired the Lord to remember how fleeting his life was at best; and either to abate his anguish, or release him from it, as he had no hope of seeing any more comfort here. A single look from God would end his days: and as the clouds vanish, and others are formed in their places; so men die and never return to occupy their former stations, but others succeed them from age to age.—This does not by any means imply a denial of a future state, or the resurrection of the dead; but it merely describes the condition of mankind respecting this present life. (Note, Ec. i. 4—11.)—As therefore Job could get no relief from his sufferings, he resolved to relieve his mind by venting his complaints.—If he had poured out his soul before God, that indeed would have abated the anguish of his spirit; but his expostulations only increased his vexation, and seemed to reflect on the divine justice and goodness. (Notes, 1 Sam. i. 9—16. Ps. xxxix. 1—4. lxxvii. 1—3. cxlii. 1—3. Matt. xxvi. 36—46.)

V. 12. Again addressing God, as the Author of his sufferings, Job enquired whether he were like a tempestuous ocean, or some whale, or unruly monster, that it was needful he should be restrained from doing mischief by such heavy afflictions; which confined him like chains, a prison, and a guard, so that he could not move.

V. 13, 14. It may be supposed that Satan was the author of these terrifying dreams and visions. Job, indeed,

supposed that they were sent from God to enhance his distress; but God only *permitted* them for the trial of his faith. (Notes, Gen. xl. 6. xli. 1—8. Dan. ii. 1. iv. 4—7. Matt. xxvii. 19—23.)

V. 15, 16. Job was so weary of life, that he would have preferred any violent death to its continuance, while wasted to a skeleton, and filled with pain. Nay, he so loathed life, that he besought God to withdraw his supporting hand, and then he should expire of course. This at least seems to have been his meaning.—He would not, however, destroy his own life. (Note, vi. 8—13.)

V. 17—19. Why should the almighty God magnify such a poor worm as man, in thus contending with him, and setting his heart upon subduing him; watching his opportunities of afflicting him, or making continual trial how much he could support, without allowing him a moment's respite? (Notes, xxxiv. 10—15. Ps. viii. 4—9. cxliv. 3, 4.)—It is difficult to expound the language of one, who spoke the dictates of passion, rather than of reason, and whose soul was engaged in a continued conflict between temptation and divine grace; which alternately prevailed, and reciprocally defeated the effects of each other. (Note, Gal. v. 16—18.)

V. 20, 21. Job would not allow that he was a wicked man, or a hypocrite: yet he confessed before God, that he was a sinner; he acknowledged that he could do nothing to recover his favour; and he enquired for what cause the Lord marked him out from among his fellow-sinners, as the object of his particular displeasure, by such unprecedented calamities as rendered him "a burden to himself." (Note, xvi. 6—16. Lam. iii. 10—13.)—He called God "the Preserver of men." He is the Preserver of our lives,

CHAP. VIII.

Bildad blames Job for reflecting on the justice of God, 1—3. He intimates that his children had been cast off for their sins; yet encourages Job to seek unto God, 4—7. He appeals to the ancients, to prove the certain doom of hypocrites, 8—19. He applies the argument to the case of Job, 20—22.

and the Saviour of the souls of all that believe: but probably Job meant “the *Observer* of men,” for his eyes are upon the ways and upon the hearts of all men, to render to every one of them according to their deeds.—Job was also assured, that God was merciful, and that he could, consistently with his glory, pardon his transgressions and take away his iniquity; and he was very desirous of some token, that this inestimable favour was granted him. Indeed, he could not understand why God did not forgive him; and he apprehended that this mercy, if not granted soon, would come too late: for that he should, during the night, be laid in the dust, and when the Lord in the morning sought for him to shew him favour, he should not be found.—These concluding verses contain a very singular intermixture of faith and unbelief; and this renders it the more difficult to explain them.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

The appointed term of our lives is known to God, but to us it is *uncertain*: while it continues, we have a warfare to accomplish, and a work to do; and our eternal state will be decided accordingly as we acquit ourselves. The believer, by the grace of God, “fights the good fight of “faith,” and performs his appointed service; then rests from his labours, and receives the conqueror’s crown, as a gracious recompence from the hand of his merciful Saviour.—When conflicting with sore temptations, and burdened with weighty afflictions, we may properly long after the promised rest, and welcome the shadows of the evening, the assaults of sickness, the inroads of old age, and the prospects of dissolution: yet, like valiant soldiers, or patient labourers, we should be willing to endure fatigue and hardship a little longer, and not impatiently desire release from suffering.—“Wearisome months and years in—“deed may be appointed for us:” and some eminent servants of God have had such complicated sufferings, by day and by night, as to deprive them of all ease and respite. Nay, Satan has been permitted so to harass them with temptations, when asleep as well as when awake, that the horror and anguish of their dreams have given them an idea of hell itself.—In such circumstances it cannot be expected, that the tempest-tossed sufferer should avoid all improper expressions: and as, if this were our own case, we should need tenderness and forbearance from our brethren; we should learn to make allowances for them, and behave toward them, when in distress, with candour and compassion. We should also pray earnestly not to be “led “into temptation;” and we may well loathe such an evil world as this, and be unwilling to remain in it for ever: yet life with all its sorrows, is valuable, if improved to glorify our God, to serve our generation, and to secure our own salvation. Though the Lord will prove his people,

THEN answered ^a Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

2 ^b How long wilt thou speak these things? and how long shall ^c the words of thy mouth be like a strong wind?

3 ^d Doth God pervert judgment? or doth ^e the Almighty pervert justice?

xxxiii. 17. 20. Dan. ix. 14. Rom. ii. 5. iii. 4—6. e xxi. 15. 20. xxxiv. 10—12. xxxv. 13. xl. 2. Ps. xcix. 4. Rev. xv. 3. xvi. 7.

and Satan may tempt them, and they may passionately “choose strangling rather than life;” yet grace will restrain the actings of indwelling sin, and preserve them from presumptuous and desperate wickedness; and divine consolations will in general counterbalance outward sufferings.—But how wretched is sinful man without the knowledge of a Saviour! Accumulated miseries may render life intolerable, and fears of future vengeance make the thought of death unspeakably tremendous; or, being hardened in infidelity or despair, a poor sinner may be tempted, as “choosing strangling, and death rather than life,” to plunge himself from temporal into eternal misery.—How loathsome may disease render our sinful bodies, even while we live! and death will surely return them, by putrefaction, to the dust whence they were taken. To that state we are all hastening; our days pass away swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, our lives are vanishing like the unstable cloud, and our earthly possessions will soon be in other hands. Let us then despair of seeing good on earth, except in the hope of heaven; let us without delay “seek “those things which are above;” and, instead of rebelliously murmuring at the appointments of God, and speaking “in the bitterness of our souls,” let us pour out our hearts in humble confessions of our sins, and in fervent prayers for forgiveness, and that we may be spared till fitted for a better world.—Whatever may be thought in the hour of temptation, the Lord is kind to his people; and he is doing them important good, when perhaps they are ready to conclude, that he is waiting an occasion to destroy them. His condescension and compassion to such worthless worms are infinite: he could crush us in a moment, and we all deserve it; but he visits and chastens us for our good, to exercise and prove our graces, to subdue our iniquities, and to restrain us from sin: and his mercies are far more numerous than the stripes of his correcting rod.—The Lord is our constant *Observer*; but he is also the gracious Saviour of all who trust in him. As we can conceal nothing from him, let us plead guilty before his throne of grace, that we may not be condemned at his judgment-seat. And we should do this earnestly; because in the grave, it will be too late to repent and seek his face. But if we wait upon him in the appointed way, the tokens of his love will in due time be vouchsafed; and we may then look forward to the hour of death, with patient submission and joyful hope.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—3. As the messengers had come one after another, to inform Job of his calamities; (*Notes*, i. 13—19;) so his friends followed each other in their censures of him: and thus they inadvertently aided Satan in tempting him to blasphemy and despair. (*Notes*, i. 9—11.

i. 5. 18, 19. v. 4. xviii. 16-19. Gen. xiii. 13. xix. 13-25.
4 If thy children have sinned against him, and ^f he have cast them away ^g for their transgression;

g v. 8. xi. 13. xxii. 21-23. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. Is. lv. 6, 7. Matt. vii. 7, 8. Heb. iii. 7, 8. Jam. iv. 7-10.
5 If ^h thou wouldest seek unto God betimes, and make thy supplication to the Almighty;

h i. 8. iv. 6, 7. xi. 14, 15. xvi. 17. Ps. xxvi. 5, 6. Prov. xv. 8. Is. i. 15-19. 1 Tim. ii. 8. 1 John iii. 19-22.
6 If ^h thou wert pure and upright; surely now ⁱ he would awake for thee, and ^k make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous.

i Ps. xlv. 23. lix. 4, 5. Is. li. 9. k xxii. 23-30. Is. iii. 10.
7 Though ^l thy beginning was small, yet ^m thy latter end should greatly increase.

l xlii. 12, 13. Prov. iv. 18. Zech. iv. 10. Matt. xiii. 12, 31, 32.
8 For ⁿ enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers:

n xlii. 12. xv. 10. 18. xxxii. 6, 7. Deut. iv. 32. xxxii. 7. Ps. xlv. 1. lxxviii. 3, 4. Is. xxxviii. 19. Rom. xv. 4. 1 Cor. x. 11.
9 (For ^o we are but of yesterday, and know ^t nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow:)

o vii. 6. Gen. xlvii. 9. 1 Chr. xxix. 15. Ps. xxxix. 5. xc. 4. cii. 11. cxliv. 4.
10 ^p Shall not they teach thee, and tell thee, and ^q utter words out of their heart?

p xii. 7, 8. xxxii. 7. Deut. vi. 7. xi. 19. Ps. cxlv. 4. Heb. xi. 4. xii. 1.
11 Can the rush grow up without

q Prov. xvi. 23. xviii. 15. Matt. xii. 35.

iv. 1.) It seems that they were agreed in their judgment, concerning the case and character of Job; so that it next devolved on Bildad to answer him, and confirm the doctrine of Eliphaz.—Job had spoken important truths, though intermingled with many sallies of passion: but Bildad abruptly and harshly condemned the whole, as boisterous, unreasonable, and pernicious, like a tempestuous wind; and charged him with stating, that God perverted justice and judgment, which Job certainly did not mean to do. (Notes, xxxiv. 10—15. Gen. xviii. 23—26.)

V. 4—7. Perhaps Bildad intended to distinguish between the case of Job, and that of his children, in order to shew that there was yet hope for him, though not for them: but many think he designed to warn him, by the example of sudden vengeance thus set before him. It was, however, very unfeeling thus to introduce so distressing a subject; and still more so to intimate that his children had been cut off for their sins, and had perished in them. (Notes, i. 5. 13. 18, 19. iv. 7—11. v. 3—5.)—The language also, in which Bildad conveys his good counsel, seems to imply, that Job's integrity and piety must at least remain dubious, unless manifested by his returning prosperity: whereas, had he died of his disease, or worn out many years in penury and pain, it would have been no just impeachment of his character; especially if he had recovered the composure of his mind, in submission to the will of God. It was right, however, to exhort Job without delay, to seek and pray unto God; and to encourage him to hope for the recovery of his health and comforts, from the goodness of the Almighty; who was able to raise him, from very small beginnings, to a great increase of wealth, honour, and happiness. (Notes, v. 8—16. xxii. 21—30.)

V. 8—10. Job had slighted the discourse of Eliphaz as insipid, and his arguments as inconclusive. (Note, vi. 5—

mire? ^r can the flag grow without water?

12 Whilst it is ^s yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb.

13 So are the paths of all ^t that forget God; and ^u the hypocrite's hope shall perish:

14 Whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a spider's ^v web.

15 He shall lean upon his house, but ^w it shall not stand: he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure.

16 He is ^x green before the sun, and ^y his branch shooteth forth in his garden.

17 His ^z roots are wrapped about the heap, and seeth the place of stones.

18 If ^a he destroy him from his place, then it shall deny him, saying, I have not seen thee.

19 Behold, ^b this is the joy of his way, and ^c out of the earth shall others grow.

s Ps. cxxxix 6, 7. Jer. xvii. 6. Jam. i. 10, 11. 1 Pet. i. 24.
t Deut. vi. 12. viii. 11, 14, 19. Ps. ix. 17. x. 4. l. 22. Is. li. 13.
u xi. 20. xiii. 16. xv. 34. xx. 5. xxvii. 8-10. xxxvi. 13. Prov. xii. 7. Is. xxxiii. 14. Lam. iii. 18. Matt. xxiv. 51. Luke xii. 1, 2.
v Heb. house. Is. lix. 5, 6.
w xviii. 14. xxvii. 18. Ps. lii. 5-7. cxii. 10. Prov. x. 28. Matt. vii. 24-27. Luke vi. 47-49.
y xxi. 7-15. Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36. lxxiii. 3-12.
z v. 3.
a xviii. 16. xxix. 19. Is. v. 24. xl. 24. Jer. xii. 1, 2. Mark xi. 20. Jude 12.
b vii. 10. xx. 9. Ps. xxxvii. 10. 36. lxxiii. 18, 19. xcii. 7.
c xx. 5. Matt. xiii. 20, 21.
d 1 Sam. ii. 8. Ps. lxxv. 7. cxiii. 7. Ez. xvii. 24.

7.) Bildad therefore allowed that, by reason of the comparative shortness of their lives, they did not know so much as their fathers did, who had had longer time for making observations, and could speak more decidedly from their own heart, or experience. To their testimony therefore he appealed, and desired Job to bestow pains to examine the traditions or records, which they had preserved of their sentiments. (Note, v. 1.)—Some think that Bildad, being descended from Abraham by Keturah, had especial reference to the eminent piety and prosperity of that patriarch.—It has been observed, that Job and his friends actually possessed all that superiority of knowledge on every useful subject, especially on things relating to true religion, which has been groundlessly ascribed to the Egyptians, and others: and that they traced this knowledge back to the tradition of the fathers, or patriarchs; that is, to traditional revelation.

V. 11—19. It seems to have been Bildad's design, in this passage, to represent, by various similitudes, the apparent piety, and the fading prosperity, of the hypocrite; and to insinuate that this was applicable to the case of Job.—A rush, or flag, growing by the river's side, or in a fenny soil, flourishes while well watered: but when the mire and water fail through drought, it needs not be cut down, but withers of itself, more speedily than other herbs. Thus the hypocrite's professed religion, and confidence in God, are maintained, while worldly interests nourish them; but they come to nothing when these supports fail. Having no root of faith and grace, his piety dies away in persecution or tribulation: and, in like manner, God may often expose his hypocrisy by taking away his prosperity. (Notes, Matt. xiii. 20, 21. Jude 11—13.) This, indeed, is the proper emblem of all those who forget God; but especially of the hypocrite.—His vain confidence may also be com-

iv. 7. ix. 22. Ps.

xxxvii. 24. 37.

* Heb. take the
ungodly by the
hand. Is. xlv. 1.

† Gen. xxi. 6. Ps.

cxxxvi. 2. 6. Luke

vi. 21.

† Heb. shouting
for joy. Ezra iii.

11—13. Neh. xii.

43. Ps. xxxii. 11

xcviii. 4. c. 1. Is. lxx. 13, 14.

20 Behold, * God will not cast away
a perfect *man*, neither will he * help
the evil doers:

21 Till † he fill thy mouth with
laughing, and thy lips with † rejoicing.

22 They that hate thee shall be

* clothed with shame; and the dwell-
ing place of the wicked shall † come to
nought.

CHAP. IX.

Job acknowledges and celebrates God's justice,
wisdom, power, and wonderful works, 1—13. He

pared to the spider's web, spun by the insect from its own resources, with great ingenuity, and suited to answer its present purposes; but easily swept away at once, as though it had never been. (Note, Is. lix. 3—8.) Thus suitable temptations destroy the hypocrite's religion; sudden judgments tear from him all his transient prosperity; and all his endeavours to maintain either his character for piety, or his worldly consequence, by means of powerful friends and relations, prove unsuccessful. Indeed he may be compared to a tree growing in the garden, and striking root even into the rock; yet after a time cut down and thrown aside, while another is planted in its place. So wicked men, when they seem most firmly established, are suddenly thrown down, treated with neglect, and sink into oblivion and contempt; while others, from the lowest stations and of the same disposition, come in their place, whose joy in their wicked ways is equally transient and unstable.—In general, the hypocrite's religion, and the ungodly man's prosperity, having no firm support, are precarious and of short duration: yet, as to this present world, every general rule admits of many exceptions; and the illustrations adduced were wholly inapplicable to the case of Job.

V. 20—22. If Job were indeed a sound character, without guile or hypocrisy in his professed piety; (Notes, i. 1. John i. 47—51;) Bildad was assured that his prosperity and comfort would return, and his enemies would be put to shame: (Marg. Ref.) but if he were a wicked man, he would never be raised above his calamities, but would sink under them.—Bildad seems to have formed in his mind a fixed rule of Providence concerning this. Yet there was a fallacy in his reasoning, and that of his friends, arising from their not distinguishing between the *present state of trial* and discipline, and the *future state of retributions*. Hence they concluded, that Job denied the justice of God and the advantages of piety; because he maintained that, in this world, wicked men often prospered, and godly men were afflicted.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Even in *religious* controversies, it is common for men to treat each other with acrimony, and their opponents with contempt; to overlook what is evidently good; to make the worst of what is apparently faulty; and to charge horrible consequences upon very inoffensive tenets.—There is a way, which some have, of bringing odium on the sentiments of those who oppose them, by attempting to shew that they impute injustice, cruelty, or tyranny to the Almighty, which is calculated to shock every pious mind. Truth needs not, and error ought not, to be thus defended. We are not competent to judge in most cases, what it becomes the universal and everlasting Sovereign to do. We should believe assuredly that he is just, wise, and good, in those dispensations which exceed our comprehension; and wait for the “day of the revelation of his righteous judgment” to the assembled world. Nay, even when doc-

trines may evidently be *proved* inconsistent with the divine perfections, as well as with Scripture, it becomes us to treat such subjects with great reverence, modesty, and caution. We are sure God will “not pervert judgment:” he can have no inducement to it, and it is impossible in itself. But we must not judge of characters by providential dispensations, or concur with those who condemn the afflicted. When we mention the remarkable deaths of others, we should not consider them as divine judgments, or decide on the state of their souls; except upon the most undeniable evidence of their presumptuous impenitent wickedness: and it is cruel needlessly to mention a case of this kind, however striking, in the presence of a sorrowing parent or relation. On every occasion, however, waving all topicks foreign to the subject, we should exhort the afflicted to “seek the LORD,” without delay, by earnest prayer; and we should encourage them with the prospect of returning comfort from his power and mercy. He will awake for those who sincerely repent and believe: and, though their “beginning be small, their latter end will greatly increase.”—We should, indeed, prepare diligently to enquire into the sentiments of wise men in other ages on these important subjects; especially that we may become acquainted with the experience and observations of those “elders, who through faith obtained a good report,” and which are recorded for our instruction and warning. And, notwithstanding the shortness of our lives, we may thus obtain true wisdom for our present and eternal good. But all human authority, whether of ancient fathers or modern reasoners, must be submitted to the decision of the sacred oracles.—Forgetfulness of God, and false apprehensions of him, his truth, and his will, render men either hypocrites or openly ungodly. These evils spring from a corrupt and carnal mind; and wicked men, of every description, will find that their joys and hopes must soon wither like the worthless rush, and be swept away as the spider's web, and they themselves cut down like the barren fig-tree. (Notes, Matt. iii. 7—10. Luke xiii. 6—9.) To these earthly joys and false confidences one generation succeeds after another; while millions perish without any regarding it! Thus men deceive themselves and others, and are deceived by Satan: yet every object in nature, when duly attended to, warns them not to lean on failing supports, to adopt self-devised expedients, or to rejoice in perishing comforts.—But, though the upright soul may be severely tried, God will never cast him away; and at length he shall be filled with satisfying and unfailing joy, to the confusion of his enemies who shall “perish for ever.” May we choose the portion, possess the confidence, bear the cross, and “die the death of the righteous;” and in the mean time, let us be careful neither to wound others by rash judgments; nor greatly to distress ourselves about the opinion of our fellow-servants, however eminent they may be for wisdom and discernment.

iv. 17. xiv. 3, 4. xxv. 4. xxxii. 2. xxxiii. 9. xxxiv. 5. 1 Kings viii. 46. Ps. cxxx. 3. cxliii. 2. Rom. iii. 20.
 * Or, *before*.
 o 20. 32, 33. x. 2. xxxiii. 3—7. xxxi. 35—37. xxxiii. 13. xxxiv. 14. 15. xl. 2. Is. lvii. 15, 16. Rom. ix. 20.
 c Ps. xix. 12. xl. 12. 1 John i. 8. iii. 20.
 d 19. xxxvi. 5. Ps. civ. 24. cxxxvi. 5. Dan. ii. 20. iv. 34—37. Rom. xi. 33. Eph. i. 8. 19. iii. 10. 20. Jude 24, 25.
 e vi. 10. xv. 23—27. xl. 9. Ex. ix. 14—17. xiv. 17. 18. Prov. xxviii. 14. xxix. 1. Dan. v. 20—30. 1 Cor. x. 22.
 f xxxviii. 9. Ps. xli. 2. lxxviii. 8. cxiv. 6. Is. xl. 12. Hab. iii. 6. 10. Zech. iv. 7. Matt. xxi. 21. 1 Cor. xiii. 2. Rev. vi. 14. xi. 13.
 g Nah. i. 5, 6. Zech. xiv. 4, 5. Matt. xxvii. 51. Luke xxi. 11. Rev. xvi. 18—20. h Is. ii. 19, 21. xiii. 13, 14. xxiv. 1. 19, 20. Hag. ii. 6, 21. Heb. xii. 26. Rev. xx. 11. i xxvi. 1. xxxviii. 4—7. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Ps. lxxv. 3. cxiv. 7. Jer. iv. 24. Joel ii. 10. k Ex. x. 21, 22. Dan. iv. 35. Am. iv. 13. viii. 9. Matt. xxiv. 29. l xxxvii. 7. xxxviii. 12—15. 19, 20. Is. xiii. 10. Ez. xxxii. 7. Luke xxi. 25, 26.

disclaims all attempts to justify himself, 14—21; but insists, that a man's innocency should not be judged of, by what befalls him in this world, 22—24. He alleges his sufferings, but will not presume to dispute with the Author of them, 25—35.

THEN Job answered and said,

2 I know *it is* so of a truth: but
 a how should man be just * with God?

3 If ^b he will contend with him, ^c he cannot answer him one of a thousand.

4 *He is* ^d wise in heart, and mighty in strength: ^e who hath hardened *himself* against him, and hath prospered?

5 Which ^f removeth the mountains, and they know not; ^g which overturneth them in his anger;

6 Which ^h shaketh the earth out of her place, and ⁱ the pillars thereof tremble;

7 Which ^k commandeth the sun, and it riseth not, and ^l sealeth up the stars;

8 Which ^m alone spreadeth out the heavens, and ⁿ treadeth upon the ^o waves of the sea:

8 Which ^m alone spreadeth out the heavens, and ⁿ treadeth upon the ^o waves of the sea:

9 Which ^p maketh ^q Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and ^r the chambers of the south;

10 Which doeth ^s great things past finding out; yea, and ^t wonders without number.

11 Lo, ^u he goeth by me, and I see *him* not: he passeth on also, but I perceive him not.

12 Behold ^v he taketh away, who can ^w hinder him? who will say unto him, ^x What doest thou?

13 If God will not withdraw his anger, ^y the ^z proud helpers do stoop under him.

14 ^a How much less ^b shall I answer him, and ^c choose out my words to reason with him?

15 Whom, ^d though I were right-

m xxxvii. 18. Gen. i. 6, 7. Ps. xxxiii. 5. civ. 2, 3. Is. xl. 22. xlii. 5. xlii. 24. Jer. x. 11. Zech. xii. 1. xxxviii. 11. Ps. xciii. 3, 4. Matt. xiv. 25—30. John vi. 19.
 † Heb. *heights*.
 o xxxviii. 31, 32. Gen. i. 16. Ps. cxlvii. 4. Am. v. 8.
 ‡ Heb. *Ash, Cecil, and Cimah*.
 p Ps. civ. 3. 13. Acts xxviii. 13.
 q v. 9. xxxvii. 12—14. xxxviii. 23. Ps. lxxii. 15. lxxii. 18. Ec. iii. 11. Is. xl. 26—28. Rom. xi. 33. Eph. iii. 20.
 r Ex. xv. 11. Ps. cxxxvi. 4. Dan. iv. 2, 3.
 s xxxiii. 8, 9. xxxv. 14. Ps. lxxvii. 19. 1 Tim. vi. 16.
 t xxxiii. 13. xxxiv. 29. Dan. iv. 35. Eph. i. 11.
 † Heb. *turn him away*? xi. 10.
 u xxxiii. 13. Is. xlv. 9. Jer. xviii. 6. Matt. xi. 26. xx. 15. Rom. ix. 18—20. xi. 34.
 x xxvi. 12. xl. 9—11. Is. xxx. 7. xxxi. 2, 3. Jam. i. 19. xxv. 6. 1 Kings b x. 15. 1 Cor. iv. 4.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1—3. In this answer, Job paid no regard to Bildad's severe reflections, but confined himself more to the point in hand than before. He declared, (referring to Bildad's assertion that God did not "pervert justice," viii. 3,) that he had no doubt concerning the righteousness of God in all his dispensations; nor did he mean otherwise, when he denied himself to be a hypocrite: "for how should man be just with God?" Before him he pleaded guilty of numerous transgressions; and should God contend with him in judgment, he could not justify one out of a thousand, of all the thoughts, words, and actions of his life: so that he deserved worse than all his present sufferings. But he evidently meant, that this was common to him with the best of men, and did not prove him a hypocrite, or an atrocious criminal; though his afflictions were great beyond example.

If he will, &c.] יִשְׁפַּח אֱלֹהִים, if he shall be pleased:—εἰ βούληται. Sept.

V. 4—13. Instead of cursing God to his face, (as Satan falsely asserted he would,) Job set himself to celebrate his perfections and wonderful works. He was as fully assured of the wisdom and power of God, as of his justice: he knew that none could finally prosper or be happy, who hardened themselves in rebellion against him. Indeed, opposition against him must be as foolish as impious: the Almighty, without any previous notice, is able to overturn the deep-rooted mountains, to shake the nations with earthquakes, and to remove or destroy the earth in a moment; he can forbid the sun or stars to shine, or at once extinguish their fires; he spreadeth out the heavens as his canopy, and walketh upon the stormy waves of the sea as subjected to his authority; (Note, Matt. xiv. 25—27;) and

he arrangeth the constellations of the heavens, and the seasons of the year, as he pleaseth. In short, his works are incomprehensibly great, and innumerable. In all these things he acts invisibly, and on every side: he is present, though unperceived; and can crush his opponents ere they are aware. He can also take away children, wealth, health, or life; and none can hinder him, or call him to account: and if his anger be not pacified, the stoutest and proudest helpers must sink under his powerful vengeance. It would be madness therefore for feeble man to resist his will.—No allusion appears to be made in this passage, to the miraculous displays of the divine power recorded in Scripture, except it be to the convulsions of the deluge.—The names, "Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades," are taken from the Greek, and are supposed to correspond with the original words. "The chambers of the south," may mean those stars, which are seen in the southern hemisphere, but not in the northern, or those which only appear in the south at certain seasons of the year. (Notes, xxxviii. 31—41. Am. v. 7—9.)

The LXX in this place render ^{פְּלִיָּאָדָּה}, ^{אֲרִקְטֻרֻס}, and ^{אֲרִקְטֻרֻס}, by ^{πλειάδα}, ^{ἑσπερον}, and ^{αρκτουρον}, respectively.—But in xxxviii. 31, they have rendered ^{אֲרִקְטֻרֻס} by ^{πλειάδος}, ^{אֲרִקְטֻרֻס} by ^{αρκτουρος}, and ^{פְּלִיָּאָדָּה} by ^{ἑσπερον}. Hence it appears that these ancient translators had no very exact ideas of the meaning of the original words.

V. 14—21. If therefore no man could justify himself before God, or withstand his power, Job, in his present abject condition, thought himself peculiarly unfit for so bold an attempt; for his mind was confused, and he could not select apt words to express his meaning, in what he desired to speak concerning him. Even if he had been completely righteous, he would rather supplicate the favour of his Judge, than claim deliverance from his justice.

^c 7. 8. viii. 5. x. 2. ^{xxii.} 27. ^{xxiv.} 51, 32. ^{1 Kings} viii. 38, 39. ^{2 Chr.} xxxiii. 13. ^{Jer.} xxxi. 9. ^{Dan.} ix. 3. 18. ^d ^{xxiii.} 7. ^{1 Pet.} ii. 23. ^e ^{Ps.} xviii. 6. ^{lxvi.} 18—20. ^{cxvi.} 1, 2. ^f ^{xxix.} 24. ^{Ex.} vi. 9. ^{Judg.} vi. 13. ^{Ps.} cxvi. 1. ^{Luke} xxiv. 41. ^{Acts} xii. 14—16. ^g ^{xvi.} 14. ^{Ps.} xxxix. 5. ^{xlii.} 7. ^{lxxxiii.} 15. ^{Is.} xxviii. 17. ^{Jer.} xxxiii. 19. ^{Ez.} xiii. 13. ^{Matt.} vii. 27. ^{xii.} 20. ^h ^{i.} 14—19. ^{ii.} 7. 13. ^{ii.} 3. ^{xvi.} 17. ^{xxxiv.} 6. ^{Ps.} xxv. 3. ^{John} ix. 3. ^{xv.} 25. ^k ^{vii.} 19. ^{Ps.} xxxix. 13. ^{lxxxviii.} 7. 15—18. ^{Lam.} iii. 3. 8. ^l ^{iii.} 20. ^{Lam.} iii. 15. 19. ^{Heb.} xii. 11. ^m ^{See on 4.—xxxvi.} 17—19. ^{xl.} 9, 10. ^{Ps.} lxii. 11. ^{Matt.} vi. 13. ^{1 Cor.} i. 25. ^{x.} 22. ⁿ 32, 33. ^{xxxi.} 35. ^{xxxii.} 5—7. ^o 2. ^{iv.} 17. ^{xxxii.} 1, 2. ^{Ps.} cxxx. 3. ^{cxliii.} 2. ^{Luke} x. 29. ^{xvi.} 15. ^p ^{xv.} 5, 6. ^{xxxiv.} 35. ^{xxxv.} 16. ^{Prov.} x. 19. ^{Is.} vi. 5. ^{Matt.} xii. 36, 37. ^{Jam.} iii. 2. ^q ^{i.} 1. ^{Phil.} iii. 12—15.

Indeed, he was so entirely disheartened, that an immediate answer to his prayer could not embolden him to hope, that God would return to him in mercy. For though conscious, that he had not given cause for it by any gross wickedness, or hypocrisy; yet God had so overwhelmed him with the tempest of his wrath; had so wounded him in body and soul, with reiterated strokes, without giving him the least breathing time; and had so filled him with bitterness; that he could not but regard him with terror. (Notes, xvi. 6—16. Ps. lxxvii. 2, 3.) At the same time, he knew that it was impossible to resist his almighty power, or to escape his omnipresence: and it would be equally absurd to think of deciding the controversy by a judicial trial; for who had authority to act as judge, and to appoint the time and place of hearing? Nay, were that possible, it would be in vain: for, if no other guilt should be charged on him, his attempt to justify himself before God, and every argument which he should use in such a cause, would condemn him as a perverse and rebellious creature. Even if not conscious of any guilt, he would not think himself free from criminality; for he did not know his own soul, as his heart-searching Judge did: and therefore he would despise his own life; and submit to any sentence, rather than contend with the Majesty of heaven. (Note, 1 Cor. iv. 3—5.)—There is in this passage a great deal of truth, as well as sound reasoning and honourable thoughts of God; yet there is also a considerable tincture of unbelief and despondency. Some hope in the divine mercy seems implied; but that attribute is not mentioned, and Job was only just supported from sinking into despair.—Those who know something of Satan's dark temptations, when the soul is filled with horrible thoughts of God, which tend to subvert the foundations of hope, will, from their own distressing experience, better understand Job's meaning, than from any unexperienced commentator. Had they at such times been urged to speak, their discourse would have contained a similar conflict between hard and honourable thoughts of God; between gloomy despondency and feeble hope; rebellious murmurs and a desire to submit, conscious that it was their duty so to do. (Notes,

am perfect, ^r it shall also prove me ^r perverse.

21 *Though I were perfect, yet* ^s would I not know my soul: ^t I would despise my life.

22 *This is one thing, therefore I* said it, ^u He destroyeth the perfect and the wicked.

23 If ^v the scourge slay suddenly, ^y he will laugh at the trial of the innocent.

24 The ^z earth is given into the hand of the wicked: ^a he covereth the faces of the judges thereof; ^b if not, where, and who is he?

25 ¶ Now my days are ^c swifter than a post: ^d they flee away, they see no good.

^{xxiii.} 8—13. ^{Prov.} xvii. 20. ^{1 Tim.} vi. 5. ^s ^{Ps.} cxxxix. 23. ^{24.} ^{Prov.} xxviii. 26. ^{Jer.} xvii. 9. ^{10.} ^{1 Cor.} iv. 4. ^{1 John} iii. 20. ^t ^{vii.} 15, 16. 21. ^u ^{Ec.} ix. 1, 2. ^{Ez.} xxi. 3, 4. ^{Luke} xiii. 2—4. ^x ^{i.} 13—19. ^{ii.} 7. ^{iv.} 7. ^{viii.} 20. ^{2 Sam.} xxiv. 15. ^{17.} ^{Ps.} xlii. 22. ^{Ez.} xiv. 19—21. ^{xxi.} 13. ^{Heb.} xi. 36, 37. ^z ^{xii.} 6—10. ^{xxi.} 7—15. ^{Ps.} xvii. 14. ^{lxxxiii.} 5—7. ^{Jer.} xii. 1, 2. ^{Dan.} iv. 17. ^{v.} 18—21. ^{vii.} 7. ^{&c.} ^{Hab.} i. 14—17. ^a ^{2 Sam.} xv. 30. ^{xix.} 4. ^{Esth.} vi. 12. ^{vii.} 8. ^{Jer.} xiv. 4. ^b ^{xxiv.} 25. ^{xxxii.} 2. ^c ^{vii.} 6, 7. ^{Esth.} viii. 14. ^d ^{Ps.} cxxxix. 5. 11. ^{lxxxix.} 47. ^{xc.} 9. ^{10.} ^{Jam.} iv. 14.

Jer. xx. 10—18.)—Without cause. (17) Notes, 1—3. Ps. xxv. 2, 3.

V. 22—24. Here Job lays down the precise subject, upon which he was at issue with his friends, and on which the Lord at length decided in his favour. (Note, xlii. 7—9.) He maintained against them, that the dispensations of Providence, in this world, make no exact discrimination between the righteous and the wicked; that when God scourges guilty nations, by war, famine, or pestilence, those who are comparatively innocent and truly pious, are often involved in the common calamity; and that in these sudden desolations the Lord does not wait, so to speak, to try their causes. Or Job may be understood to speak figuratively of the scourge, as laughing at distinctions in the characters of the sufferers. (Notes, viii. 20—22. Ec. ix. 1—3. Ez. xxi. 2—5.) Indeed the earth is chiefly possessed and governed by wicked men; and the judges of it are commonly blinded by their lusts, or hoodwinked by bribery, so that they frequently oppress and persecute the righteous. Yet, God gives them their power, and allows them to prosper in their crimes, by which they are still further blinded and hardened. And who is he, that can deny these facts? or maintain, in the view of them, that this is a state of exact retribution? (Notes, xii. 6—10. xxi. 7—22. Ps. xvii. 13—15. lxxxiii. 1—14. Jer. xii. 1—4. Mal. iii. 13—18.)

V. 25—35. Here Job again renewed his complaints, with the same incoherency and conflict of contending passions as before. He regarded his life, as having suddenly come to a wretched end; and with a velocity that surpassed the speed of the swiftest runner, who hasted to convey important tidings, (Note, 2 Chr. xxx. 6—9,) of the swiftest ships, and even of the eagle hasting to the prey. All his efforts to rise superior to the tumult of his passions were unavailing; he could not but fear even worse than he suffered; and as he was indeed a sinner, and his friends condemned him, he was alarmed lest God should finally reject him. If indeed he were a wicked man, it would be labour in vain to vindicate his character: for when he had done all in his power for that purpose; God would detect his

26 They are passed away as the
* swift ships: * as the eagle *that* hast-
eth to the prey.

27 If I say, ^f I will forget my com-
plaint, I will leave off my heaviness,
and comfort *myself*;

28 I am ^g afraid of all my sorrows,
^h I know that thou wilt not hold me
innocent.

29 If I ⁱ be wicked, why then labour
I in vain?

30 If ^k I wash myself with snow-
water, and make my hands never so
clean;

31 Yet ^l shalt thou plunge me in
the ditch, and ^m mine own clothes shall
[†] abhor me.

32 For *he is* ⁿ not a man, as I am,
that I should answer him, and ^o we
should come together in judgment.

33 Neither ^p is there any [†] day's-
man betwixt us, *that* ^q might lay his
hand upon us both.

34 Let him take his rod away from
me, and ^r let not his fear terrify
me:

35 *Then* would I speak, and not fear
him; ^s but *it is* not so with me.

* Heb. ships of
desire, or ships
of Ebeh.

xxxix. 27—30.

2 Sam. i. 23.

Prov. xxiii. 5.

Jer. iv. 13. Lam.

iv. 19. Hab. i. 8.

vii. 13. Ps. lxxvii.

2, 3. Jer. viii. 18.

xxi. 6. Ps.

lxx. iii. 15, 16

cxix. 120.

h 2, 20, 21. xiv.

16, 17. Ex. xx.

7. Ps. cxxx. 3

i 22. x. 7. 14—17.

xxi. 16, 17. 27.

xxii. 5, &c. Ps.

lxxiii. 13. Jer. ii.

35

k Ps. xxvi. 6

Prov. xxviii. 13.

Is. i. 16—18

Jer. ii. 22. iv. 14.

Rom. x. 3

1 John i. 8.

l 20. xv. 6.

m Is. lix. 6. lxiv.

6. Phil. iii. 8, 9.

† Or, make me to

be abhorred.

n xxxiii. 12. xxxv.

5—7. Num. xxxiii.

19. 1 Sam. xvi.

7. Ec. vi. 10. Is.

xlv. 9. Jer. xlix.

19. Rom. ix. 20.

1 John iii. 20.

o xxxiii. 18—23. xxxiii.

3—7. Ps. cxliii. 2.

p 19. 1 Sam. ii. 25.

1 John ii. 1, 2.

† Heb. one that

should argue, or,

umpire.

q 1 Kings iii. 16,

&c.

r xiii. 11. 20—22.

xxxiii. 15. xxxii.

23. xxxiii. 7.

xxxvii. 1. Ps.

xxxix. 10. xc. 11.

† Heb. but I am

not so with my-

self. xxix. 2, &c.

secret iniquities, and thus thrust him as it were into the mire, till his very garments rendered him abhorred. Nay, though he were not a wicked man, yet the discovery of all his former sins, and of the defects of his present obedience, would shew him to be “as an unclean thing, and his “righteousnesses as filthy rags.” (Note, Is. lxiv. 6—8.) Indeed, his loathsome disease, and his other afflictions, were interpreted by his friends as proofs of his guilt, and as God’s plunging him in a ditch, and rendering him abominable; notwithstanding all the proof which he could give of his integrity. So that there was nothing to be attempted in so unequal a contest with God: there was no “day’s-man,” or *umpire*, to decide upon the merits of the cause, whose authority might induce submission to his award: and as to himself, he was so confused and terrified, that he could not make the best of his cause. If his afflictions and terrors were removed, he could then speak without fear: but as the case now stood he might as well hold his peace.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—21.

The justice, wisdom, truth, and goodness of God, must be taken for granted, whatever sentiments we defend or oppose; for “shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” —But “how should man be just with God?” If he enter into judgment with us according to his holy law, not one action in a thousand can stand the test.—The wisdom, power, and sovereignty of God are displayed in the works of creation and providence: we may collect what he can do from what he has done; and when these subjects are duly considered, those who harden themselves against him in presumptuous wickedness appear to be perfectly infatuated. How can those, who despise the favour and defy the vengeance of the Almighty, expect to prosper, or to escape final misery? But they are no less infatuated, who proudly attempt to justify themselves before that God, who possesses infinite purity and justice, and who knows us far better than we know ourselves. He will prove every indictment which he has brought, and vindicate every sentence which he has denounced, against any of his creatures. It is therefore our only wisdom to “supplicate mercy,” and not to demand justice, from our Judge. Every attempt “to “establish our own righteousness,” forms an additional

demonstration of our pride, perverseness, and rebellion. (Note, Rom. x. 1—4.) The Lord can produce against us innumerable transgressions, which have escaped our own notice or recollection: he views us with an impartial eye, while we flatter ourselves in our own sight: he sees our iniquity to be hateful, when we are attempting to palliate it. (Note, Ps. xix. 12—14.) If then “we know nothing “by ourselves, we are not thereby justified:” and it is far better to submit to the righteousness of God, than to argue, either against the sentence of his law, or the appointments of his providence, which unitedly testify against us. In like manner, all endeavours to vindicate our character, if indeed we are hypocrites, must be in vain: we shall soon appear as if newly plunged in the mire, and be exposed to shame and condemnation, without being able to plead any thing in our own behalf. But if consciously sincere, we may humbly maintain our integrity before our fellow creatures: yet it is often lost labour, except as “by well doing, “we put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.” And it is commonly best to leave our cause with God, and patiently to bear the unjust suspicions of our brethren, till he sees good to remove the painful trial.

V. 22—35.

We should be very careful not to be offended, either by the tribulations with which we meet, or the prosperity of the wicked: they have their short-lived pleasures, we our transient sorrows. Life is hasting to a close with unobserved swiftness, and soon the joys of the world and our tears will be for ever done away. Yet, under severe trials and sharp temptations, it is very difficult to repress murmurs, to keep out hard thoughts of God, or to hold fast our confidence in him. When, through Satan’s influence on the mind, the Lord appears as an enemy; when his power and justice are more distinguishable than his mercy; and when a sense of his displeasure, and slavish fears of condemnation preponderate; the soul, even of a believer, is filled with inexpressible confusion, and verges to melancholy and despair. It is easy to counsel those who are in such a case; but who can then practise as he ought? Every object enhances terror; every topick suggests new disquietude: the trembling and tempted soul forgets the promises, or dares not appropriate them; every precept, threatening, warning, and example, seems to be pointed against him; and he scarcely ventures to approach, or knows not how to

CHAP. X.

Job intreats God to shew on what account he contended with him; and pleads for compassion as from his Creator, 1—13. He states that his sins were

strictly marked and rigorously punished, 14—17. He repines, that he had ever been born, or had not died immediately after; and craves respite from pain to prepare for death, 18—22.

MY ^a soul ^{*} is weary of my life; ^b I will leave my complaint upon myself; ^c I will speak in the bitterness of my soul.

2 I will say unto God, ^d Do not condemn me: ^e shew me wherefore thou contendest with me.

speaking, before the mercy-seat, where once he communed with his God in the spirit of adoption, with confidence and comfort. "This is" indeed "the time of Jacob's trouble, but" "he shall be delivered out of it." We may be thankful, if we have not known these waves and billows of dire temptations; yet we shall scarcely know how to sympathize with those that are conflicting with them, or to make proper allowances for them. But, poor tempest-tossed soul, consider Job, and notice that others have passed this dreadful gulph before thee: and though they could not believe that God would hear or deliver them any more; yet he rebuked the storm, and brought them to the desired haven. And look to Jesus, who, though free from sin, once "suffered" "being tempted, that he might be able to succour those" "who are tempted." "Resist then the devil, stedfast in" "the faith;" give not place to hard thoughts of God or desperate conclusions about thyself; repress as much as possible every passionate wish or expression, which arises in thy mind. Come to him, who invites "the weary" "and heavy laden;" and has promised "in no wise to" "cast out those who come," but "to give rest to their" "souls:" plead guilty; cast thyself upon unmerited mercy, as if this were thy first approach to a forgiving God, without deciding any thing about thy former experience or character: acknowledge that thy sufferings are less than thy sins have deserved: cry for repentance, for faith, for patience, for inward support; and wait thus at mercy's gate. There can indeed be no superior, who as umpire, can lay his hand on both parties: yet remember that there is an appointed Mediator, "an Advocate with" "the Father," who "is able to save to the uttermost all" "them who come to God by him; seeing he ever liveth to" "make intercession for them," according to the will of God: and that those who believe on him, are washed and justified from all their sins, and will soon be saved from all their troubles. In this way, thou shalt ere long find, that the tempter is rebuked, the storm is over, thy sun breaks forth; yea, thou shalt yet sing, "O LORD, I will" "praise thee; though thou wast angry with me, thine" "anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me." (Notes, *Is. xii. 1—3.*)—Oh, how happy is a believer even in these trying circumstances, compared with those prosperous sinners, to whom it will shortly be said, "Remember that" "thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and

3 *Is it* 'good unto thee that thou shouldst oppress, that thou shouldst ^g despise ^h the [†] work of thine hands, and ⁱ shine upon the counsel of the wicked?

4 Hast thou eyes of flesh? or ^k seest thou as man seeth?

5 *Are* ^l thy days as the days of man? ^m are thy years as man's days,

6 That ⁿ thou enquirest after mine iniquity, and searchest after my sin?

7 ^o Thou ^p knowest that I am not ^q wicked; ^r and *there is* none that can deliver out of thine hand.

1—5. *xxxix. 1, 2, 21—24. John xxi. 17. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 Thes. ii. 10. 14. Deut. xxxii. 39. Ps. l. 22. Dan. iii. 15. Hos. ii. 10. John x. 28—30.*

"Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented!"

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1, 2. The vehemence of Job's passions, excited by his exquisite sufferings, here again broke through his better purposes; and he was urged to seek relief by complaining "in the bitterness of his soul," whatever the consequence might be: he would cease from silently musing on his misery, and would give utterance to his inward anguish.—Perhaps, "his soul being weary of life," he wished to bring some sudden judgment on himself, which might at once end his days. Yet he would still beg of God not to account him a wicked man, or finally to deal with him as such; but to shew him on what account he acted with such extreme rigour towards one of his upright worshippers.

V. 3. It may be supposed, that Job was at a loss, what to think of the divine dispensations towards him. He could not conceive that God would oppress his creatures, by punishing them without cause; as if he despised the work of his own hands, and took pleasure in destroying or disgracing it: yet he was not able to understand, how these things could consist with the goodness and mercy of God; and he supposed, that his remarkable afflictions would tend to encourage the counsels and practices of wicked men, who often argue that there is no advantage in religion, and therefore seek happiness in the world by an ungodly life. (Note, *xxi. 7—16.*)

V. 4—7. Man's eyes see partially, and superficially, and discern objects one after another; and his days are transient, so that he must make haste, or he may not find time to effect his purposes: but the case is entirely different with the everlasting, omniscient, and holy God. He could have detected Job's iniquity if he were guilty, without putting him to torture to extort a confession: and he had space to bring him to the trial, and to convict him, before he proceeded to punish. He could not therefore comprehend, what God meant by thus afflicting him; as he could appeal to him that he had not been wicked, that is, *an impenitent, unconverted sinner*; a hypocrite in religion, and one who used it as a cloke to cover his iniquities. If, however, God was pleased in sovereignty to punish him, he knew it was in vain to contend with him; for none could deliver him out of his hands.

8 Thine ^phands ^{*}have made me and fashioned me together round about: ^qyet thou dost destroy me.

9 ^rRemember, I beseech thee, that ^sthou hast made me as the clay; and wilt thou bring me ^tinto dust again?

10 Hast thou not ^upoured me out as milk, and curdled me like cheese?

11 Thou hast ^xclothed me with skin and flesh, and hast [†]fenced me with bones and sinews.

12 Thou hast granted me ^ylife and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.

13 And these *things* hast thou ^zhid in thine heart: ^aI know that this *is* with thee.

14 If I sin, ^bthen thou markest me, and ^cthou wilt not acquit me from mine iniquity.

15 If ^dI be wicked, woe unto me; and ^eif I be righteous, *yet* will I not lift up my head. ^f*I am* full of confusion; therefore ^gsee thou mine affliction;

V. 8—13. In these verses Job expostulates with God, as if he had created him only for misery. The very hands which had fashioned him, (as the potter moulds the clay on all sides, till he has formed the vessel which he intended,) now heavily afflicted him; and were about to destroy him, and reduce him to his original dust.—He then gave an accurate account of his wonderful formation in the womb. From his original liquid form he was gradually coagulated, as milk is curdled into cheese; and then the skin and the flesh covered him, till at length he was supported and braced by bones and sinews. To this material substance God had given life, and a rational soul; and thus he had been born into the world, and had ever since been protected, and favoured with a variety of comforts: and could the Lord have created, preserved, and prospered him, only to render his downfall the more dreadful, and his miseries the more extreme? Yet all his sufferings must have been the result of a secret purpose thus to overwhelm him, and the event in like manner was known to God alone.

V. 14—17. Job did not deny, that as a sinner he *deserved* his sufferings; but he thought that justice was executed upon him with peculiar rigour, that every sin was noticed, and that God would not mercifully acquit him from his iniquity. If indeed he were a wicked man, a notorious sinner, and hypocritical in his religion, his case must be dreadful: nay, if righteous, or an upright worshipper of God, he was so crushed and dismayed, that he should not dare to look up for mercy. Indeed he was full of confusion, and knew not what to think of his extraordinary case: yet he begged of God to notice his increasing affliction; and no longer to pursue him with his judg-

16 For it increaseth: ^hthou hunt-ⁱest me as a fierce lion; and again thou shewest thyself ^jmarvellous upon me.

17 Thou renewest thy ^kwitnesses against me, and increasest thy indignation upon me; ^lchanges and ^mwar *are* against me.

18 Wherefore then ⁿhast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh, that I had ^ogiven up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!

19 I should have been ^pas though I had not been; I should have been carried from the womb to the grave.

20 *Are* not ^qmy days few? ^rcease *then*, and let me alone, that I may take comfort a little,

21 Before ^sI go *whence* I shall not return, ^teven to ^uthe land of darkness and ^vthe shadow of death;

22 A land of darkness, as darkness *itself*; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and *where* the light is as darkness.

ments and terrors, as the fierce lion hunts the trembling fugitive; nor to act toward him in so wonderful a manner. For every affliction was a witness of the divine indignation against him; and nothing but changes of one misery for another, awaited him, against whom God himself, and the whole creation, seemed to be at war.—The gloom, unbelief, and hard thoughts of God, which are here discernible, ought to be ascribed as much to Satan's temptations and Job's inward anguish of soul, as to his outward trials and remaining depravity.—The words rendered, "I am full of confusion" (15), may be translated, "Oh, be satisfied with my confusion," or "disgrace."

V. 18—22. Job here, more directly than before, expostulated with God for giving him his being, and for not cutting him off by death in the womb, or as soon as born. (Notes, iii.) He considered death as at hand; and he begged a little respite from his anguish, that he might prepare for that closing scene; and for removing to the country, whence he should not return. The description that follows, seems to be only intended for the grave, and not to relate to the invisible world.—Coherency or exactness, in the discourse of one who spoke "in the bitterness of his spirit," was not to be expected; yet it is evident, that Job believed that there would be a future state, and had some hope of happiness in it, though now exceedingly clouded and discouraged. But he here described the state of dead bodies in the grave, as darkness and disorder: and he used many repetitions; meaning in general that they know nothing of the vicissitudes of day and night, or of the orders established among the living; and that men are cited thither, and arranged there, without respect to age, rank, or character.

CHAP. XI.

Zophar sharply rebukes Job for justifying himself, and earnestly desires that God would answer him, 1—6. He shews that God is unsearchable, and man ignorant and presumptuous, 7—12. He reminds Job that repentance is the only way of recovering comfort and prosperity, 13—20.

^a See on ii. 1., xx.

THEN answered ^aZophar the Naamathite, and said,

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

As afflictions may speedily render us weary of life, how needful is it to have our treasure in heaven, and to be prepared for death! Yet we should not indulge a wish to quit our post before the appointed time.—We are apt to think that we have a right to complain when we are greatly afflicted, and to imagine that it will be a relief to us. But, when we “speak in the bitterness of our souls,” we generally increase guilt and vexation, and our complaints rebound upon ourselves.—In every affliction we should examine, “wherefore God contendeth with us;” assured, that he has good and wise reasons for his conduct: and when we do not readily perceive his meaning, we ought most earnestly to intreat him to shew it to us; that we may repent of our sins, fall in with the designs of his corrections, reap the benefit of them, and escape final condemnation.—We may not be able, in some cases, to understand the reason of his appointments: but we ought not for a moment to suppose that he punishes without cause, or that his sovereignty resembles the arbitrary will of selfish and wicked men. Such thoughts originate from Satan, brooding on the enmity of our carnal hearts; and they commonly mingle with our discontent and impatience. Indeed the sovereign authority and irresistible power of God should be terrible to all the impenitent workers of iniquity, and to them alone: but if we be conscious that we truly repent, accept of proffered mercy, and desire to serve him, he will in due time end our trials and give us comfort.

V. 8—22.

The wisdom, power, and goodness of God, displayed in the wonderful formation of our bodies, and in giving us reasonable and immortal souls, and in all the mercies of our infancy, childhood, and riper years, demand our admiring, grateful praise; but in a gloomy hour, when corruption prevails, Satan can induce even a believer to admit the dishonourable apprehension, that God created and preserved him only to make him miserable! Yet all the miseries of man arise from his own voluntary wickedness: and, whatever may be hid in the decrees and counsels of God, most certain it is, that none shall eventually perish, but the finally impenitent: and our Creator (being in Christ become our Redeemer also,) will “not destroy the work of his own hands” in any humble believer; but will renew him unto holiness, that he may enjoy eternal life. But Satan plunges the tempted soul into one abyss after another: and when one blasphemous thought is rejected, another will be suggested to the mind. When any one, engaged in this conflict, is made sensible of the Lord’s

2 Should not ^b the multitude of words be answered? and should a man ^c full of talk be justified?

3 Should ^e thy ^f lies make men hold their peace? and, when thou ^d mockest, shall no man ^e make thee ashamed?

4 For thou hast said, ‘My doctrine is pure, and ^g I am clean in thine eyes.

righteousness in present sufferings, or even in the sentence of eternal misery denounced against sinners; he will be tempted to question the divine goodness, or to despair of mercy; to conclude that he is an exception to ordinary rules, precluded from the forgiveness reserved for others, and marked out to be treated with exact and rigorous justice. But the terror and confusion of those who are thus buffeted by Satan, is inexplicable, even by such as have had painful experience of it. Every thing then wears a gloomy aspect: all seems to testify that God is become their enemy, and is pursuing them to destruction; while one vain and foolish wish succeeds to another; and they relapse into those sallies of passion, which they have just before seen to be rebellious and vain; longing to be in any other circumstances than those in which they are placed. Yet if true grace possesses the heart, it will glimmer forth a little in their darkest hours; some feeble actings of faith and hope will be discernible; and they will be restrained from the desperate language and behaviour of an ungodly man, in similar circumstances.—But if anguish of mind on earth may render the gloomy grave a desirable refuge; what will be the condition of those who shall be condemned to the blackness of darkness for ever! There unrestrained enmity, unmingled wrath, and absolute despair, eternally reign: light only serves to shew their misery, and knowledge to augment their anguish. Let every sinner then seek deliverance from this dreadful state, and every believer be thankful to “Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come.” Let all our troubles warn us of the shortness of life, remind us to pray to be spared till ready, and excite us to prepare for death, and to welcome its approach.—Having obtained the earnest and hope of heaven, we need not look with horror upon the dark and silent grave; for it cannot in the least degree harm us: and “if the Spirit of him, who raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in us, he will also quicken our mortal bodies,” and raise them up immortal and glorious.

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1—4. Zophar, probably the youngest of Job’s three friends, instead of being softened by his pathetick complaints, took up the argument against him with greater vehemence, than Eliphaz and Bildad had done. He represented him as a man who loved to hear himself speak; and who, by affected eloquence, aimed to run down the most evident truth in his own vindication; and as one who maintained palpable falsehoods, and treated the most sacred subjects, and most solid reasonings, with contempt and mockery. It was therefore highly proper that he should be answered, rebuked, and put to shame.—But what ground was there for these high charges? Job

h xxiii. 3—7. xxxi. 35. xxxiii. 6—13. xxxviii. 1, 2. xl. 1—5. 8. xlii. 7. i xv. 8. 11. xxviii. 28. Deut. xxix. 29. Ps. xxv. 14. Dan. ii. 28. 47. Matt. xiii. 35. Rom. xvi. 25, 26. 1 Cor. ii. 9—11. k Eph. iii. 5. k Ezra ix. 13. Ps. ciii. 10. cvi. 43. —46. Lam. iii. 22. l v. 9. xxvi. 14. xxxvii. 23. Ps. lxxviii. 19. cxlv. 3. Ec. iii. 11. Is. xl. 28. Matt. xi. 27. Rom. xi. 33. 1 Cor. ii. 10. 16. Eph. iii. 8. m Heb. the heights of heaven. m xxii. 12. xxxv. 5. 2 Chr. vi. 18. Ps. ciii. 11. cxlviii. 13. Prov. xxv. 2, 3. Is. iv. 9. n xxvi. 6. Ps. cxxxix. 6—8. Am. ix. 2. Eph. iii. 18, 19. o xxviii. 24, 25. Ps. lxxv. 5—8. cxxxix. 9, 10. p v. 18. ix. 4. 12. 13. xii. 14. xxxiv. 29. Is. xiv. 27. Dan. iv. 35. 8. Rev. iii. 7. John ii. 24, 25. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. ii. 23. Ec. v. 8. Hos. vii. 2. Hab. i. 13. Heb. iv. 13.

5 But, ^h Oh, that God would speak, and open his lips against thee;

6 And that he would ⁱ shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that *they* are double to that which is! Know therefore that God exacteth of thee *less* than thine iniquity *deserveth*.

7 Canst ^k thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

8 *It is* ^l as ^m high as heaven; what canst thou do? ⁿ deeper than hell; what canst thou know?

9 The measure thereof *is* ^o longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

10 If ^p he ^q cut off, and ^r shut up, or gather together, then who can ^s hinder him?

11 For ^t he knoweth vain men: ^u he

seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider *it*?

12 ^v For ^w vain man ^x would be wise, though ^y man be born *like* ^z a wild ass's colt.

13 If thou ^a prepare thine heart, and ^b stretch out thine hands toward him:

14 If ^c iniquity *be* in thine hand, ^d put it far away, and ^e let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles.

15 For then shalt thou ^f lift up thy face without spot; yea, ^g thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear:

16 Because ^h thou shalt forget *thy* misery, and remember *it* ⁱ has waters that pass away:

17 And *thine* ^j age shall ^k be clearer than the noon-day; ^l thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

6—8. Prov. xiv. 26. xxviii. 1. g Gen. xli. 51. Prov. xxxi. 7. Ec. v. 20. Is. liv. 4. lxxv. 16. John xvi. 21. Rev. vii. 14—17. h vi. 15. Gen. ix. 11. Is. xii. 1, 2. liv. 9. i xlii. 11—17. Ps. xxxvii. 6. xcii. 14. cxii. 4. Prov. iv. 18. Is. lviii. 8—10. Mic. vii. 8, 9. Zech. xiv. 6, 7. Mal. iv. 2. Luke ii. 26—32. j Heb. arise above the noon-day. k 1 Chr. xxix. 10, &c. Hos. vi. 3.

t Ps. lxii. 9, 10. lxxii. 22. xcii. 6. Ec. iii. 18. Rom. i. 22. Jam. ii. 20. u Heb. empty. v. 13. xii. 2, 3. xxviii. 28. Prov. xxx. 2—4. Rom. xii. 16. 1 Cor. iiii. 18—20. Jam. iiii. 13—17. x xv. 14. Ps. li. 5. Eph. ii. 3. y vi. 5. xxxix. 5—8. Jer. ii. 24. z v. 8. viii. 5, 6. xxii. 21, 22. 1 Sam. vii. 3. 2 Chr. xii. 14. xix. 3. Ps. lxxviii. 8. Luke xii. 47. a Ps. lxxviii. 31. lxxviii. 9. cxliii. 6. b iv. 7, 8. xxii. 5. Is. i. 15. c xxii. 23. xxxiv. 32. Ez. xviii. 30. 31. Jam. iv. 8. d Ps. ci. 2, 3. Zech. v. 3, 4. e x. 15. xxii. 26. Gen. iv. 5, 6. Ps. cxix. 6, 7. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 Tim. ii. 8. 1 John ii. 28. iiii. 19—22. f Ps. xxvii. 1, 2. xlvii. 1, 2. cxlii. 6—8. Prov. xiv. 26. xxviii. 1. g Gen. xli. 51. Prov. xxxi. 7. Ec. v. 20. Is. liv. 4. lxxv. 16. John xvi. 21. Rev. vii. 14—17. h vi. 15. Gen. ix. 11. Is. xii. 1, 2. liv. 9. i xlii. 11—17. Ps. xxxvii. 6. xcii. 14. cxii. 4. Prov. iv. 18. Is. lviii. 8—10. Mic. vii. 8, 9. Zech. xiv. 6, 7. Mal. iv. 2. Luke ii. 26—32. j Heb. arise above the noon-day. k 1 Chr. xxix. 10, &c. Hos. vi. 3.

had said that "his doctrine was pure," which his friends could not disprove: and he was accused of saying, "I am clean in the eyes of God." He had indeed said that God knew he was not *wicked*, or one who concealed gross iniquities under the mask of hypocrisy; but he had also confessed himself a sinner, and implored forgiveness. And though he was tempted to question, whether God would be *merciful* to him, and had unadvisedly asserted that justice was rigorously exercised towards him; yet he had never supposed that God dealt *unjustly* with him. (Notes, vi. 27—30. vii. 20, 21. ix. 1—3. 14—24. x. 3—17. xxxiv. 5—9. xxxv. 1—3.)

V. 5, 6. Zophar despaired of convincing Job; and therefore wished that God would interpose to vindicate his truth, and the justice of his providence: for if God should shew him the secret, wise, and righteous reasons of his dispensations; or the extensive and spiritual nature of true holiness, and consequently the number and heinousness of his sins, all of which were vastly more than he had any conception of; he would acknowledge that God exacted less punishment of him than he deserved.—This Job would not have denied: and when God afterwards did speak, it was in behalf of Job, and not against him. (Notes, xxiii. 3—7, xxxi. 35—37. xxxiii. 1—11. xlii. 7—9.) —*Secrets.* (6) *Marg. Ref.*—*Note, Ps. xxv. 14.—Double, &c.* 'For in the wisdom and justice, or according to the law of God, thou mightest suffer double to what thou now dost; and know thou that, &c.' (Ezra ix. 13. Notes, Ps. ciii. 10. Lam. iii. 21—23.)

V. 7—12. These animated interrogations were intended to convince Job, that the nature of God is incomprehensible, and his judgments unsearchable; since there is an infinity in his perfections, and in his counsels, which no similitude can represent to our imaginations, and no reasonings or researches fully explain to our understandings.

But this important truth, instead of militating against Job's doctrine, condemned the rashness of his friends, who inferred his guilt from his calamities, as if *they* had found out the secrets of the divine wisdom to perfection, whereas they had not the least conception of the real reason of his unprecedented sufferings! (Notes, iv. 17—21.)—Zophar added, that if God were pleased to cut off a man's family, (or rather, to *alter the course of things*), to shut him up in prison, or to gather armies against him, none could hinder him; that he knew the vanity and folly of men, and saw and considered the most secret wickedness of their lives or hearts; and so had good reasons for punishing even those who appeared to be righteous. He declared that man, ignorant and short-sighted as he is, has an ambition of being wise and knowing, is curious and presumptuous, and proud of his understanding, and the depth of his penetration; though in fact he is born as uninformed as the wild ass; and like that animal, he fiercely scorns subjection and confinement, aims at independence and liberty in indulging his appetites; and is therefore very incompetent to the acquisition of divine wisdom and knowledge. Or, being obstinate and headstrong like the wild ass's colt; nothing can make him wise to know his place and duty, but severe discipline and painful experience. The closing verse, however, is variously interpreted, and does not necessarily imply all that is suggested by our version of it; but may literally be rendered, "That empty man may become considerate: though man be born as the colt of a wild ass." 'But a vain man (a fool,) will become wise, when the wild ass's colt is born a man.' E. Smith.

V. 13—20. Here Zophar, after the example of Eliphaz and Bildad, exhorted Job to repentance, and gave him great encouragement, yet mixed with irritating insinuations. (Notes, v. 17—27. viii. 20—22.) If, instead of vindicating himself, he would, with due preparation of heart, humble

¹ vi. 11. vii. 6. xxii. 27—29. Ps. xliii. 5. Prov. xiv. 32. Rom. v. 3—5. Col. i. 27. ^m Lev. xxvi. 6. Ps. iii. 5. iv. 8. Prov. iii. 24—26. ⁿ xlii. 8, 9. Gen. xxvi. 28—31. Ps. xlv. 12. Prov. xix. 6. Is. lx. 14. Rev. iii. 9. ^{*} Heb. *intreat thy face*. ^o xxxi. 16. Lev. xxvi. 16. Deut. xxviii. 65. Ps. lxi. 3. Lam. iv. 17. [†] Heb. *flight shall perish from them*. Am. ii. 14. v. 19. 20. ix. 1—3. Heb. ii. 3. p viii. 13, 14. xxvii. 8. Prov. x. 24. xx. 20. Luke xvi. 23—26. [‡] Or, a puff of breath.

18 And thou shalt be secure, ¹ because there is hope; yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and ^m thou shalt take thy rest in safety.

19 Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid; yea, ⁿ many shall ^{*} make suit unto thee.

20 But ^o the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and [†] they shall not escape, and ^p their hope shall be as ^{*} the giving up of the ghost.

himself before God, and stretch out his hands in fervent prayer to him; if he repented of his wickedness, and did “works meet for repentance;” he might obtain forgiveness, and stand with confidence before God, who would clear his character, restore his health, and establish him in prosperity: so that his misery would be forgotten, or only remembered as a cause of gratitude. Then his old age would shine with a brighter light of divine favour and felicity, than either his youth or more mature years had done: secure of the protection of God, and rejoicing in hope of future blessedness, he might order all his affairs with comfort and confidence, and would close his life in reputation and usefulness. But disappointment, vexation, and ruin, inevitably awaited all wicked men: and their very hope would soon expire, as a dying man gives up the ghost.—There was, however, no certain ground on which to conclude, that Job’s deepest repentance and the Lord’s most gracious forgiveness, must be followed by outward prosperity; nor any reason to regard him as a hypocrite, if he died in his present calamitous condition.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Nothing is more unbecoming, or more common, than acrimony and reviling in religious controversy. Opposition stirs up pride and resentment in the hearts even of godly men; the credit of the victory insensibly becomes the object; and an opponent must be represented as a dangerous and wicked man, that he may without censure be exposed to ridicule or hatred. But in fact, a multitude of empty words neither require nor deserve an answer; and *specious reasonings* are best opposed by *conclusive arguments*. Those who accuse others of falsehood and deceit, are commonly the first to transgress: and men often *shame* themselves by their invectives and misrepresentations, in attempting to put others to *shame*; or they manifest their own pride, when they would represent the sentiments of others, as mockery of the truth. Such as maintain error are often most ready to appeal to God, and to express a high confidence that they are pleading his cause: and in the eagerness of dispute, the most important truths will be adduced in support of those very principles of which they are subversive. Yet we should endeavour to profit by truth, though we disapprove of the spirit with which it is maintained.—We ought often to meditate on the incomprehensible perfections and works of God, that we may be made sensible of our own meanness, ignorance, and vileness. Some little of his wisdom, justice, and goodness in the government of the universe, we may discover by faith,

CHAP. XII.

Job retorts on his friends, censures their pretensions to superior knowledge, and complains of their unkindness, 1—5. He shews that God often permits the wicked to prosper in this world, 6—11. He discourses on the perfections and works of God, 12—25.

AND Job answered and said,

2 No doubt but ^{*} ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you.

3 But ^b I have ^{*} understanding as well as you: [†] I am not inferior to you:

a vi. 24, 25. viii. 8. —10. xi. 2, 3. 6. 12. xv. 2. 10. xvii. 4. xx. 3. xxxii. 7—13. Prov. xxviii. 11. Is. v. 21. 1 Cor. iv. 10. vi. 5. b xiii. 2—5. Prov. xxvi. 4. 2 Cor. xi. 5. 21—23. ^{*} Heb. *an heart*. [†] Heb. *I fall not lower than you*.

from revelation; enough indeed to shew us sinners, that our severest temporal sufferings are “less than our iniquities deserve,” and so to render us patient and thankful under them: but the secrets of his wisdom, which we can never search out to perfection, infinitely exceed our narrow capacities. (Notes, xxvi. 14. xxviii. 23—28. Deut. xxix. 29.) In this abyss our thoughts and reasonings are swallowed up: the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of all his attributes pass knowledge: and our province is to believe, adore, and love. It is in vain for us to dispute against his omnipotent sovereignty; nor can we escape his omnipresent and infinite knowledge: but it behoves us to consider who and what we are, and to remember that we are born in sin, and children of wrath, and in some respects resemble the untractable wild ass. We should then give up our proud desire of comprehending the deep things of God; and of measuring his truths, judgments, and decrees, by the rule of our short-sighted reason. Our wisdom consists in preparing our hearts to seek his mercy and favour; to repent of our sins; to accept of his mercy and salvation; and to pray earnestly for his sanctifying grace, that we may “cast away all our transgressions,” and devote to him our bodies, our souls, and substance, and rule our families in his faith and fear. Thus, “being justified by faith, we shall have peace with God,” and confidence before him: and a quiet conscience, “joy in the Holy Ghost,” an affiance in a wise and kind providence ordering all for our good, with the lively hope of eternal felicity, will give comfort and steadfastness to our souls. So shall we forget our misery, as waters that pass away; the light of God’s countenance will render our declining years more pleasant, than those early days that were spent in youthful gaiety; we may then rest in safety, and the work of our hands shall be established unto us. Trials may interrupt our happiness, but cannot destroy it; nay, they will tend to increase it: we shall become truly honourable and useful; and may at length lie down in the grave without fear, and bid an eternal farewell to pain and sorrow, at that period, when the expectation and enjoyment of the ungodly shall eternally expire. For “the wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death.” (Note, Prov. xiv. 32.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 2, 3. Zophar had treated Job’s discourse as futile and erroneous, and his other friends were of the same judgment; Job therefore ironically retorted upon them. ‘Doubtless,’ says he, ‘you three are the only

• Heb. with whom are not such as these. vi. 6, 7. xxvi. 2, 3. xi. 3. xvi. 10. xvii. 2. 6. xxi. 3. xxx. 1. Ps. xxii. 7, 8. xxxv. 16. Matt. xxvii. 29, 30. 41, 42. Heb. xi. 36.

d xvi. 20. Ps. xci. 15. Jer. xxxiii. 3. Mic. vii. 7.

e Prov. xiv. 2. Mark. v. 40. Luke xvi. 14. Acts xvii. 32.

f Deut. xxxii. 35. Ps. xvii. 5. xciv. 18. Jer. xiii. 16. g xviii. 5. Prov. xiii. 9. xx. 20. Matt. xxv. 8.

h vi. 5. xvi. 4. Ps. cxxiii. 3, 4. Am. vi. 1—6. Luke xii. 19. xvi. 19, 20.

i ix. 24. xxi. 7—15. Ps. xvii. 14. xxxvii. 1. 35. lxxiii. 11. Jer. xcii. 7. Jer. v. 27, 28.

k xxi. 29, 30. Prov. vi. 6. Is. i. 3. Jer. viii. 7. Rom. viii. 20—22.

l 3. Acts xix. 35. inxxii. 18. Deut. viii. 17, 18. 1 Sam. ii. 7. Jer. xxvii. 5, 6. Dan. iv. 17. v. 18. Rom. xi. 36. Jam. ii. 5—7.

u Num. xvi. 22. Dan. v. 23. Acts xvii. 25. 28.

• Or, life.

o xxvii. 3. xxxiv. 4, 15. Gen. ii. 7. vi. 17. Ps. civ. 29. cxlvi. 3, 4.

† Heb. flesh of man. John iii. 6.

yea, ' who knoweth not such things as these?

4 I am as ' one mocked of his neighbour, ' who calleth upon God, and he answereth him ; ' the just upright man is laughed to scorn.

5 He that is ' ready to slip with his feet, is as ' a lamp despised in the thought ^h of him that is at ease.

6 ¶ The ⁱ tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure; into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.

7 But ^k ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee:

8 Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee; and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.

9 ^l Who knoweth not in all these, that ^m the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?

10 In ⁿ whose hand is the [†] soul of every living thing, and ^o the breath of all [•] mankind.

men of understanding in the world, and when you die, no wisdom will remain on earth; but men will sustain an irreparable loss, being bereaved of such oracles of divine knowledge! Yet he thought that *he* had some understanding of these matters, and did not fall below them: and indeed any body might know such things as they had advanced, as far as there was truth in them.

V. 4. Here again Job retorted upon Zophar, who had spoken of him as a *mock*er: but indeed his friends treated his sufferings, character, and discourse with contempt, and reviled an upright man, who had long been an accepted worshipper of God, as if he were a hypocrite.—‘ You deride your friend, when you bid him call upon God, that he may answer him: but this is no new thing, for the best of men have been mocked on this fashion.’ *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 5. Though a man have shone “ as a light in the world,” by wisdom, piety, or usefulness, while in affluence; yet as soon as he sinks into poverty or distress, he will generally be despised by the rich and prosperous: and they will mark every one of his mistakes or faults with severity, to justify their neglect of him. ‘ He that is near to his ruin, (as I now am,) is (to those that prosper and are at ease) like unto a lamp that is near burning out unto the snuff; and therefore despised by them for the present, however it have formerly shined.’ *Bp. Hall*.—(Note, Ps. cxxiii. 3, 4.)

V. 6—10. Job here opposes *facts* to *hypothesis*. It cannot be denied, that audacious robbers and oppressors, and the most impious wretches, are often prospered in Providence, and have riches abundantly in possession. (Notes,

xxxiv. 3. 1 Cor. x. 15. Phil. i. 10. Marg. Heb. v. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 3. Heb. palate. vi. 20.

q viii. 8. xv. 10. That is, God. xxxii. 6—9.

r 16. ix. 4. xxxviii. 20—28. xxxvi. 5. Ps. cxlvii. 5. Prov. ii. 6, 7. Jer. x. 12. Dan. ii. 20. Luke xxi. 15. 1 Cor. i. 24. Col. ii. 3. Jam. i. 5.

s Prov. viii. 14. Is. xl. 13, 14. xlvii. 10. Rom. xi. 34. Eph. i. 8. 11.

t ix. 12, 13. xi. 10. Is. xiv. 23. Jer. li. 58. 64. Mal. i. 4.

u xvi. 11. 1 Sam. xvii. 46. xxiv. 18. xxvi. 8. Marg. Is. xxii. 22. Rom. xi. 32. Marg.

* Heb. upon

x 10. Gen. viii. 1, 2. 1 Kings viii. 35, 36. xvii. 1. Jer. xiv. 22. Nah. i. 4. Luke iv. 25. Jam. v. 17, 18. Rev. xi. 6.

y Gen. vi. 13. 17. vii. 23. Ps. civ. 7—9. Am. v. 8.

z 13. Matt. vi. 13. 1 Kings xxii. 22, 23. Ez. xiv. 9.

b 2 Sam. xv. 31. Is. xix. 12—14. 1 Cor. i. 19, 20.

c 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11—14. Jer. lli. 31—34. Dan. ii. 21.

Rev. xix. 16. d Josh. x. 24. 42. 1 Sam. xvii. 45, 46. Is. xxxvii. 36—38. xlv. 1. Rev xvii. 14. xix. 19—21.

11 Doth ' not the ear try words? and the ' mouth taste his meat?

12 With ' the ancient is wisdom ; and in length of days, understanding.

13 With ' him is ' wisdom and strength, he hath ' counsel and understanding.

14 Behold, ' he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: ' he shutteth ' up a man, and there can be no opening.

15 Behold, * he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up: also ' he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.

16 With ' him is strength and wisdom: ' the deceived and the deceiver are his.

17 He ^b leadeth counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools.

18 He ^c looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.

19 He ^d leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.

ix. 22—24. xxi. 7—16.) The matter is so plain, that the whole creation testifies it. The animal tribes generally subserve the pride, luxury, and indulgence of ungodly men: the earth, and its richest produce, is their property; and all nature drudges, as it were, to pamper their lusts. (Note, Rom. viii. 18—23.) Yet this is not to be ascribed to fortune, or chance: but the Lord orders these things as he pleases; seeing the life and breath of man, and of every creature, are entirely at his disposal.

V. 11, 12. The ear of man (that is, the understanding to which the report of the senses is made,) was formed, that, by attention to what is spoken, it might distinguish truth from falsehood, and right from wrong; as the palate distinguishes tastes. But Job probably thought, that the distinguishing faculty of his friends must be obtuse, or vitiated by prejudice; otherwise they could never reject truths so obvious as those which he had stated to them. Indeed, aged men, who have had long opportunity of making observations, are supposed to be wiser than others; but he intimated, that his friends had lived long to little purpose, as they were egregiously mistaken in so plain a matter.

V. 13—25. The transition from the foregoing verse to this subsequent discourse seems as follows. The consideration, that “ length of days ” among men was supposed to increase wisdom and understanding, led Job to think of the *everlasting* God, whose wisdom and knowledge are infinite: and thus, without mentioning him, he proceeded to expatiate on his perfections and dispensations; shewing that he believed the same general truths as his friends did, and could discourse upon them with cogency and fluency.

* Heb. the lip of the faithful.
Prov. x. 21. xii. 19. 22.

e 24. xvii. 4. xxxii. 9. xxxix. 17.

f Ex. viii. 2. 16.

24. 1 Kings xxi. 23, 24. 2 Kings ix. 26. 34—37.

Ps. cvii. 40. Is. xxiii. 9. xxiv. 21.

22. xxxvii. 38.

Dan. iv. 32, 33.

Matt. ii. 12, 13.

Acts xii. 23.

f Or, looseth the

girdle of the strong. Is. v. 27.

xi. 5. xxii. 21. Eph. vi. 10. 14.

21. cxxxix. 12. Dan. ii. 22. Matt. x. 26.

xxxiv. 22. Am. v. 8. Luke i. 79.

20 He removeth away * the speech of the trusty, and * taketh away the understanding of the aged.

21 He ^f poureth contempt upon princes, and ^f weakeneth the strength of the mighty.

22 He ^g discovereth deep things out of darkness, and ^h bringeth out to light the shadow of death.

g xi. 6. xxviii. 20—23. 2 Kings vi. 12. Ps. xlv. 21. cxxxix. 12. Dan. ii. 22. Matt. x. 26. 1 Cor. ii. 10. iv. 5. h iii. 5. xxiv. 17.

23 He ⁱ increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations, and ^j straiteneth them *again*.

24 He ^k taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, ^l and causeth them to wander in a wilderness *where there is no way*.

25 They ^m grope in the dark without light, and he ⁿ maketh them to ^o stagger like a drunken man.

Ex i 7. 20. Is. ix. 3. xxvi. 15. xxvii. 6. li. 2. lx. 22. Jer. xxx. 19. xxxiii. 22. Zech. x. 8.

† Heb. leadeth in.

k 29. xvii. 4. Is. vi. 9. 10. xix. 1.

Hos. vii. 11.

l Ps. cvii. 4. 40.

m v. 14. Gen. xix. 11. Is. lix. 10.

Acts xiii. 11.

1 John ii. 11.

n Ps. cvii. 27. Is. xix. 14. xxiv. 20.

o Heb. wander.

(Notes, v. 8—16. xi. 7—12.) He declared God to be the Fountain of knowledge, wisdom, and power; and that his providence rules the world with irresistible authority. He destroys cities and imprisons the inhabitants: he afflicts the land with drought; or overflows it with a deluge, as he did the earth in the days of Noah. (Notes, Gen. vii.) The crafty deceivers, and those who are deluded by them, fall in with his universal plan for his own glory; and even Satan, the great deceiver, accomplishes the purposes of God by his malignant endeavours to defeat them! Kings and legislators, conquerors and orators, are disgraced, overthrown, and infatuated, beyond all expectation, as the Lord pleases: and they are sure to be at length rendered contemptible when they oppose his cause. (Notes, Is. ii. 10—18. xxiii. 8, 9. Dan. iv. 34—37. Acts xii. 20—23.) He detects the most secret conspiracies, and the deepest intrigues of princes: he disposes of nations with absolute authority; and when any stand in his way, he throws them into such confusion, that they are perfectly bewildered, as if lost in a desert, or groping in the dark, or staggering from drunkenness; and thus they become incapable of the least effectual exertion.—These important truths were suited to convince the over-confident disputants, that they had gone out of their depth, in attempting to assign the Lord's reason for afflicting Job; when "his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out." (Note, Rom. xi. 33—36.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

Reviling, raillery, and boasting, commonly prove infectious: and when we over-rate ourselves and court admiration, others will be disposed to undervalue us, and treat us with contempt. Whatever some men may think to the contrary, there certainly was good sense, sound reasoning, true knowledge, and heavenly wisdom in the world, before they were born; and the world will not be left in the dark, when these luminaries are set, and their labours also consigned to oblivion. Nay, when *wise and good men* die, blessed be God, wisdom does not die with them, but others are raised up in their places.—We have all a right to judge for ourselves, being endued with understanding as well as others: and we should neither claim superiority over them, nor in *this respect* yield it to them; for we are cautioned by our Lord on both sides, when he says, "Call no man father upon earth;...neither be ye called masters:" but in other matters our rule is, "in honour to prefer others," and to "sit down in the lowest place;" and it is seldom wise or becoming to deviate from it. (Notes, Matt. xxiii.

8—10. Luke xiv. 7—11.)—The most pious and conscientious men have generally been treated with contempt by worldly persons; and sometimes by their brethren, who ought to have sympathized in their sorrows, borne with their infirmities, and helped them with their prayers. But if men despise them, let them but call upon God and he will answer them.—Adversity and poverty, in this evil world, eclipse the light of wisdom and piety; and many, who once were honourable and useful, have sunk into contempt, when fallen under misfortunes and become indigent.—Yet worldly prosperity is of small value in the sight of God. He has superior blessings for his children; and commonly he gives carnal things abundantly into the hands of those, whose pride, luxury, and impiety are increased by them.—The whole creation groans, as in unnatural bondage to the lusts of men. Every creature preaches the goodness of God, and the ungrateful abuse of man; and testifies that this is a state of probation, and not of retribution.

V. 11—25.

The faculties of our souls were originally formed, as capable of discerning truth and falsehood, as our bodily senses are of discriminating their objects.—Observation and experience should teach us wisdom. But, through the effects produced on the powers of the mind by the fall of man, connected with our prejudices, and the influence of our sinful passions, we draw wrong conclusions, make a perverse choice, and often wander farther from God and true wisdom as our years increase. Yet, when being renewed by the Holy Spirit, we begin to use our faculties aright; we receive wisdom from the Fountain-head by faith and prayer; we learn useful lessons from all we see and experience; and acquire a spiritual taste, which savours truth and holiness, and is of use every hour of our lives. (Note, Heb. v. 11—14.) May we seek more and more to have "the eyes of our understanding thus enlightened," and "our senses exercised, by reason of use, to discern both good and evil!"—It is a main point of wisdom to set God always before us, to observe his working in every thing, and to feel our own absolute dependence on him. "He doeth what he will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" He creates or destroys, he exalts or depresses, kings or nations, as he pleases. (Notes, 1 Sam. ii. 3—8.) All the power and policy of earth and hell, cannot conceal any thing from him, or carry one point against him. All creatures subserve his purposes, and assist in accomplishing his vast designs. But those who break his commandments, and,

CHAP. XIII.

Job, confident of his knowledge, appeals to God; disdainfully and peevishly reproves his friends, for pleading against him, with false reasonings and partiality; and warns them to fear the judgment of God, 1—12. In extreme suffering, and expecting death, he professes confidence that God would justify him, 13—19. He craves respite, and desires to know his sins, and why God dealt so rigorously with him, 20—28.

LO, ^a mine eye hath seen all *this*, ^b mine ear hath heard and understood it.

2 What ^c ye know, *the same* do I know also: I *am* not inferior unto you.

3 Surely ^d I would speak to the Almighty, and ^e I desire to reason with God.

4 But ^f ye *are* forgers of lies, ye *are* all ^g physicians of no value.

5 Oh, ^h that ye would altogether hold your peace! ⁱ and it should be your wisdom.

depending on their power, wisdom, or dignity, exalt themselves against his cause, and rebel against his authority, after having been constrained to subserve his plan, shall be cast off with indignation, and rendered contemptible and miserable: while such as submit to his authority, and trust in his mercy, obey his precepts, and aim to promote his cause and honour in the world, shall be taken care of by the way, and at the end shall be graciously received with, “Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into “the joy of thy Lord.” May this be our choice, our conduct, and our felicity!

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1, 2. With manifest self-preference, Job here declared, that the discoveries of God’s providential dealings with men, which he had stated, were the result of his own exact and careful observation; and that he understood these matters at least as well as his friends did, and therefore he did not want their instructions. (Note, xii. 2, 3.)

V. 3—6. An improper boldness is discernible in the discourses of Job, for which Elihu afterward justly reproved him: (Notes, xxxiii. 8—13. xxxiv. 5—9:) yet he did not mean to justify himself before God, but only to obtain from him a verdict in his favour against his friends, who treated him as a hypocrite; accusing him of crimes which he had never committed, and arguing from false principles, respecting the divine government of the world. They visited him indeed as physicians, in his distress; but by their improper treatment they irritated his disease. They would therefore do him the greatest favour in their power, and most shew their own wisdom, if they would hold their peace; and attend to his reasonings, from which they might learn to correct their own errors.

6 Hear ^k now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.

7 Will ye ^l speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?

8 Will ye ^m accept his person? will ye contend for God?

9 Is it good that he should ⁿ search you out? or ^o as one man mocketh another, do ye *so* mock him?

10 He will surely ^p reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons.

11 Shall ^q not his excellency make you afraid? and ^r his dread fall upon you?

12 Your ^s remembrances *are* like unto ^t ashes, your bodies ^u to bodies of clay.

13 ^v Hold your peace, ^w let me alone, that I may speak, ^x and let come on me what *will*.

14 Wherefore do ^y I take my flesh in my teeth, ^z and put my life in mine hand?

V. 7—12. The disputants meant to vindicate the Lord’s dealings with Job, and to plead his cause: but they bore false witness against their friend, and used deceitful reasonings in the argument. Now, if such practices were admitted, in pleading for a king against one of his subjects; it would be called “accepting his person,” and be a reproach to the character of the king, and a disgrace to the cause. But God wanted not such advocates, nor did his conduct need vindicating by such means. Job therefore reminded his friends, that when their conduct should be searched out, it would appear very wicked, and dishonourable to God; and that he would certainly rebuke them for condemning the innocent. If indeed they duly considered the majesty and excellency of God, they would be afraid of his indignation, while under pretence of pleading his cause, they acted so contrary to his example: and it would better become them to consider themselves as sinful dying creatures, whose bodies would speedily return to the earth, and whose remembrance would be buried in obscurity or oblivion.—Bishop Patrick thus paraphrases the concluding verse, perhaps according to the true meaning of the original: ‘Whose remonstrances on his behalf are no better than dust; and the arguments you accumulate, but like ‘so many heaps of dirt.’

V. 13, 14. Perhaps Job’s friends seemed about to interrupt him; or shewed apprehensions, that divine judgment would come upon him for so pertinaciously attesting his innocence. ‘Well,’ says he, ‘keep silence, let me speak, and I will risk all consequences; for my anguish is so excessive that I could even gnaw my own flesh: and, as I am not conscious of any great crime for which I am thus punished, I would even venture my life to have this matter cleared up.’ (Notes, vi. 8—13. vii. 7—11.)

^b 18. xix. 25—28. Ps. xlii. 10. Prov. xiv. 32. Rom. viii. 35, 39. ^c x. 7. xvi. 17. 21. xxi. 4—7. xxxi. 35—37. xl. 2. 4. 5. 8. I John iii. 20. ^d Heb. prove, or argue. ^e Ex. xv. 2. Ps. xxvii. 1. lxii. 6. 7. cxviii. 14. 21. Is. xii. 2. Jer. iii. 23. Acts xiii. 47. ^f viii. 13. xxvii. 8. —10. xxxvi. 13. Is. xxxiii. 14. ^g 6. xxxiii. 1. ^h xvi. 21. xxiii. 4. xl. 7. ⁱ ix. 2. 3. 20. xl. 7, 8. Is. xlii. 26. Rom. viii. 33. 34. 2 Cor. i. 12. ^j xix. 5. xxxiii. 5. —7. 32. Is. i. 7, 8. ^k 13. vii. 11. Jer. xx. 9. ^l ix. 34, 35. ^m Gen. iii. 8—10. Ps. cxxxix. 12. Rev. vi. 15, 16. ⁿ x. 20. xxii. 15—17. ^o 11. See on xxxiii. 7. Ps. cxix. 120. ^p ix. 32. xxxviii. 3. xl. 4, 5. xlii. 3—6.

15 Though ^b he slay me, yet will I trust in him: ^c but I will ^d maintain mine own ways before him.

16 He also *shall be* ^d my Salvation: ^e for an hypocrite shall not come before him.

17 Hear ^f diligently my speech and my declaration with your ears.

18 Behold now, ^g I have ordered *my* cause; ^h I know that I shall be justified.

19 Who *is* he ⁱ *that* will plead with me; for now, ^j if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.

20 Only ^k I do not two *things* unto me: then will I not ^l hide myself from thee.

21 ^m Withdraw thine hand far from me: and ⁿ let not thy dread make me afraid.

22 Then ^o call thou, and I will an-

swer: or let me speak, and answer thou me.

23 How ^p many *are* mine iniquities and sins? ^q make me to know my transgression and my sin.

24 Wherefore ^r hidest thou thy face, and ^s holdest me for thine enemy?

25 Wilt thou ^t break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?

26 For thou ^u writest bitter things against me, and ^v makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.

27 Thou ^w puttest my feet also in the stocks, ^x and ^y lookest narrowly unto all my paths; thou ^z settest a print upon the ^a heels of my feet.

28 And ^b he, as a rotten thing, consumeth, ^c as a garment that is moth-eaten.

^q xxii. 5. Ps. xlii. 20, 21. ^r xxxvi. 8, 9. Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.

^s x. 2. xxix. 2, 3. Deut. xxxii. 20. Ps. x. 1. xlii. 1.

^t xlv. 24. lxxvii. 6. —9. lxxxvii. 14. xvi. 9. xix. 11. xxx. 21. xxxvi. 35. xxxiii. 10.

^u 1 Sam. xxviii. 16. Lam. ii. 5. 2 Thes. iii. 15.

^v xiv. 3. 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. Is. xvii. 13. Matt. xii. 20. x. 20. Ruth i. 3, &c.

^w xx. 11. Ps. xxv. 7. Prov. v. 11—13. Jer. xxxi. 19. John v. 5. 14.

^x xxxiii. 11. 2 Chr. xvi. 12. Prov. vii. 22. Acts xvi. 24.

^y x. 6. xiv. 16, 17. xvi. 9.

^z Heb. observe.

^a ii. 7.

^b Heb. roots.

^c xxx. 17—19. 29. 30. Num. xii. 12.

^d iv. 19. Ps. xxxix. 11. Hos. v. 12.

V. 15—19. The first clause in this passage may be properly rendered as an interrogation, “Lo, he will slay me, shall not I trust?” or, “though he should slay me, shall not I trust?” Our version is formed from a change in the text, on the authority of the Jewish writers, which in this case seems not at all necessary.—Even if left to die of his diseases, or to be cut off by a sudden stroke, Job determined not to give up his confidence.—His friends had intimated, that the return of his prosperity would evince his former integrity, and his present repentance: (Notes, v. 18—27. viii. 20—22. xi. 13—20;) but he, conscious that he had walked uprightly before God, and having an assured belief of his faithfulness and mercy, would confide in him as his Salvation, even though he slew him; and would maintain before him, that he had not been a wicked dissembler, though he well knew that no hypocrite could escape detection, or condemnation in his sight. He desired his friends to attend to his appeal, and to observe how he ordered his cause: he did not deny that he was a sinner; but he pleaded that he was not a hypocrite. From the charge of hypocrisy he knew that God would justify him; and he challenged them to bring forward the proofs of their allegations. He had lost all, except his character, the testimony of his conscience, and his hope in God, which they endeavoured to rend from him; and it would be death to him, not to vindicate himself from their cruel aspersions.—“For now, I shall be silent, and expire.”

V. 20—23. Job here addressed himself to God, and begged of him to try his cause. Provided his outward pains, and his inward horror, were removed, so that the divine majesty did not overwhelm him, he was confident he could plead effectually in his own behalf; and he would either propose, or answer, questions relative to his case, as the Lord pleased. In the first instance he desired to know, “how many his iniquities” were; and especially he wished to discover what that transgression was, which had

brought his present calamities upon him. It is probable that Job intended this merely as an appeal to God, that it was not hypocrisy, or gross oppression; yet the address was querulous and passionate, and when the Lord actually spake, Job found he could not answer him. (Notes, xl. 1—5. xlii. 1—6.)—“O God, I cannot accuse myself of wilful wickedness against thee: but if there be any secret iniquity that I am not privy to, do thou make it known to me, and convince me of it.” Bp. Hall.—Note, x. 1, 2. Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.)

V. 24—28. As the Lord neither removed Job’s pains, nor vindicated his character, nor comforted his soul, he considered him as hiding his face in anger, and holding him as an enemy. And he pleaded, that this was beneath the infinite Majesty of Heaven; seeing he was so mean and frail, and at the point of death, as a withered leaf or dry stubble, the sport of the winds and fuel for the flame. (Note, vii. 17—19.) He thought that God framed more severe decrees against him, and inflicted on him more bitter things, than on any one else: and, as he was conscious, that during his maturer years, he had uprightly served the Lord; he supposed that his youthful iniquities, previous to his conversion, were now remembered against him, and that he possessed them in their painful effects. For it was evident, that divine judgments confined him, as a prisoner in the stocks, till his conduct had been examined, and evidence against him sought after: and that the prints of God’s displeasure were marked upon his whole body, even to the soles of his feet; (ii. 7;) insomuch that he was consuming, as a putrefying carcase, and wearing away, as a moth-eaten garment. (Notes, ii. 7, 8. xxx. 15—31. Num. xii. 11—13.)—In these complaints we discern the effects of strong temptations, and remaining depravity: yet in this chapter Job expresses a regard to God in every thing; shews lively exercises of faith, hope, and confidence in him; and gives many evidences of a sound judgment and a tender conscience.

CHAP. XIV.

Job pleads with God for relief, because of the shortness and misery of life, and the sinfulness of human nature, 1—6. Viewing death as destructive to all

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

It is very difficult for man to possess superior talents, without some appearance of ostentation and self-preference: yet to be "clothed with humility" confers a peculiar gracefulness upon wisdom, knowledge, and every shining quality.—In troubles of mind and conscience, we frequently find men to be "physicians of no value." They often either mistake our case, or attribute our distress to a wrong cause, or prescribe pernicious remedies, and by one means or other increase our malady. But when the conscience is wounded, and the heart dismayed with the fear of wrath, the prevalence of sin, the force of temptation, or the weight of affliction, we should apply to the Physician of our souls; whose knowledge, power, and love are infinite, who never rejects any sincere application, and who never leaves any case uncured. To him we may speak, and before him we may spread our case, at all times; which is a peculiar comfort when we meet with harsh treatment from man: and, though we are sinners, and have committed numberless offences; yet, "if our heart condemn us" not of hypocrisy, we may have humble confidence before him. (*Note, 1 John iii. 18—24.*)—Sometimes the greatest comfort that we can afford the afflicted, consists in patiently attending to their complaints: and when we do not understand the subject in debate, or see that others know more of it than we do, or are eager to be heard; it is our wisdom altogether to hold our peace, in hopes to get some good, when we cannot do any.—Deceit and iniquity are doubly base, when employed in the professed cause of truth and piety; because they seem to imply, that religion needs to be supported by such disgraceful means. But the God of truth and love can never approve the conduct of those who slander, deceive, or persecute their brethren, under pretence of doing him service. Such conduct, when searched into, appears an impious mockery of God; and springs from the basest motives, however secret they are kept. He will therefore surely reprove the offenders: and a due attention to the holy excellency of his character would fill with terror of his vengeance, all those who ignorantly hope for his favour in any unhallowed attempts to serve him.

V. 13—28.

In this evil world, considering how frail we are, and how short our time is, we may find enough to employ us, without falsely accusing and reviling our brethren.—Under every affliction we should aim to keep up a confidence in the divine mercy, which will preserve us under the most exquisite agonies, from doing ourselves any harm.—Though outward evils and inward distresses should unite in our case, and continue unabated till death; a strong and active faith, an acquaintance with the scriptural ground of a believer's hope, and conscious integrity, may enable the poor

earthly hopes, he yet desires to be hid in the grave, and determines to wait the time appointed for his change, 7—15. He complains that God dealt severely with him; and shews that all things on earth, and men especially, are subject to corruption, 16—22.

tempted soul to trust in the Lord, and to expect salvation from him. The upright may maintain his cause before him, and be assured that he will be justified; but no hypocrite can come with acceptance before him, or find admission into his kingdom. Yet it is best to repress our vehement passions, and to wait his time of clearing our aspersed characters; though to sit down under some slanders, without attempting our own vindication, be almost as the pangs of death to us: and indeed it is very cruel to bereave an afflicted man of his reputation, or to endeavour to discourage his hope in God, without any evidence of his guilt.—It is very desirable to have a clear conscience and an assurance of God's favour: yet great humility and reverence becomes us in appealing unto him. He knows us better than we do ourselves; and we should humbly beseech him to bring us acquainted with our sins, that we may repent and seek forgiveness. But he, who duly considers the number and heinousness of his transgressions, will not wonder that God hides his face and afflicts him; nor would he have cause to complain of injustice, if he treated him as an enemy. And, though we are mean, as the dry leaf or the stubble; yet, being also guilty and polluted, and proper fuel for the fire of the Lord's indignation, it would not be dishonourable to him, if he were to pursue us to destruction. Sins long since forgotten by us, stand recorded in his book; the guilt of which no time can obliterate: while old age often possesses the iniquities of youth, by bodily diseases, ruined circumstances, bad habits, a guilty conscience, or rebellious children: and it is a mercy, if final condemnation be escaped.—Should God observe our steps, and narrowly examine our paths, we could in no wise stand before him in judgment: he would indeed "write bitter things against us;" and both body and soul would eternally be filled with the marks of his righteous vengeance. This will be the awful case of unbelievers: yet there is salvation, provided and revealed, not from temporal sorrows, (for our bodies must still return to the dust, and perish as a garment that is moth-eaten,) but "from the wrath to come." For when the mortal body of the believer, whose sins are washed away in the blood of Christ, shall be laid in the grave, his soul will find admission into the realms of glory, and his body also shall at length arise incorruptible and immortal. Seeking first this eternal salvation, let us bear our present trials without a murmur; let us often humble ourselves anew for sins long since committed and repented of, and look forward to death as the period of all our sorrows. And let young persons beware of indulging themselves in sin; for even in this world they may so possess the iniquities of their youth, as to have months of sorrow for moments of pleasure. (*Note, John v. 10—14. P. O. 1—14, conclusion.*) Their wisdom and duty therefore consist in remembering their Creator in their early days, that they may have assured hope and sweet peace of conscience, as the solace of their declining years. (*Note, Ec. xii. 1.*)

MAN *that is* ^aborn of a woman is ^bof few days, and ^cfull of trouble.

2 He cometh forth ^dlike a flower, and is cut down: he ^efleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

3 And ^fdost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and ^gbringest me into judgment with thee?

4 ^hWho ⁱcan bring ^ja clean thing out of an unclean? not one.

5 Seeing ^khis days *are* determined, ^lthe number of his months *are* with thee, ^mthou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass;

6 ⁿTurn from him, that he may ^orest, till he shall accomplish, ^pas an hireling, his day.

7 For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, ^qthat it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.

8 Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground;

^a xv. 14. xxv. 4. Ps. li. 5. Matt. xi. 11.
^b Heb. *short of days*
^c vii. 1. 6. ix. 25. Gen. xlvii. 9 Ps. xxxix. 5.
^d v. 7. See on Ec. ii. 17. 23.
^e Ps. xc. 5—7. xcii. 7. 12. ciii. 15. 16. Is. xl. 6—8. Jam. i. 10. 11. 1 Pet. i. 24.
^f viii. 9. ix. 25. 26. 1 Chr. xxix. 15. Ps. cii. 11. cxliv. 4. Ec. viii. 13.
^g vii. 17. 18. xiii. 25. Ps. cxliv. 3. ix. 19. 20. 32. xiii. 27. Ps. cxliii. 2. Rom. ciii. 19.
^h Heb. *Who will give?*
ⁱ xv. 14—16. xxv. 4—6. Gen. v. 3. Ps. li. 5. John iii. 6. Rom. v. 12. viii. 8, 9. Eph. ii. 3.
^j Luke i. 35.
^k Ps. xxxix. 4. Dan. v. 26. 30. ix. 24. xi. 36. Luke xiii. 20. Acts xvii. 26. Heb. ix. 27.
^l xxiii. 13, 14. Ps. civ. 9. 29. Dan. iv. 35. Rev. i. 18. iii. 7.
^m vii. 16. 19. x. 20. Ps. xxxix. 13.
ⁿ Heb. *cease*.
^o vii. 1, 2. Matt. p. xx. 1—8.
^p 14. xix. 10. Is. xi. 1. xxvii. 6. Dan. iv. 15. 23—25. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 36.

9 Yet through the scent of water it will bud, ^qand bring forth boughs like a plant.

10 But man dieth, and ^rwasteth away: yea, ^sman giveth up the ghost, and ^twhere is he?

11 As the waters fail from the sea, and ^uthe flood decayeth and drieth up:

12 So ^vman lieth down, and riseth not: ^wtill the heavens *be* no more, they shall not ^xawake, nor be raised out of their sleep.

13 Oh, that thou wouldest ^yhide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret, ^zuntil thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest ^aappoint me a set time, and ^bremember me!

14 If a man die, ^cshall he live *again*? ^dall the days of my appointed time will I wait, till ^emy change come.

15 Thou ^fshalt call, and I will answer thee: ^gthou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

^q Ez. xvii. 3—10. 22—24. xix. 10. 11. Rom. xi. 17—24.
^r Heb. *is weakened, or, cut off*.
^s iii. 11. x. 18. xi. 20. xvii. 13—16. Gen. xlix. 33. Matt. xxvii. 50. Acts v. 10.
^t 12. vii. 7—10. xix. 26. Prov. xiv. 32. Luke xvi. 22, 23.
^u vi. 15—18. Jer. xv. 18.
^v x. 21, 22. xxx. 23. Ec. iii. 19—21. xii. 5.
^w xix. 25—27. Ps. cii. 26. Is. li. 6. lxxv. 17. lxxvi. 22. Matt. xxiv. 35. Acts iii. 21. 2 Pet. iii. 7. 10—13. Rev. xx. 11. xxi. 1.
^x iii. 13. vii. 21. Is. xxvi. 19. Dan. xii. 2. John xi. 11—13. Eph. v. 14. 1 Thes. iv. 14, 15.
^y iii. 17—19. Is. lvii. 1, 2.
^z Is. xii. 1. xxvi. 20, 21.
^a Mark xiii. 32. Acts i. 7. xvii. 31.
^b Gen. viii. 1. Ps. cvii. 4. Luke xxiii. 42.
^c xix. 25, 26. Ez. xxxvii. 1—14. Matt. xxii. 29—32. John v. 28, 29. Acts xxvi. 8. 1 Cor. xv. 42—44. Rev. xx. 13.
^d 5. vii. 1. xlii. 16.
^e 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. Phil. g vii. 21. x. 3. 8. Ps. cxxxviii. 8. 1 Pet. iv. 19.

NOTES

CHAP. XIV. V. 1—6. Job, perhaps perceiving that his friends disregarded him, continued his discourse, by descanting upon the condition of man, and interspersing addresses unto God. He observed, that every man, born of Adam's race, is short-lived and exposed to manifold afflictions: all his beauty, felicity, splendour, and gaiety, fall before the stroke of sickness or of death, as the gaudy flower before the scythe; or they pass away like the fleeting shadow. (Notes, Ps. xc. 3—6. xcii. 6, 7. 12. ciii. 15—18. Is. xl. 6—8. Jam. i. 9—11. 1 Pet. i. 23—25.) He then expostulated with God, for noticing, or judging with such severity, a poor creature beneath his regard. (Notes, vii. 17—19. xiii. 24—28.) He was indeed a sinner, being descended from sinful parents, as all other men were: even as, in the whole course of nature, the progeny partake of the propensities and qualities of the creature, from which it sprang. For "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." Or, how could it be possible for his conduct to be sinless, when his heart was by nature polluted and unclean? In either sense, this forms a decisive testimony, that Job understood and believed the doctrine of *original sin*: and though he did not apply it, in so humble and pious a manner, as David afterwards did; (Note, Ps. li. 5, 6;) yet he seems to have intended it as a plea, why the Lord should not deal with him according to his own works, but according to his promised mercy and grace.—Job proceeded to observe, that man's days were determined, and he could not exceed his appointed term

of life; therefore he prayed that he might have a little rest from his exquisite anguish, till the wearisome work of life was over, and death should end his sorrows; which would be as welcome to him as night to the fatigued and worn-down day-labourer.

V. 7—12. Though a tree be cut down, and the stump seem decayed in the earth; yet, if it be in a moist and fruitful situation, it may be expected that tender branches will shoot forth, and grow up as a newly planted tree, or as if the old tree again revived. But when a man is cut off by death, he is for ever removed from his place in this world; no one expects to see him again; and his body returns to the earth whence it was taken, and mingles with it; even as the waters return to the sea, whence they first came. Thus he lieth down, till the consummation of all things, when he shall awake at the general resurrection.—All these expressions imply Job's belief of that great doctrine; though both ancient and modern Sadducees have contrived to misunderstand him. Why else should he speak of death as "*sleep*," and mention a *period* to it when he shall awake, even "when the heavens are no more?" (Marg. Ref. u—x.)—Either Job meant by these considerations to comfort himself with the hope of having soon and for ever done with this wretched world; or he used them as a plea, why God should grant him respite from trouble to prepare for death, the consequences of which are irreversible.

V. 13—15. Job here earnestly prayed, that God would speedily terminate his sorrows, and hide him in the grave, till his fatherly displeasure were past, or the present storm subsided: that he would set a time when he would release

^h x. 6. 14. xiii. 27. **16** For now ^h thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?

ⁱ xxi. 19. Deut. xxxii. 34. Hos. xiii. 12. **17** My transgression is ⁱ sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.

^k Ps. cii. 25, 26. Is. xl. 12. xli. 15. 16. liv. 10. lxiv. 1. Jer. iv. 24. Rev. vi. 14. viii. 8. xx. 11. **18** And surely ^k the mountain falling ^k cometh to nought, and ^l the rock is removed out of his place.

^l xviii. 4. Matt. xxvii. 51. [†] Heb. *overflowest*. Gen. vi. 17. vii. 21—23. **19** The waters wear the stones: thou [†] wasthest away the things which grow out of the dust of the earth;

him; or at present dismiss him, till the appointed period of the resurrection, and the general judgment, and then remember him in mercy. As, however, death would soon remove him hence, he determined to wait, in patience and hope, “all the days of his appointed time,” till that change should take place; and to look forward in believing expectation to the resurrection, when God would call him forth out of the grave, and he would gladly answer; when he would come to try his cause and justify him, and take delight in the work of his hands.—The *change*, or *renovation*, which shall take place, at the resurrection, seems principally intended. (Note, Phil. iii. 20, 21.)

Wait till, &c. (14) Ὑπομενῶ ἕως πάλιν γενῶμαι. “I will wait, till I shall exist again.” Sept.

V. 16—22. In the preceding verses Job spoke in some degree of faith and hope; but here despondency again prevails. He represents God as strictly scrutinizing his whole conduct; and collecting evidence against him, which he preserved as a treasure sealed or sewed up in a bag, that he might be punished with the utmost rigour. (Notes, Deut. xxxii. 34, 35. Rom. ii. 4—6.) He would not say that God did him injustice; but he thought that he carried matters to extremity against him: and in that case he would certainly bring him to destruction without remedy. For his indignation must ruin the happiness, and the hope, of the most prosperous and powerful; as an earthquake subverts the strongest mountains, or removes the solid rocks: or, if more gradually, yet effectually, as the waters wear away the stones, or wash away the earth and its productions from the high to the low grounds. Indeed, God irresistibly prevails against all who contend with him; by sickness or death he changes their countenances, and sends them away into misery: and when the body is full of pain, or the soul of terror at the approach of death, the poor sufferer cannot notice either the prosperity or the adversity of his family.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15.

It is very useful, seriously to reflect on the shortness and uncertainty of human life; on the vanity and vexation of all human enjoyments; and on the fading nature of all worldly splendour, which has neither substance nor continuance: that we may cease to expect happiness from earthly objects, and learn to “lay up our treasure in heaven.” But it is still more interesting to advert properly to the *cause* and the *remedy* of these evils. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so

and thou ^m destroyest the hope of man.

ⁿ Ec viii. 8. **20** Thou ⁿ prevailest for ever against him, and he passeth: thou ^o changest his countenance, and sendest him away.

^p 1 Sam. iv. 20. Ps. xxxix. 6. Ec. ii. 18, 19. ix. 5. Is xxxix. 7, 8. lxiii. 16. **21** His sons come to honour, and ^p he knoweth *it* not; and they are brought low, but he perceiveth *it* not of them.

^q xix. 20. 22. 26. xxxiii. 19—21. **22** But ^q his flesh upon him shall have pain, and ^r his soul within him shall mourn.

“death passed upon all men.” We receive our nature through this corrupted channel, and all the powers of our soul are contaminated by it: for who can produce a holy offspring from an unholy stock? The almighty power of God, indeed, once formed the holy human nature of the Saviour, in the womb of a sinful woman; but that was above, and contrary to, the established order of nature, that he might appear “in the likeness of sinful flesh,” and yet be without sin. All else are conceived, and shapen in iniquity; and we all early manifest an aversion to God and his holy service, and our actual transgressions soon become numerous. So that unless we be “born of the Spirit,” no spiritually good thing dwells in us or can proceed from us: and even the little good of the regenerate is greatly defiled. We should therefore learn to abase ourselves before God, as abominable and polluted creatures: we should cease from all dependence on our own works; deprecate the strictness and severity of the divine judgment; and cast ourselves wholly on the mercy of our God, according to the new covenant of grace, through the mediation of our divine Surety: and we should daily seek the renewing of the Holy Spirit, and look forward to heaven as the only place of perfect holiness and felicity.—As the number of our days and months is appointed, which we cannot exceed; we should both seize the present moment, and pray for the preservation of our faculties, and the composure of our minds, that we may prepare for eternity, and finish our measure of trials and services with comfort and acceptance; relying on the tender compassion of our heavenly Father, who remembereth that we are but dust. A span of life alone remains unto us; our duties are exceedingly important, in their consequences to ourselves and to others: and if the opportunity be slipped, it will be irrecoverable for ever. Whatever then we find to do, let us do it heartily and immediately. (Note, Ec. ix. 10.) If our trials be heavy and many, they will not here last long; death will finally terminate all our *earthly* sorrows and comforts: yet even that is but a *sleep*; the soul will continue to live and act; and the body will awake and live, when “the heavens shall be no more.” (Notes, Dan. xii. 2, 3. 1 Thes. iv. 13—18.) If our sins be forgiven, and our hearts renewed unto holiness, heaven will be the rest of our souls, while our bodies will be secretly hid in the grave from the malice of our enemies, and we shall then feel no more pain from the corrections of our God. At the appointed time, he will again remember us; and then we shall find every cloud dispersed, and every frown removed. Then the Lord will call his sleeping

CHAP. XV.

^a ii. 11. iv. 1. xxii. 1. xlii. 7. 9. Eliphaz sharply reproves Job, as arrogant and im-
^b xi. 2, 3. xlii. 2. pious, 1—13. He declares God's holiness and man's
^{*} Heb. knowledge of wind. vi. 26 sinfulness, 14—16. He appeals to observation and
^c Hos. xii. 1. tradition, in proof that the wicked are miserable in this
^d xlii. 4, 5. xvi. world, 17—35
 2, 3. xxvi. 1—3.
 Mal. iii. 13—15.
 Matt. xii. 36, 37.
 Col. iv. 6. 1 Tim.
 vi. 4, 5.

THEN answered ^a Eliphaz the Tema-
 nite, and said,

^e ² Should ^b a wise man utter ^{*} vain
^f knowledge, and ^c fill his belly with the
 east wind?

^g ³ Should ^d he reason with unprofit-
 able talk? or with speeches wherewith
 he can do no good?

^h ⁴ Yea, ^e thou [†] castest off fear, and
ⁱ restrainest [‡] prayer before God.

^j ⁵ For thy mouth [§] uttereth thine ini-
 quity, and [¶] thou choosest the tongue
 of the crafty.

^k ⁶ Thine ^h own mouth condemneth

thee, and not I: yea, ⁱ thine own lips ⁱ testify against thee.

⁷ *Art* thou ^j the first man *that* was ^j born? ^k or wast thou made before the hills?

⁸ Hast thou heard ^l the secret of God? and dost ^m thou restrain wisdom to thyself?

⁹ What ⁿ knowest thou, that we know not? *what* understandest thou, which is not in us?

¹⁰ With us *are* both ^o the grey-headed, and very aged men, much elder than thy father.

¹¹ *Are* ^p the consolations of God small with thee? ^q is there any secret thing with thee?

¹² Why doth ^r thine heart carry thee away? and what do ^s thy eyes wink at,

¹³ That thou ^t turnest thy spirit against God, ^u and lettest *such* words go out of thy mouth?

saints, and they will answer him; they will arise incorruptible and glorious; they will be publicly justified, and manifested to be his children and heirs; he will shew his love to them and his delight in them, as the creatures of his power, and the subjects of his grace; and death shall be “swallowed up in victory.” A few more days of conflict and difficulty, and this change shall begin in death; when the soul, released from sin and sorrow, and perfected in holiness, will joyfully wait for the re-union of the body, and that last, complete, and eternal change, when “mortality shall be swallowed up of life.” For this appointed period let us wait with godly fear, with realizing faith and cheerful hope, with diligent preparation and patient continuance in well-doing; neither desirous of living, nor impatient of the troubles of life.

V. 16—22.

We should on no account yield to the suggestions of Satan, or the dictates of unbelief, to conclude, that the Lord can deal even in rigorous justice with a *sinner*, who has a hope of everlasting life; or that he intends the misery and condemnation of those who trust in his mercy, and who desire to know and do his will.—We ought to number our own steps, watch over our sins, and keep an exact account of our transgressions, that we may humbly seek forgiveness of them, and more highly value the salvation of the gospel: and if we thus “judge ourselves, we shall not “be condemned of the Lord.” He may afflict us with salutary chastisements; disease may fill our flesh with pain, change our countenance, and wear us away; we may lose the comfort of our families and connexions, and every hope of earthly felicity: but our God will not send the believer away into the regions of darkness and despair; nay, he will receive him into the realms of eternal felicity.—But what a change awaits the prosperous unbeliever! When the appointed period arrives, a state of unmixed, unalter-

able, and eternal misery will succeed! How will he answer, when God shall call him to his tribunal? Then indeed will he find, though now he will not believe it, that God numbered all his steps, and watched over his sins, and kept an exact account of all his iniquities, which are sealed up as evidence to be produced against him at the day of trial. And if the light afflictions that are but for a moment, and which God's own children suffer here, be so wearying and distressing, what will the vengeance be that he reserves for his determined enemies! The strength of mountains and rocks cannot “stand before his indignation,” or shelter sinners from it. Their hope will then be destroyed for ever. Where will then be their possessions, pleasures, and distinctions? All past away and come to nought! Their countenance will then change, when the Judge shall bid them “depart accursed into “everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:” and when body and soul are thus filled with anguish, what comfort can they derive from the consideration, that their crimes immortalized their names, and aggrandized their families, and that their estates descended to their posterity?—But the Lord is yet upon a mercy-seat, ready to be gracious: “Oh, that men were wise, that “they understood these things, that they would consider “their latter end!”

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1—13. Instead of being convinced by Job's reasoning, or softened by his pathetick complaints, Eliphaz, with increasing severity, led on a second attack against him. Job had been reputed a wise man: but Eliphaz asked, whether it consisted with that character, to propagate notions so empty, and to satisfy his conscience with them; when they were as unfit for the purpose, as the unwholesome east wind would be to appease his hunger. Would any wise man reason with such inconclusive

x ix. 2. xiv. 4. xxv. 4—5. 1 Kings viii. 46. 2 Chr. vi. 36. Ps. li. 5. Prov. xx. 9. Ec. vii. 20. 29. John iii. 6. Rom. vii. 18. Gal. iii. 22. Eph. ii. 2, 3. 1 John i. 8—10. y See on iv. 18.—xxv. 5. Is. vi. 2—5. z iv. 19. xlii. 6. Ps. xiv. 1—3. Rom. i. 28—30. iii. 9—19. Tit. iii. 3. a xxxiv. 7. Prov. xix. 28. b v. 27. xlii. 5, 6. xxxiii. 1. xxxiv. 2 xxxvi. 2. c 10. viii. 8. Ps. lxxi. 16. lxxviii. 3—6. Is. xxxviii. 19. d Gen. x. 25. 32. Joel iii. 17. e Rom. viii. 22. f Ps. xc. 3, 4. Luke xii. 19—21. Jam. v. 1—6. * Heb. sound of fears. xviii. 11. Gen. iii. 9, 10. Lev. xxvi. 36. 2 Kings vii. 6. Prov. i. 26, 27. g i. 13—19. xx. 5—7. 22—24. 1 Sam. xxv. 36—38. Ps. lxxiii. 18—20. xcii. 7. Acts xii. 21—23. 1 Thes. v. 3. h 1 Cor. x. 10. Rev. ix. 11.

14 What ^ais man, that he should be clean? and *he which* is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?

15 Behold, ^yhe putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight.

16 How much more ^zabominable and filthy *is* man, which ^adrinketh iniquity like water.

17 ¶ I will shew thee, ^bhear me; and that *which* I have seen I will declare;

18 Which wise men have told ^cfrom their fathers, and have not hid *it*:

19 Unto ^dwhom alone the earth was given, and no stranger passed among them.

20 The wicked man ^etravailleth with pain all *his* days, and ^f'the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.

21 A ^gdreadful sound *is* in his ears: ^hin prosperity ⁱthe destroyer shall come upon him.

i vi. 11. ix. 16. 2 Kings vi. 23. Is. viii. 21, 22. Matt xxvii. 5. k xx. 24, 25. l xxx. 3, 4. Gen. iv. 12. Ps. lix. 15. cix. 10. Lam. v. 6. 9. Heb. xi. 37, 38. m xviii. 5, 6. 18. Ec. xi. 8. Joel ii. 2. Am. v. 20. Zeph. i. 15. Heb. x. 27. n vi. 2—4. Ps. cxix. 143. Prov i. 27. Is. xlii. 8. Matt. xxvi. 37, 38. Rom. ii. 9. o Prov. vi. 11 xxiv. 34. p Lev. xxvi. 23. Ps. lxxiii. 9, 11. Dan. v. 23. Mal. iii. 13. Acts ix. 5. xii. 1, 23. q ix. 4. xl. 9—11. Ex. v. 2, 3. ix. 17. 1 Sam. iv. 7—9. vi. 6. Ps. lii. 7. Is. viii. 9, 10. x. 12—14. xli. 4—7. r 2 Chr. xxxviii. 22. xxxii. 13—17. s xvi. 12. Gen. xlix. 8. Ps. xviii. 40. t Deut. xxxii. 15. Ps. xvii. 10. lxxiii. 7. lxxviii. 31. Is. vi. 10. Jer. v. 28. u iii. 14. xviii. 15. Is. v. 8—10. Mic. vii. 18. x Jer. ix. 11. xxvi. 18. li. 37. Mic. iii. 12.

22 He believeth not that he shall return out of darkness, ^kand he is waited for of the sword.

23 He ^lwandereth abroad for bread, *saying*, Where *is it*? he knoweth that ^mthe day of darkness is ready at his hand.

24 Trouble and ⁿanguish shall make him afraid; they shall prevail against him, ^oas a king ready to the battle.

25 For ^phe stretcheth out his hand against God, and ^qstrengtheneth himself against the Almighty.

26 He ^rrunneth upon him, ^s*even* on *his* neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers:

27 Because ^the covereth his face with his fatness, and maketh collops of fat on *his* flanks.

28 And he dwelleth in ^udesolate cities, *and* in houses which no man inhabiteth, ^xwhich are ready to become heaps.

arguments?—Thus contemptuously did he speak concerning Job's discourse. Yet in fact his doctrine was true, his cause was good, and many of his observations very wise and pious.—Eliphaz next charged him with casting off the fear of God, and restraining prayer before him: either because he concluded from some hasty expressions, that Job had no reverence for God, and proudly refused to call upon him in his trouble; or, that his doctrine would embolden others to ungodliness with the hopes of impunity, or discourage them from prayer by representing religion as unprofitable. “Truly thou makest void fear” (that is, the *fear of God*); and diminishest meditation (or, *worship*) “before him.”—He further accused him with choosing craftily to cloke his iniquity with the semblance of piety; observing that there needed nothing more than his own words to convict and condemn him.—He next enquired, whether he were the first of men, or had existed before the creation; whether he were of the secret council of God, or had engrossed all wisdom to himself. If not, why did he presume to know more than any of his friends; when they were themselves, or had on their side, much older men than he, or even than his father. And he demanded, “whether the consolations of God were “small with him:” that is, whether the consolations, which they proposed to him, if penitent, were so small, that he should contemn them as “physicians of no value.” Or, whether he had any better method of comfort and deliverance, which he kept secret from them. In short, Eliphaz expostulated with Job, for letting his own heart carry him into such arrogant behaviour to them, and into so daring impiety against God, as he had just uttered.—Temptation and anguish indeed had extorted several improper expressions from Job: but Eliphaz was evidently angry, because he did not confess himself a hypocrite; but argued against the decision of him and his friends, and

treated their discourses with peevish neglect, as either false, or inapplicable to the case.

V. 14—16. (*Notes*, iv. 17—21. ix. 1—3. 14—21. xiv. 1—6.) The holy God puts no trust in his *saints*, his holy ones, or holy angels: nay, he sees defect and mutability in the heavens themselves; as well as in its inhabitants, some of whom kept not their first estate. How “abominable “then and filthy” in his sight is *man*, even every one who is born of woman! For it is evident, that he naturally craves sinful indulgences with a greedy appetite, and seeks his satisfaction in them, as one who is thirsty desires and drinks down water with greediness and delight: and that he quenches his perverse thirst as often as it returns, even by the commission of the most atrocious crimes.—This text forms a conclusive proof, that these disputants were deeply convinced of the doctrine of original sin, and the total depravity of human nature, as far as man is left to his own *innate propensities*. But that doctrine could not fairly be made to bear on the point at issue; because Job did not attempt to justify himself from the charge of sinfulness, but merely from that of hypocrisy, or gross wickedness.

V. 17—35. Eliphaz here again laboured to confirm his position, that the righteous prosper, and the wicked are miserable, in this world. He stated, that this was not merely his own opinion, but a tradition received from their fathers: and one which wise men had always approved and taught; and they especially, whose exclusive authority and prosperity were the reward of their singular piety. It was their uniform observation, that wicked men passed through life in pain, and in constant dread of death: that if they prospered for a little time, some spoiler or murderer soon came upon them: that when they began to be distressed, they were driven to despair; and that in general they were speedily reduced to want and beggary; and had their trou-

^y ^{xx} 22—28 ^{xxii}. 15—20. ^{xxvii}. 16, 17. ^{Ps}. xlix. 16, 17. ^{Luke} xii. 19—21. ^{xvi}. 2. 19—22. ^{Jam}. i. 11. v. 1—3.

29 He shall not be rich, ^y neither shall his substance continue, neither shall he prolong the perfection thereof upon the earth.

^z 22. ^x. 21, 22. ^{xviii}. 5, 6. 18. ^{Matt}. viii. 12. ^{xxii}. 13. 2 ^{Pet}. ii. 17. ^{Jude} 13.

30 He shall not ^z depart out of darkness; ^a the flame shall dry up his branches, and ^b by the breath of his mouth shall he go away.

^a ^{xx}. 26. ^{Is}. xxx. 33. ^{Ez}. xv. 4—7. ^{xx}. 47, 48. ^{Matt}. xxv. 41. ^{Mark}. ix. 43—49. 2 ^{Thes}. i. 8, 9.

31 Let ^c not him that is deceived ^d trust in vanity: for ^e vanity shall be his recompence.

^b ^{iv}. 9. ^{Is}. xi. 4. ^{Rev}. xix. 15. ^c ^{xi}. 16. ^{Is}. xlv. 20. ^{Gal}. vi. 3. 7. ^{Eph}. v. 6. ^d ^{Ps}. lxxii. 10. ^{Is}. lix. 4. ^{Jon}. ii. 8. ^e ^{iv}. 8. ^{Prov}. xxii. 8. ^{Is}. xvii. 10, 11. ^{Hos}. viii. 7. ^{Gal}. vi. 8.

ble and anguish embittered by the dread of impending vengeance, which would prevail against them as a victorious potentate. He did not mean that this was the case of every transgressor; but of the *presumptuous rebel*, who opposed the authority of God, arraigned his providence, and hardened his heart in defiance of his wrath; who was rendered insolent and secure by prosperity; and who became outrageous in adversity, as if he would run upon the Almighty like a desperate warrior, who rushes upon certain death, that he may attempt revenge upon his enemy. He meant the man, whose impiety was connected with rapine and oppression; by whom whole cities had been desolated, and then occupied. The ill-gotten wealth of such a person would never continue, nor the perfection of his prosperity be prolonged. The wrath of God, like a consuming fire, would destroy him root and branch; or, like a tempestuous wind, would drive him away into darkness and despair. Let not then any one, who had gloried in such false confidences, continue to deceive himself; since disappointment and vexation would be his recompence, and his prosperity, and offspring, would come to an untimely end. For hypocrites, however numerous, would be exposed and ruined; and unjust judges, who had amassed riches by bribery, would be consumed. They had conceived mischief and contrived deceit and fraud; and they would find themselves deceived and cheated, with the shadow of happiness and the reality of misery.—Many important truths were contained in this discourse: but, as far as it related to *temporal prosperity or adversity*, it admitted of numerous exceptions; and it implied an invidious application to the case of Job. It was evidently intimated, that *he* was the *prosperous sinner*, the *presumptuous offender*, the *desperate rebel against God*, the *oppressor*, the *hypocrite*, the *corrupt judge*: the ruin of his substance and family, with his inward terror and anguish, were so many demonstrations of his guilt; and his vindication of himself completed the evidence, and almost constituted him a blasphemer, as if he charged the Lord with injustice, and set himself in array against him.—Thus Eliphaz inadvertently took the part of Satan; and brought in a verdict against Job, as if he had actually and openly cursed God. (*Notes*, i. 9—11. iv. 1.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

It is easier to answer, than to convince, an opponent: yet when arguments fail, contempt and railing generally most abound; for far more are capable of slander and

32 It shall be ^{*} accomplished before his time, ^f and his branch shall not be green.

33 He shall ^g shake off his unripe grape as the vine, ^h and shall cast off his flower as the olive.

34 For ⁱ the congregation of hypocrites *shall be* desolate, and fire shall consume ^k the tabernacles of bribery.

35 They ^l conceive mischief and bring forth [†] vanity, and their belly prepareth deceit.

^{*} Or, cut off. ^{xxii}. 16. ^{Ps}. lv. 23. ^{Ec}. vii. 17. ^f ^{viii}. 16—19. ^{xiv}. 7—9. ^{xviii}. 16. 17. ^{Ps}. lli. 5—8. ^{Is}. xxvii. 11. ^{Ez}. xvii. 8—10. ^{Hos}. ix. 16. ^{xiv}. 5—7. ^{John} xv. 6. ^g ^{Is}. xxxiii. 9. ^{Rev}. vi. 13. ^h ^{Deut}. xxviii. 39, 40. ⁱ ^{viii}. 13. ^{xx}. 5. ^{xxvii}. 8. ^{xxxvi}. 13. ^{Is}. xxxiii. 14. 15. ^{Matt}. xxiv. 51. ^k ^{xi}. 14. ^{xii}. 6. ^{xxii}. 5—9. ^{xxix}. 12—17. ^l ^{Sam}. viii. 3. ^{xii}. 3. ^{Mic}. vii. 3. [†] ^{Ps}. vii. 14. ^{Is}. lix. 4, 5. ^{Jam}. i. 15. [†] Or, iniquity.

declamation, than of reasoning with cogency and temper.—“The wisdom which is from above,” teaches us to consider the tendency and effect of our knowledge, and renders us careful not to satisfy ourselves, or amuse others, with unprofitable notions, empty words, or delusive arguments. Every investigation of divine truth should be conducted in the fear of God, and with fervent prayer: and whatever encourages men in sin, or discourages their approach to the mercy-seat of God, must be false and pernicious. Yet prejudiced and angry disputers frequently charge consequences upon their opponents, which are not fairly deducible from their tenets; and accuse them of those crimes which they abhor.—Men’s own mouths often proclaim their iniquity; and even betray the secret hypocrisy of their hearts: yet they, who are forward to make others “offenders for a word,” are commonly found most guilty, and in judging others condemn themselves; and we should carefully distinguish between the language of infirmity and temptation, and that of deliberate impiety. It is common, for men to exclaim against the pride of others, when their own pride most manifestly prevails: and this is evidently the case, when they grow angry on being contradicted; and charge those, who dissent from them, with arrogance, with pretending to be wiser than all mankind, or engrossing all knowledge to themselves; and when they would decide controversies by authority, and by their own superior age and experience. We should watch and pray against this indecent and self-sufficient spirit; and that we may not misrepresent men’s words, nor accuse them without evidence.—In the worst estate of man on earth, he has many unmerited comforts from God. No consolations can be had in trouble, but in the way of faith and prayer; no other secret can be found to heal a wounded conscience, and a broken heart, than the encouragements of the gospel; and however proposed, they are worthy of our acceptance. Yet unmerited reproach and unseasonable severity may so embitter a man’s spirit, that he cannot receive them from those, who have thus discomposed him.—But, alas! “what is man, that he should be clean,” or righteous! Indeed, pious men in every age, and nation, who have differed and engaged in controversy in other things, have unanimously agreed, that our fallen nature is abominable and polluted, delighting in iniquity, and drinking it down with greediness. We may well then admire the patience of God in bearing with us; and still more his love to us, in “the redemption which is in Jesus Christ,” and the mercy and grace through him vouchsafed to all who believe.

CHAP. XVI.

Job reproves his friends, for their conduct towards him ; and shews how he would have acted, if they had been afflicted as he was, 1—5. He pathetically describes his heavy and varied sorrows, 6—16. As a dying man, he appeals to God to attest his integrity, Jam. i. 19. 17—22.

THEN Job answered and said,
2 I have ^a heard many such things :
* miserable comforters *are* ye all.
3 Shall [†] vain words have an end ?
or ^b what emboldeneth thee that thou answerest ?
4 I also could speak as ye *do* ; ^c if your soul were in my soul's stead, I could heap ^d up words against you, and ^e shake mine head at you.

V. 17—35.

We should not despise the wisdom and experience of pious persons in former ages, or the result of their observation : but neither authority, reputation, antiquity, nor greatness, renders men infallible.—The word of God evinces, that sinners are and will be miserable, in proportion to their crimes, unless they repent and obtain forgiveness. Yet the most wicked may sometimes live long in outward prosperity, and die without any remarkable catastrophe : (*Notes*, Ps. lxxiii. 4—9 :) but the vexations of the world, and the thoughts of death and judgment, must fill them with pain and terror. Sometimes they are cut off by premature death, reduced to unexpected poverty, or beset with dangers on every side ; or their departure is attended with horror and anguish. Commonly a curse corrodes their ill-gotten treasures, and their families speedily decay and sink into obscurity : at all times, the wrath of God, as a consuming fire, is ready to fasten upon the dying sinner, and as a tempestuous wind to hurry him into the regions of darkness and despair. This must be the case of all, who live and die forgetful of God, and neglecting his salvation : but what will be the doom of those daring rebels, who strengthen themselves in direct opposition to his known will, his cause, and glory ; and who prosecute their covetous, sensual, ambitious, or revengeful purposes, in contempt of his authority, and defiance of his vengeance ; who grow insolent in prosperity, and desperate in adversity ; and whose blasphemous impiety is connected with the most cruel oppression ! Were it not notorious, it could scarcely have been conceived, that men could be so infatuated in their enmity against God. But “ can their hands be strong, or their hearts endure,” when he shall call them to his judgment-seat ?—On the other hand the righteous may be destitute, afflicted, and tormented, even until death : yet they shall be supported, comforted, and delivered ; and the perfection of their felicity shall be prolonged for ever. Let none then deceive themselves and trust in vanity : as a man sows so shall he also reap ; and the whole company of the wicked, however numerous and distinguished, notwithstanding all their power and sagacity, shall perish for ever. But let

5 *But* ^f I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips should assuage *your grief*.
6 ¶ Though I speak, ^g my grief is not assuaged : and *though* I forbear, ^h what am I eased ?
7 But now ^b he hath made me weary : thou ⁱ hast made desolate all my company.
8 And thou hast filled me with wrinkles, *which* ^k is a witness *against me* : and ^l my leanness rising up in me beareth witness to my face.
9 He ^m teareth *me* in his wrath, who hateth me : ⁿ he gnasheth upon me with his teeth ; ^o mine enemy sharpeneth his eyes upon me.

us apply these truths to our own hearts and consciences, examine our own state and character by them, and cease uncandidly to judge and condemn our brethren.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1—3. Job here reproved Eliphaz, for repeating what was in itself uninteresting and inapplicable : and he decided that all his friends had proved themselves comforters, who increased, instead of diminishing his distress ; for they had reproached him without ceasing, instead of giving him any suitable encouragement. He was surprised, that they would proceed with such empty discourse : and that Eliphaz should have the *courage*, or rather *harshness*, to reply, after he and his associates had been so completely refuted.—If we consider the speech of Eliphaz *abstractedly*, Job undervalued it : but as it related to the matter in debate, he must be allowed to have had some reason for what he said.
V. 4, 5. A very pathetick turn is here given to the discourse. Had Job been in health, at ease, and prosperous, and his friends sick, bereaved, destitute, and tempted, he could have despised and reviled them very readily : but how would *they* have taken it ? He would, however, have scorned to behave in such a manner : on the contrary, he would have suggested topicks of consolation to strengthen their faith and patience, and to assuage their grief, with the encouraging hope of a happy event to their afflictions. (*Note*, iv. 3—6.)
V. 6—16. These verses contain most grievous complaints, and many harsh expressions, which may easily be accounted for, but cannot be justified.—Job began by observing that he could obtain no relief, either by silence or by speaking ; as all he said was misrepresented, and exposed him to further reproach. He declared that *He*, God himself, “ had made him weary,” even of his life : and then, turning his discourse to him, he further complained, that he had destroyed his family, dispersed all his companions, and left his friends so to mistake his case, that they had become his tormentors. He had likewise disfigured and wasted his body with dire diseases, so that his wrinkles and leanness were witnesses against him. Job next spoke of “ his enemy, who hated him, tare him, and gnashed

10 They have ^pgaped upon me with their mouth; ^athey have smitten me upon the cheek reproachfully; ^rthey have gathered themselves together against me.

11 God hath ^{*}delivered me ^{*}to the ungodly, and ^tturned me over into the hands of the wicked.

12 I was ^uat ease, but he hath ^xbroken me asunder: he hath also taken ^{me} ^yby my neck, and ^zshaken me to pieces, and ^aset me up for his mark.

13 His ^barchers compass me round about; ^che cleaveth my reins asunder, and ^ddoth not spare; he ^epoureth out my gall upon the ground.

14 He ^fbreaketh me with breach upon breach, ^ghe runneth upon me like a giant.

15 I have ^hsewed sackcloth upon

my skin, and ⁱdefiled my horn in the dust.

16 My ^jface is foul with weeping, and ^kon mine eye-lids is the shadow of death.

17 Not ^lfor *any* injustice in mine hands: also ^mmy prayer is pure.

18 ⁿO earth, ^ocover not thou my blood, and ^plet my cry have no place.

19 Also now, behold, ^qmy witness is in heaven, and my record is ^ron high.

20 My friends ^sscorn me; *but* mine eye ^tpoureth out *tears* unto God.

21 Oh, that one might ^uplead for a man with God, as a man *pleadeth* for his ^vneighbour!

22 When ^wa few years are come, then I shall go the way ^xwhence I shall not return.

Luke vi. 11, 12. Heb. v. 7. 5. Ec. vi. 10. Is. xlv. 9. 5. 14.

s ix. 34, 35. xiii. 3. 22. xxiii. 3—7. Or, friend. || Heb. years of number. xiv

“upon him” with insulting rage, and looked upon him as about to devour him. But it is not certain, whether he intended this of the severity, with which Eliphaz had treated him; or whether he meant Satan, who doubtless assaulted him with every horrid and terrifying temptation to drive him to despair; or whether he thus spoke of God, as become his enemy. (*Marg. Ref. m—o.*) He however meant his friends, when he spoke of those, who “gaped upon him with their mouth, smote him on the cheek reproachfully, and gathered themselves together against him;” (or, “filled themselves against him,” that is, fully gratified their ill-will;) referring to their unanimous accusations, by which they wounded his spirit, and exposed his character to disgrace.—He then complained that God had delivered him into the hands of wicked men: the Sabeans and Chaldeans had seized his substance; and his friends persecuted him, as if they had been ungodly men; nor could he obtain the least redress. Nay, the Lord himself brake him asunder, seizing upon him, and shaking him; as a strong man, when greatly enraged, would seize and shake one that was feeble and helpless: he had set him up as a mark, at which all the executioners of his vengeance were required to shoot their arrows; so that he was wounded in his vitals, and broken with renewed afflictions; and the Almighty seemed to run upon him with irresistible force and fury, as a giant or a mighty warrior upon one who dared not to oppose him. He had therefore assumed the garb of a mourner and a penitent; and the sackcloth, which he had put on, stuck to him as if sewed to his skin: his honour and authority were turned into deep disgrace; he was disfigured with incessant weeping; and death seemed ready to close his eyes. (*Notes, i. 16—22. ii. 7—13. vi. 1—4. x. 14—17. xiii. 24—28.*)

V. 17—22. It should be recollected, that Job did not mean to deny he was a *sinner*; but he solemnly protested that he had not been an *unjust oppressor*, or a *hypocrite*: and if he had shed any innocent blood, he called upon the

earth no longer to cover it, but to disclose it, that he might be openly convicted. In that case he allowed, that he should have no right to compassion from man, or to expect that God would regard his cry for deliverance. But he was assured that He, who dwelleth in the heavens, knew his innocency, and would be a witness in his behalf. His friends, indeed, “despised him,” but he prayed with weeping before a merciful God: and he wished greatly that he could have access to him; and have his cause pleaded before him, as one pleadeth for another before the tribunal of earthly princes; that he might have his injured character vindicated, before the appointed years of his life were ended, which had been but few, and were now, as he thought, very soon to be closed.

My friends scorn me. (20) מְלִיצֵי רָעִי. The word מְלִיצֵי is rendered *an interpreter*; Gen. xlii. 23. Job xxxiii. 23. And the plural is translated *ambassadors*; 2 Chr. xxxiii. 31: and *interpreters*; Is. xliii. 27. *marg.*: and it occurs nowhere else, except in this place. Hence many think it may signify *a mediator*.—Thus the passage may be rendered, “My Mediator is my Friend; my eye poureth out *tears* unto God. And one is pleading for man to God; “and the Son of man for his neighbour.” By a trivial change of the vowel points, the singular number may be admitted; and thus the sentiment expressed may be considered as an additional proof of Job’s faith in a Redeemer. (*Notes, xix. 23—27. xxxiii. 19—26.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are all very incompetent judges of our own performances; and often suppose, that we have spoken things pertinent and excellent, when others deem them trite and inapplicable, and wonder that we should dwell on topicks not worth hearing, or be emboldened to speak at all. In fact, while the speaker is partial, the hearer is often prejudiced; and both parties should watch over themselves, if they would amicably settle controversies, profitably

CHAP. XVII.

Job continues his complaints: and shews that his

* Or, spirit is sufferings would astonish the righteous, but not discourage them, 1—10. His hope is not in life, but in death, 11—16.

MY *breath is *corrupt, ^b my days are extinct, *the graves are ready for me.

2 Are there not ^d mockers with me? and doth not mine eye [†]continue in their ^eprovocation?

3 Lay down now, ^fput me in a surety

with thee: who is he *that* will ^gstrike hands with me?

4 For ^hthou hast hid their heart from understanding; therefore shalt thou not exalt *them*.

5 He ⁱthat speaketh flattery to his friends, even ^jthe eyes of his children shall fail.

6 He hath made me also ^ka by-word of the people, and [†]aforetime I was ^las a tabret.

7 Mine ^meye also is dim by reason of sorrow, and all my ⁿmembers are ^oas a shadow.

g Prov. vi. 1. xi. 15. marg. xvii. 18. xxii. 26.
h 2 Sam. xv. 31. xvii. 14. 2 Chr. xxv. 16. Is. xix. 14. Matt. xi. 25. xlii. 11. Rom. xi. 8. 1 Cor. i. 20.
i xxxii. 21, 22. Ps. xii. 2, 3. Prov. xx. 19. xxix. 5. 1 Thes. ii. 5.
j Ex. xx. 5. Deut. xxxviii. 65.
k 1 Kings xi. 12. Lam. iv. 17.
l Gen. xxxi. 9. 1 Kings ix. 7. Ps. xlv. 14.
† Or, before them.
m Gen. xxxi. 27. Is. v. 12.
n xvi. 16. Ps. vi. 7. xxxi. 9, 10. Lam. v. 17.
o Or, thoughts. 11. Ps. cix. 23, 24. Ec. vi. 12.

conduct conversation, or even preach and hear the word of God in a becoming manner.—We are not suitably affected with the sufferings of others, because we “do not love our neighbour as ourselves.” It is natural to those who are at ease, to give sage advice, grave reproofs, or solemn warnings to the afflicted; and even to censure and condemn them: but we ought to consider how *we* should feel, if thus treated in similar circumstances. Indeed, the prosperous are commonly troublesome comforters of the afflicted; sympathy and tenderness of spirit are seldom learned, except in the school of tribulation; and the experienced believer, who can make allowances for the anguish of disease, and the force of temptation, and recollects what topicks have proved consolatory to himself, best “knows how to speak a word in season to the weary,” which may strengthen his faith and hope, and assuage his grief.—In great distress, when we can get no relief, we are apt to yield to repining: and, as the believer may then be tempted even to think hardly of God’s dealings with him; he may well be borne with, if he speak peevishly and harshly of his fellow-creatures.—The consideration of the variety of complicated miseries that a godly man may endure, from the frown and correction of God, the rage and malice of Satan, and the ingratitude and cruelty of men, in his conscience, reputation, connexions, soul and body, should teach us to prepare for trials, and excite our gratitude for our many mercies; while it should warn the sinner to “flee from the wrath to come.”—How weary and desolate will the wicked be in the eternal world! How will the rage of Satan, the company of the damned, mutual enmity and contempt, and the irreconcilable wrath of God, unite with the reproaches of conscience, and the horrors of despair, to fill them with inexpressible misery! There they will be the mark of all the arrows of divine vengeance, and incessant weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth, will be their dreadful employment!—But should not the same reflection lead the believer to Gethsemane and Golgotha? The divine Saviour had far more cause than Job, to complain that “he was made weary;” that all his company of followers was desolated; that his enemy who hated him was permitted to assault and tear him; that he was delivered into the hands of the ungodly, who gaped upon him, gathered themselves against him, reproached, insulted, smote, and crucified him; yea, that “it pleased the LORD to bruise him,” and inflict upon him

agonies unknown; yet “not for any injustice in his hands:” also his prayer was pure.” He was “wounded for our transgressions,” and suffered for our sins, that he might deliver us from the wrath to come, and bestow on us the gift of eternal life. Should he not then be precious to our souls? and ought we not promptly to obey him, and suffer for his sake?—If our conscience be sprinkled with his atoning blood, and testify to our integrity; if “our witness be in heaven, and our record on high,” that we are not living in iniquity or hypocrisy;—though our afflictions abound, our enemies triumph, and our friends despise us; yet God will receive our prayer, and regard our tears, and in due time plead our cause, clear our characters, and assign a period to our trials. And when we “go the way whence we shall not return,” it will be a release from prison, and an entrance into unalloyed glory and felicity.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1, 2. The nature and violence of Job’s disease rendered it painful to him, and offensive to others, when he drew his breath; and he concluded that his days were expiring, and that the sepulchres of his ancestors were ready for him. In these doleful circumstances he was surrounded with professed friends, who were indeed “mockers;” as they insulted over his misery, and despised instead of comforting him: nor could he turn his attention from their reproaches to view more encouraging objects, or think of any thing else during whole nights. (*Marg.*)

V. 3—7. Again Job intreated the Lord, to give him some assurance, that he would soon try his cause, or appoint some impartial judge, to whom he could confidently refer the decision; (*Notes*, xvi. 17—22. xxiii. 3—7. xxxiii. 1—7;) for his friends, being *judicially* infatuated, would never be honoured in such a service. He supposed that their former professions of affection for him were mere flattery; or that their doctrine flattered the prosperous, as if they were the favourites of Heaven: or, he assured them, that though he desired fair treatment from them, he did not wish them to flatter him; being sensible that God abhorred flattery, and that those who aimed to advance themselves by it, would heap up disappointment and misery for their children.—“I must speak the truth of them, (though it displeases them,) and not soothe them in their errors: for

o Ps. lxxiii. 12—15.
Ec. v. 8. Hab. i.
13. Rom. xi. 33.
p xxxiv. 30. Acts
xiii. 46.
q Prov. iv. 18. Is.
xxxv. 8—10.
1 Pet. i. 5. 1 John
ii. 19.
r Gen. xx. 5. Ps.
xxiv. 4. xxvi. 6.
lxxiii. 13. Is. i. 15.
16. Mark vii. 2.
* Heb. add
strength. Is. xl.
29—31. 2 Cor.
xii. 9, 10.
s vi. 29. Mal. iii. 18.
t 4. xv. 9. xxxii.
9. xlii. 7. 1 Cor.
i. 20. vi. 5.
u vii. 6. ix. 25, 26.
Is. xxxviii. 10.
x Ec. ix. 10. Is.
viii. 10. Lam. iii.
37. Rom. i. 13.
2 Cor. i. 15—17.
Jam. iv. 13—15.

8 Upright *men* shall be ^oastonded
at this, and the innocent shall ^pstir up
himself against the hypocrite.

9 The righteous also shall ^qhold on
his way, and he that hath ^rclean hands
shall ^sbe stronger and stronger.

10 But as for you all, ^tdo ye return,
and come now: ^ufor I cannot find one
wise *man* among you.

11 ¶ My ^vdays are past, ^wmy pur-
poses are broken off, *even* the ^xthoughts
of my heart.

12 They ^ychange the night into

† Heb. possessions. y vii. 3, 4. 13, 14. xxiv. 14—16. Deut. xxviii. 67.

day: the light is ^zshort because of
darkness.

13 ^aIf I wait, ^bthe grave is mine
house: ^cI have made my bed in the
darkness.

14 I have ^dsaid to ^ecorruption, Thou
art my father: ^fto the worm, Thou
art my mother, and my sister.

15 And where is now ^gmy hope?
as for my hope, who shall see it?

16 They shall go down to ^hthe bars
of the pit, when *our* ⁱrest together is
in the dust.

† Heb. near
z xiv. 14. Ps. xxvii.
14. Lam. iii. 26,
26.
a See on l.—x. 21,
22. xxx. 23.
b Ps. cxxxix. 8.
Is. lvii. 2.
c Heb. cried, or,
called.
c xxi. 32, 33. Ps.
xvi. 10. xlix. 9.
Acts ii. 27—31.
xiii. 34—37.
1 Cor. xv. 42.
53, 54.
d xix. 26. xxiv. 20.
Is. xiv. 11.
e iv. 6. vi. 11. xiii.
15. xix. 10.
f xlviii. 13, 14.
xxxiii. 18—28.
Ps. lxxxviii. 4—
8. cxliii. 7. Is.
xxxviii. 17, 18.
Jon. ii. 6.
g iii. 17—19. Ez.
xxxvii. 11. 2 Cor. i. 9.

‘he that flatters his friends, when he should reprove them,
‘may look long enough before either he, or his children,
‘find one that will deal sincerely with them.’ *Bp. Patrick*.
—Indeed, God had so reduced and afflicted his servant,
that he was become a proverb and an object of derision,
even to those, who before professed greatly to respect and
delight in him. (*Notes*, xxix. 18—25. xxx. 1—14. *Ez.*
xxxiii. 30—33.)

V. 8, 9. Upright believers, in different parts and ages
of the world, would hear how this conscientious servant
of God had been afflicted, and how his friends had treated
him; at which they would be greatly astonished. But this
would excite them to distinguish themselves from hypo-
crites, and set themselves against them; especially against
such as condemned others merely because they were
afflicted. And when God should make known Job’s real
character, and the reason of his extraordinary trials; his
example would be an adjudged case, that no adversity
could prove a man to be wicked, or an object of divine
wrath. This would be a great encouragement to the right-
eous, to hold on their way, in the midst of difficulties, re-
proaches, and suspicions; nay, to grow stronger in faith
under those very trials, which detected and turned aside
the hypocrite. Some explain the passage, as a wish,
“Let the upright, &c.,” but in fact, these have been the
effects of Job’s sufferings in numberless instances; and
this was one grand design for which they were permitted.
“Ye have heard of the patience of Job; and have seen
“the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of
“tender mercy.” (*Jam.* v. 11.)—Here a glimpse of divine
light, and a lively exercise of faith and hope, broke forth
in the midst of the despondency of Job’s discourse. (*Notes*,
xix. 23—27. xxiii. 8—12.)

V. 10. *Do ye return, &c.* That is, ‘Re-examine my
cause, and alter your unjust decision; for I cannot find
one among you who has spoken on this subject, as a wise
man would have done.’ (*Notes*, vi. 27—30. *Mal.* iii. 13—
18.)

V. 11, 12. The old translation seems here to be both
more literal and intelligible. “My days are past, my en-
terprises are broken, and the thoughts of my heart have
“changed the night for the day, and the light that ap-
“proached, for darkness.”—All the purposes which Job
had formed, however wise, pious, or benevolent, were, as
he supposed, finally come to nothing, as his days were
cast. (*Notes*, Ps. cxlvi. 3, 4. *Ec.* ix. 10.) And now the

thoughts which possessed his heart turned the night into
day, by preventing his rest. Yet when the light approached,
it was turned into darkness by the gloom of his disquieted
mind.—‘My thoughts will not let me sleep in the night,
‘nor enjoy pleasure in the day.’ *Bp. Patrick*. (*Notes*, vii.
1—6. 13, 14.)

V. 13—16. Whenever Job thought of waiting, in hope
of his sufferings being terminated, that thought was asso-
ciated with the idea of lodging in the dark and silent grave.
His disease, and his daily reflections, familiarized his mind
to corruption and the worms; and he was induced to claim
kindred with them, through the present loathsomeness of
his disease; and to expect more relief from them, than
from his friends and nearest relations.—He had indeed no
hopes of temporal good; nor would they, who flattered
him with these expectations, ever witness such a change
in his circumstances. All his hopes would soon descend
with him into the grave; when he and his friends also
would rest together in the dust. (*Notes*, vi. 8—13. 15—
23. ix. 14—21.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If constrained to dwell with mockers and revilers, we
should endeavour to withdraw our attention from them,
by meditating on the blessed society in heaven; that our
tempers may not be ruffled by “continuing in their pro-
“vocation.”—Through our divine Surety, the believer
shall not only be justified from his sins against God, but
from all the false accusations of man.—To be so *judicially*
blinded, that the Lord hides the heart from understanding,
forms a most dreadful case, and forebodes everlasting shame
and misery: but this never befalls those who humbly trust
and serve him; nor should we rashly conclude it to be the
case of any, merely because they mistake in some things,
which appear to us of great importance.—The Lord abhors
the flattering of the prosperous, and the contemning of the
afflicted: we should therefore study godly simplicity, and
candid compassion.—Vain is the praise of men: they extol
a person one day, and insult him the next; they idolize
and then execrate, perhaps without any other cause, than
a change in a man’s outward circumstances. Let us then
be indifferent about human applause, and “seek the honour
“which cometh from God.”—As we, at this distance of
time, may derive encouragement and instruction from the
sufferings of Job, so may others from our lighter afflic-
tions; and this may serve to reconcile us to them. Indeed,

CHAP. XVIII.

Bildad sharply reproves Job for presumption and impatience, 1—4. He enlarges on the miseries of the wicked, 5—21.

THEN answered ^a Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

2 How ^b long will it be ere ye make an end of words? ^c mark, and afterwards we will speak.

3 Wherefore ^d are we counted as beasts, and reputed vile in your sight?

4 He ^e teareth ^f himself in his anger: ^g shall the earth be forsaken for thee? and shall ^h the rock be removed out of his place?

5 Yea, ⁱ the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the ^j spark of his fire shall not shine.

6 The light shall be dark in his tabernacle, and his ^k candle shall be put out with him.

7 The ^l steps of his strength shall be straitened, and ^m his own counsel shall cast him down.

8 For ⁿ he is cast into a net by his own feet, and he walketh upon a snare.

9 The ^o gin shall take him by the heel, and ^p the robber shall prevail against him.

10 The ^q snare is ^r laid for him in the ground, and a trap for him in the way.

11 ^s Terrors shall make him afraid on every side, and shall ^t drive him ^u to his feet.

12 His strength shall be ^v hunger-bitten, and ^w destruction shall be ready at his side.

13 It shall devour the ^x strength of his skin: even ^y the first-born of death shall devour his strength.

14 His ^z confidence shall be rooted out of his tabernacle, and it shall bring him to ^{aa} the king of terrors.

15 It shall ^{ab} dwell in his tabernacle, ^{ac} because it is none of his: ^{ad} brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation.

16 His ^{ae} roots shall be dried up beneath, and above ^{af} shall his branch be cut off.

17 His ^{ag} remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street.

a ii. 11. viii. 1. xxv. 1 xlii. 7—9.

b viii. 2. xi. 2. xiii. 5, 6. xvi. 2, 3.

c xiii. 5, 6. 17. xxi. 2. xxxiii. 1. Prov. xviii. 13.

d xii. 7, 8. xvii. 4. 10. Ps. lxxiii. 22. Ec. iii. 18. Rom. xii. 10.

e v. 2. xiii. 14. xvi. 9. Jon. iv. 9. Mark ix. 18.

f Luke ix. 39.

g Heb. his soul. xl. 8. Ez. ix. 9.

h xiv. 18. Is. liv. 10. Matt. xxiv. 35.

i xx. 5. Prov. iv. 19. xiii. 9. xx. 20. xxiv. 20.

j Is. i. 11.

k Or, lamp. xxi. 17. marg. Ps. xviii. 28. Rev. xviii. 23.

l xx. 22. xxxvi. 16. Ps. xviii. 36.

m Prov. iv. 12.

n v. 12, 13. 2 Sam. xv. 31. xvii. 14.

o Ps. xxxiii. 10. Hos. x. 6. 1 Cor. iii. 19.

p xxii. 10. Esth. iii. 9. vi. 13. vii. 5. 10. Ps. ix. 15.

q xxxv. 8. Prov. v. 22. xxix. 6.

r Ez. xxxii. 3.

s 1 Tim. iii. 7. vi. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 26.

m Is. viii. 14, 15.

n i. 15. 17. v. 5.

o Ps. xi. 8. Ez. xii. 13. Rom. xi. 9.

p Heb. hidden.

q vi. 4. xv. 21.

r Ps. lxxiii. 19.

s Jer. vi. 25. xx. 3, 4. xvi. 5.

t xlix. 29. 2 Cor. v. 11. Rev. vi. 15, 16.

u Heb. scatter.

v Lev. xxvi. 36.

w 2 Kings vii. 6, 7.

x Ps. lxxv. 5. Prov. xxviii. 1.

y xv. 23, 24. 1 Sam. ii. 5. 36. Ps. xxxiv. 10. cix. 10.

z Ps. vii. 12—14.

aa 1 Thes. v. 3.

ab 2 Pet. ii. 3.

ac Heb. bars. xvii. 16. Jon. ii. 6.

ad Gen. xlix. 3.

ae Is. xiv. 30. Rev. vi. 8.

af viii. 14. xi. 20.

ag Ps. cxii. 10. Prov. x. 28. Matt. vii. 26, 27.

ah xxiv. 17. xli. 34.

ai Ps. lv. 4. Prov. xiv. 32. 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56. Heb. ii. 15.

aj y 12, 13. Zech. v. 4.

ak z xx. 18—21. xxxi. 38, 39. Jer. xxii. 13. Hab. ii. 6—11.

al a Gen. xix. 24.

am Deut. xxix. 23.

an Ps. xi. 6. Is. xxxiv. 9, 10. Rev. xix. 20. xxi. 8.

ao b xxix. 19. Is. v. 24. Hos. ix. 16.

ap Am. ii. 9. Mal. iv. 1.

aq c v. 3, 4. xv. 30.

ar d xiii. 12. Ps. xxxiv. 16. lxxviii. 4. Prov. ii. 22.

as x. 7.

the upright believer will extract benefit from every event. The falls of those, who once seemed to run well, will teach him humble watchfulness and jealous fear; and stir him up to guard against hypocrisy, and protest against hypocrites: the afflictions of the godly will teach him the nature of his warfare, and warn him to prepare for the conflict: and the heaviest affliction which is laid upon him, will eventually tend to strengthen his faith, increase his patience, and encourage his hope, while he is walking in the ways of God and doing his work.—We should always be open to conviction, and ready to retract our erroneous sentiments and unmerited censures; for this is a good proof of wisdom.—The purposes and thoughts of our hearts are soon broken off, by sickness or the prospect of death; and they often break our sleep, and darken our days with solicitude to no purpose. Let us then learn to renounce carnal hopes and anxieties, to execute immediately every wise and useful design, and “to cast all our care upon him that careth for us.” Let us remember, how nearly our bodies are allied to corruption, the worm, and the dust; and seek for that lively hope which shall be accomplished, when the hope of the wicked will be put out in darkness; that, when our bodies are confined in the grave, our souls may enjoy “the rest reserved for the people of God.”

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 2—4. Bildad had before given Job good advice and encouragement; (Notes, viii. 4—7. 20—22;) but here he used nothing but rebukes, and presages

of approaching ruin. He speaks, as if there were persons present, during the debate, some of whom favoured Job and took his part, when he says, “How long will it be ere ye make an end of words?” (Note, xxxv. 4—8.) He thought it long, before his own time came to speak; and he calls upon Job, and all who were of his sentiments, to mark with attention, that they might understand, what was spoken by him and his friends.—It must be allowed, that Job had spoken contemptuously enough concerning the discourses of his friends, declaring that “God had hid their hearts from understanding,” and that “he could not find one wise man among them;” for he had been too much moved by their unjust suspicions and erroneous principles. Bildad, however, seems to have been much more angry; as if Job had counted him and his friends senseless as beasts.—And because he had said, that he “took his flesh in his teeth,” (Note, xiii. 13, 14,) alluding to his exquisite pain; Bildad ascribed it to his furious anger, which prompted him to do himself a mischief: and as he would not allow himself to be a wicked man, Bildad concluded that he wished to alter the fixed laws of God’s righteous government, in order that he might be exempted from punishment.

V. 5—21. The remainder of this chapter is a rhetorical declamation on the miseries of the wicked. There is indeed a great deal of truth and animation in the description; but the application of it to Job was unjust and cruel. It does not contain a single proof of the doctrine maintained by Bildad, namely, that the wicked are uniformly exposed to peculiar calamity in this world; or one evidence

* Heb. *They shall drive him.* 11. 14. into darkness, and ^f chased out of the world.

^e iii. 20. x. 22. Is. viii. 21, 22. Jude 13. 18 He shall ^g neither have son nor nephew among his people, ^h nor any remaining in his dwellings.

^f xx. 8. Prov. xiv. 32. Is. xvii. 3, 14. Dan. iv. 33. v. 21. ^g i. 19. viii. 4. xlii. 13—16. Ps. cix. 13. Is. xiv. 21, 22. Jer. xxii. 30. ^h xx. 26—28. Is. v. 8, 9.

20 They that come after *him* shall be ⁱ astonished at ^k his day, as they that [†] went before [‡] were affrighted.

21 Surely ⁱ such *are* the dwellings of the wicked, and this *is* the place of [†] *him that* ^m knoweth not God.

ⁱ xix. 13—19. ^k 14—16. ^m xxi. 14. Ex. v. 2. Judg. ii. 10. 1 Sam. ii. 12. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Ps. lxxix. 6. Jer. ix. 3. x. 25. Rom. i. 28. 1 Thes. iv. 5. 2 Thes. i. 8. Tit. i. 16.

of the wickedness of Job. For the former, Bildad appealed to facts which by no means would bear him out; and the latter he thought undeniable from Job's remarkable calamities.—Yet if we include the state of retribution, as well as that of probation, we may deduce from this passage much useful instruction.—Job had said, that “his light was short because of darkness.” (*Note*, xvii. 11, 12.) Yea, answered Bildad, it is always so with a notoriously wicked man. A glimmering of prosperity, and a spark of hope may be given him; but both shall soon go out, and his family will share his misery. (*Notes*, v. 3—5. viii. 4—7. 11—19. xv. 17—35.) His most vigorous efforts to escape destruction will be unavailing, and his craftiest projects will entangle him. He is like one who ventures on forbidden ground, where nets, and snares, and traps, are placed, which he cannot escape wherever he sets his feet: or like a man in a dangerous road, where robbers meet and plunder him. In short he lives amidst alarms and terrors, and is always ready to flee as from an enemy; famine, penury, or other calamities speedily befall him; afflictions, as it were, greedily devour him; diseases prey upon his strength and comeliness; and some one more dire than the rest, like “the first-born of death,” fastens upon him and cannot be removed. Thus all his confidences fail him; and death, as “the king of” all the “terrors” which have assailed him, stares him in the face, and affrights him with the near prospect of approaching misery. Nay, destruction takes up his abode in his tabernacles: divine judgments, like the fire and brimstone which destroyed Sodom, desolate his family, and leave neither root nor branch; his memory is either lost or disgraced; he is driven into darkness and chased out of the world, as not fit to live or willing to die; (*Note*, Prov. xiv. 32;) and he leaves no descendant, son, or grandson, behind him: so that all who witness his doom are terrified, and all that hear of it will be astonished. Surely, concluded Bildad, this is the doom of those who are more wicked than other men.—No doubt, he meant this application for Job; as the whole description is full of evident references to his varied calamities, and his desponding complaints. (*Marg. Ref.*)—But how different was the event of his troubles, and the sentiments of posterity respecting him, from what Bildad supposed they would be!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

The eagerness and asperity, even of good men, when heated in controversy, are often very indecent. They are slow to hear, swift to speak, and swift to wrath; (*Note*, Jam. i. 19—21;) and ready to give affronts, but unable to bear them: sometimes they are led even to boast, and revile, as well as to misunderstand and misinterpret each other; to overlook all the wise and pious sentiments of their opponents; and to make the worst of every apparent error, or sally of passion. We all perceive the folly of such violence in others, and many are afterwards ashamed of it

in themselves; but few are able to avoid it at the time. It is therefore generally our wisdom, especially if our spirits be eager, to shun controversy: and it is always our duty to watch and pray against pride; for if we duly considered how mean, guilty, polluted, and ignorant we really are, we should not be so much offended, even if we were “counted as “stupid as beasts,” and reputed vile in the sight of all others.—Violent anger torments those who indulge it: and, however we may fret and repine, we might as easily remove the rocks, as disannul the immovable purposes of God, or alter the measures of his wise and righteous government; so that our wisdom and duty consist in seeking grace from him, to enable us to submit, and to deduce profit from all his appointments.—It is common for angry disputants to rank their opponents among the enemies of God; to draw perverse conclusions from important truths; and to confound their own opinions, which are often erroneous, with the unerring testimonies of Scripture.—In this world there is no exact *external* discrimination betwixt the righteous and the wicked. Yet even on earth, which is as *the wicked man's heaven*, he meets with continual anxiety, terror, and vexation; with pain and sickness; with bitter disappointments to his pride, avarice, or ambition; and with galling affronts and injuries: he experiences stings of conscience, and the dread of the wrath of God; and death is to him emphatically “the king of terrors,” which threatens to tear him from all he loves, and plunge him into all he fears. These things often extort the doleful groan: though at other times he smothers his anguish in his breast, conceals it with a smile, or drowns it in hypocritical mirth, and sensual indulgence. He is continually losing his comforts, or his relish for them; and he has no calm confidence in God, no “joy in the Holy Ghost,” no lively hope, no communion with a heavenly Father, to countervail the loss. Yet he cleaves to the world, as *his best, his all*; and is chased out of it sorely against his will: whilst God seems to frown, and conscience forebodes that he is about to be driven from light, into eternal darkness and despair. Whether he believe it, or not, “surely such will be the “dwellings of the wicked; and this the place of him that “knoweth not God.” Thus “his light shall be put out, “and the spark of his fire shall not shine.” (*Note*, Prov. iv. 18, 19.) Nor will it signify to him, whether his memory be honoured, and his family flourish; or whether the one be buried in oblivion or covered with infamy, whilst the other is clean rooted out.—But they who partake of the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, are happy in the midst of their tribulations: they have hope and comfort; peace of conscience and a submissive will are their privilege; death is no longer to them “the king of terrors;” nor will they be chased out of the world, or driven from light into darkness. On the contrary, death will remove them to the land of perfect knowledge, purity, and felicity; they “shall be had in everlasting remembrance,” and they may

CHAP. XIX.

JOB complains of the persevering cruelty, with which his friends distressed him; and shews the greatness and variety of his sufferings, 1—20. He intreats their pity, 21, 22. He professes his faith in a divine Redeemer, and a future resurrection, 23—27. He warns his friends not to persecute him, 28, 29.

THEN Job answered and said,

2 ^a How long will ye ^b vex my soul, and ^c break me in pieces with words?

3 These ^d ten times have ^e ye reproached me: ye are not ashamed *that* ye ^f make yourselves ^g strange to me.

4 And be it indeed *that* ^h I have erred, ⁱ mine error remaineth with myself.

5 If indeed ye will ^j magnify yourselves against me, and ^k plead against me my reproach:

6 Know now that ^l God hath overthrown me, and hath ^m compassed me with his net.

7 Behold, ⁿ I cry out of ^o wrong, but I am not heard: I cry aloud, but *there* is ^p no judgment.

8 He hath ^q fenced up my way that I cannot pass, and ^r he hath set darkness in my paths.

9 He hath ^s stripped me of my glory, and taken the crown *from* my head.

10 He hath ^t destroyed me on every side, and ^u I am gone: and ^v mine hope hath he removed like a tree.

11 He hath also ^w kindled his wrath

^a viii. 2. xviii. 2. Ps. xiii. 1. Rev. vi. 10.
^b xxvii. 2. Judg. xvi. 16. Ps. vi. 2, 3. xlii. 10. 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8.
^c Ps. lv. 21. lix. 7. lxiv. 3. Prov. xii. 18. xviii. 21. Jam. iii. 6—8.
^d Gen. xxxi. 7. Lev. xxvi. 26. Num. xiv. 22. Neh. iv. 12. Dan. i. 20.
^e iv. 6—11. v. 3, 4. viii. 4—6. xi. 3, 14. xv. 4—6. 12. xviii. 4, &c.
^f Or, *harden yourselves against me*.
^g 17. Gen. xlii. 7. Ps. lxi. 8. xi. 3—6.
^h 2 Sam. xxiv. 17. Prov. ix. 12. Ez. xviii. 4. 2 Cor. v. 10. Gal. vi. 5.
ⁱ Ps. xxxv. 26. xxxviii. 16. xlii. 11. lv. 12. Mic. vii. 8. Zeph. ii. 10. Zech. xii. 7.
^j 1 Sam. i. 6. Neh. i. 3. Is. i. 1. Luke i. 25. xiii. 2—4. John ix. 2. 34.
^k vii. 20. xvi. 11—14. Ps. xli. 9—14. lxvi. 10—12. m. xviii. 8—10. Lam. i. 12, 13. Ez. xii. 13. xxxii. 3. Hos. vii. 12.
^l x. 3. 15—17. xvi. 17—19. xxi. 27. Ps. xxii. 2. Jer. xx. 8. Lam. iii. 8. Hab. i. 2, 3.
^m Or, *violence*.
ⁿ ix. 32. xiii. 15—23. xvi. 21. xxiii. 3—7. xxxi. 35, 36. xxxiv. 5. xl. 8.
^o iii. 23. Ps. lxxxviii. 8. Lam. iii. 7. 9. Hos. ii. 6.
^p Josh. xxiv. 7. Prov. iv. 19. Is. i. 10. Jer. xlii. 16. xxxiii. 12. John viii. 12.
^q xxix. 7—14. 20, 21. xxx. 1. Ps. xlix. 16, 17. lxxxix. 44. Is. li. 6. Hos. ix. 11, 12.
^r s i 13—19. ii. 7. Ps. lxxxviii. 13—18. 2 Cor. iv. 8, 9. t xvii. u vi. 11. viii. 13—18. xvii. 15. xxiv. 20. Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36. x Deut. xxxii. 22. Ps. lxxxix. 46. xc. 7.

against me, and ^y he counteth me unto him as *one of* his enemies.

12 ^z His troops come together, and ^a raise up their way against me, and encamp round about my tabernacle.

13 He hath ^b put my brethren far from me, and mine acquaintance are verily ^c estranged from me.

14 My ^d kinsfolk have failed, and my ^e familiar friends have forgotten me.

15 They that ^f dwell in mine house, and my maids, ^g count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight.

16 I called ^h my servant, and he gave me no answer; I intreated him with my mouth.

17 My ⁱ breath is strange to my wife, though I intreated for the children's *sake* of mine own ^j body.

18 ^k Yea, ^l young children despised me; I arose, and they spake against me.

19 All ^m my inward friends abhorred me: and ⁿ they whom I loved are turned against me.

20 My ^o bone cleaveth to my skin ^p and to my flesh, ^q and I am escaped with the skin of my teeth.

21 Have pity upon me, ^r have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for ^s the hand of God hath touched me.

22 Why do ye ^t persecute me as God, ^u and are not satisfied with my flesh?

xiii. 24. xvi. 9. xxxiii. 10. Lam. ii. 5.

xvi. 11. Is. v. 5. 6. li. 23. xxx. 12

Ps. xxxi. 11. xxxviii. 11. lxix. 8. 20. lxxxviii. 8. 18. Matt. xxvi. 56. 2 Tim. iv. 16. vi. 21—23.

Prov. xviii. 24. Mic. vii. 5, 6. Matt. x. 21.

2 Sam. xvi. 23. Ps. lv. 12—14. Jer. xx. 10. John xiii. 18.

16—19. xxxi. 31, 32. Ps. cxxiii. 3, 4.

i. 15, 16, 17, 19.

Heb. belly.

xxx. 1. 12. 2 Kings ii. 23. Is. iii. 5. Or, *the wicked*.

Heb. *the men of my secret*. Ps. xli. 9. lv. 12—14. 20.

vi. 14, 15. Ps. cix. 4, 5. Luke xxii. 43.

xxx. 30. xxxiii. 19—22. Ps. xxii. 14—17. xxxii. 3, 4. xxxviii. 3. cii. 3. 5. Lam. iv. 8.

Or, *as*. ii. 4—6. vii. 5. Lam. iii. 4. v. 10.

vi. 14. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26. Heb. xiii. 3.

i. 11. ii. 5. 10. vi. 4. Ps. xxxviii. 2.

x. 16. xvi. 13, 14. Ps. lxix. 26. ii. 5. xxxi. 31. Is. li. 23. Mic. iii. 3.

depart hence with the hope, that their posterity also shall be blessed.—Bear up then, ye suffering believers: ye shall for a little time have sorrow, but your Beloved “will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” (Note, John xvi. 16—22.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 2—4. Bildad had begun both his answers to Job with, “How long?” (viii. 2. xviii. 2.) But Job thought that he had more occasion to complain of the incessant accusations of his friends, than they of his persevering self-defence. Their harsh words vexed his soul, and even broke him in pieces, destroying all his courage and confidence. They had reproached him *ten times*: a definite for an indefinite number. (Marg. Ref. d.) They ought to be ashamed, thus to treat their friend as a stranger, or an enemy: if indeed he were *mistaken*, his error chiefly hurt himself; and if he were *guilty*, he must bear the

punishment, nay; he actually was severely suffering for his sins, and was rather an object of compassion than of severity.

V. 5—22. In these verses Job most pathetically expostulated with his friends, about their unkindness. If they determined to magnify themselves against him, by assuming the authority of judges; they ought, at least, to consider how great his miseries were, that they might be aware what cause he had to complain, and how little reason there was to add to his suffering; and that God himself was contending with him, and had overthrown him, and so entangled him in inextricable difficulties, that he could not escape. He was plundered of his substance, and as injuriously robbed of his good name; and he could not prevail to obtain a hearing of his cause, or any answer to his prayer. His path was obstructed by impassable difficulties, and covered with impenetrable darkness, so that he knew not where he was, or what to do. (Notes, Lam. iii. 2—20.) He had been stripped of his honour and authority; his possessions, family, and every hope of temporal comfort

* Heb. *Who will give, &c.* 23 ¶ * Oh, that ^r my words were now written! oh, that they were printed in a book!

24 That they were ^s graven with an iron pen and lead, in the rock for ever!

25 For ^t I know *that* my Redeemer liveth, and *that* ^u he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth:

26 [†] And *though* after my skin worms [†] destroy this *body*, yet ^{*} in my flesh shall I see God:

27 Whom ^x I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not ^{*} another; [§] *though* my reins be consumed ^{||} within me.

† Heb. *a stranger.* § Or, *my reins within me are consumed with earnest desire* [for that day.] Ps. cxix. 81. Phil. i. 23. || Heb. *in my bosom.*

were destroyed, like a tree which is plucked up by the roots; and he had such an inward sense of God's indignation, that he was, in his own apprehensions, counted as one of his enemies. In short, the judgments of God, like armies of hostile invaders, were evidently come to besiege his tabernacle: and his friends, relations, and acquaintance, notwithstanding their attachment and obligations to him in his prosperity, were now estranged from him, and seemed scarcely to remember his name. His few remaining servants would neither obey his authority, regard his intreaties, nor afford him any relief; but kept at a distance, as disgusted with his appearance, or as despising his abject condition. Nay, his wife, forgetful of conjugal affection and duty, would not come near him in his extremity; though he intreated her sympathy and assistance, for the sake of their children, the pledges of their former love, and the occasion of their present common sorrow! Even the children of his neighbours watched his words and actions, in order to deride him; and his inward friends, to whom he had entrusted his secret thoughts, and whom he had loved for their supposed piety, were become his enemies, and abhorred him. At the same time his disease had reduced him to a mere skeleton; even his very skin was consumed, so that nothing was reserved to him entire, but his gums and his teeth.—In this wretched case he pathetically implored the compassion of his friends: God had touched him in every tender part; they needed not add their persecuting reproaches to his awful judgments, as if vested with the Lord's prerogative, and acting by his authority; and they ought, surely, to be satisfied with his outward sufferings, without wounding his spirit, or bereaving him of his hope in God.

V. 23—27. The Spirit of God seems, at this time, to have powerfully operated on the mind of Job. The gloom and tempest of his soul were dispersed; and he afterwards discoursed with more serenity and resignation. At some times he had appeared ready to despair: but here he “witnessed a good confession,” declared the soundness of his faith and the assurance of his hope, and seemed to emerge from his temptations, in the extremity of his afflictions, even as the expiring Jesus, when the depth of his inward sufferings was over, exclaimed, “It is finished,” and, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.” (Notes, vi. 8—13. ix. 14—21. x. 18—22. Matt. xxvi. 36—39. xxvii. 50.)—Job began by solemnly wishing that what he was about to utter, (for of that he seems to speak, rather than of the protestations of his integrity,) might be recorded in the most publick and indelible manner, “in a book,” or “with an iron pen and lead, or upon a rock for ever;” according to the several methods then in use of registering remarkable transactions: and in this God granted, nay exceeded his desires; for, being written in

the sacred scriptures, his words will continue to the end of time, and be made useful to multitudes in all ages and nations. “I know,” says he, “that my Redeemer liveth.” The word translated “Redeemer,” signifies a *kinsman*, or *near relation*, to whom the redemption of captives, or of alienated estates, belonged by custom, even before the giving of the law. (Notes, Lev. xxv. 25—28. Ruth iv. 1—8.) The promised Seed of the woman, who was to assume the nature of man, and be his Redeemer, was evidently intended. Job was assured that this Redeemer of sinners, who ransoms and restores to them their forfeited inheritance, was *his* Redeemer; he was conscious that he embraced the promise of his coming, and expected salvation through him. He had no doubt that he was even at that time a *living* Redeemer: which accords to the words of Jesus, “Before Abraham was, I AM.” He believed also that “he would stand at the latter day upon the earth;” that “in the fulness of time,” he would appear as “the Seed of the woman, to bruise the serpent's head,” while his “own heel would be crushed;” that after his resurrection he would stand up as the “First-fruits of them that sleep” in the dust of the earth; and that, at the last day, he would appear as the Judge of the world, to raise the dead, to destroy this earth, and to complete the redemption of his people.—As to Job himself, though after his skin, which was almost destroyed, his body would be consumed by putrefaction; yet he should be raised again from the dead, and behold his God and Saviour. Him he should certainly behold “for himself,” as his Portion and Felicity; not only as the Object of mental contemplation, but with his own eyes, in his own body raised from the dead, and not in another. All this he firmly believed and assuredly hoped for, though at present his reins, or vitals, were consumed within him by disease, and he despaired of recovery in this world.—Other interpretations have been given of this extraordinary testimony; but none that will bear comparison with this most obvious explanation of the original.—The old translation of two verses is very literal, and worthy of notice: “For I am sure that my Redeemer liveth, and he shall stand at last upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms shall destroy this *body*: yet shall I see God in my flesh.”—The last clause indeed may either refer to the Redeemer's incarnation, or to his own future resurrection, or to both.

In my flesh shall I see God. (26) מִבְּשָׁרִי אֶחְיֶה אֶת־יְהוָה.—The construction of בְּשָׁרִי with the prep. מִן appears to militate against the opinion, that Job expressed his expectation of seeing God in human nature. He says, “From my flesh, &c.” That is, “My soul, residing again in my body, shall, out of it, behold God.” And he then mentions the eyes, which are, as it were, the windows of the body, and through which the soul views objects.

z 22. Ps. lxi. 26.

* Or, and what root of matter is found in me?

a 1 Kings xiv. 13.
b xiii. 7—11. Rom. xiii. 1—4.

28 But ye should say, 'Why persecute we him? * seeing ^a the root of the matter is found in me.

29 Be ^b ye afraid of the sword: for wrath *bringeth* the punishments of the

sword, ' that ye may know *there is* a ^c judgment.

Ps. lviii. 10, 11.
Ec. xi. 9. Matt.
vii. 1, 2. Jam.
iv. 11, 12.

CHAP. XX.

Zophar, with eagerness and warmth, enlarges on the certain ruin and manifold calamities of the wicked, 1—29.

V. 28, 29. After this confident declaration of his faith and hope, Job again warned his friends no longer to persecute him; as they had sufficient evidence, that the root of divine faith and grace was planted in his heart, whence all true godliness springs: that on a careful examination, it would be found that the doctrine which he maintained sprang from the root of truth; and, that this would appear to their confusion, at the coming of the Judge. So that it would be dangerous for them to treat him as a hypocrite, or an infidel: for God in anger might visit them with some terrible calamity; and teach them by painful experience, that there is a judgment appointed, when he will avenge his servants on their enemies and calumniators.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—22.

Harsh language, from professed friends, greatly adds to the weight of outward afflictions, and destroys the inward support and comfort of the soul. They ought therefore to be ashamed, who treat with unkindness, or load with reproach, those who have a right to expect comfort and assistance from them. Yet, if our friends "magnify themselves against us," and, as unjust and unauthorized judges, condemn us as hypocrites; it is best neither to lay the matter to heart, nor to keep an account of their slanders or revilings, lest we should be tempted to harbour resentment, or to watch our opportunity of retaliation. Rather let us "look to him, who endured the contradiction of "sinners against himself;" and who was treated with far more unmerited and ungrateful insult and cruelty, than even Job was, or we *can* be.—But it is very distressing to one who loves God, and who has long sought happiness in the light of his countenance, to be at the same time under his severe rebukes, to experience the hiding of his face, and the sense of his displeasure, and be tempted to conclude that he is counted as one of his enemies; to be bereaved at once of outward honour, prosperity, and comfort, and of inward consolations; to have every prospect clouded with the appearance of future miseries, and the soul disquieted with grievous temptations and horrors. Yet, if in addition to all this, the character be loaded with infamy, and every friend and relative be estranged and set against the sufferer; if those diseases or afflictions, which should command sympathy and relief, only excite disgust and abhorrence, and encourage the insults of the vilest of mankind;—if this, and more, should come upon any man at once; it would only render him more conformable to the Saviour, and not in the least weaken the proof of his being a child of God, and an heir of eternal glory. Nor should we be over confident that this will not be our case. Should it please the Lord, to prove us with complicated afflictions, we know not how soon many of our friends, and even nearest relations, might forget every tie of nature, affection, and gratitude; how much our case and character might be mistaken by our most intimate religious com-

panions; how far we might become "a reproach to the "foolish," and to the meanest of our dependents and inferiors; or how fruitless it might be, to call upon any of them to pity or to help us, when "the hand of God had "touched us;" and every one might act, as if, not satisfied with our outward trials, he was intent only on increasing our inward disquietude.—We ought then to be thankful for present exemptions, learn to sympathize with others in distress, and prepare for the worst that can befall us.

V. 23—29.

No true believer will, in any possible case, be left entirely comfortless. (Note, *John* xiv. 18—20.) "There is a "Friend, who loveth at all times, and a Brother, who is "born for adversity." The long-expected Redeemer once "stood upon the earth" in human nature, as our Surety, to ransom our souls by his precious blood; we are assured, that in heaven "he ever liveth to make intercession for "us;" and at the last day he will again appear, in glory, to raise the dead and to judge the world. At that solemn period all his enemies shall weep and wail because of him; but his people, raised up incorruptible, immortal, and glorious, shall see him as their God and Saviour, *for themselves*, in their own persons, and for their complete felicity; being made like him, and admitted to be for ever with him. Let us then give diligence, that we may be assured he is *our* Redeemer; and that we shall be 'numbered with his 'saints in glory everlasting.' In the prospect of this happy consummation, let us solace our minds under the pressure of sickness or poverty, the unkindness of friends and relatives, and in the prospect of death and the grave: for "though after our skin worms destroy this body, yet in "our flesh shall we see God." These faithful sayings are most durably and legibly written in the sacred Scriptures: may they be engraven by the Holy Spirit upon the tablets of our hearts; that our assured faith and hope may unite with love and gratitude, to produce devoted obedience and patient submission to the Lord. This "root of the matter" being found in us, no slander or persecution can hurt us: and though for a time we may be discomposed, we shall again recover our calm, and wait for him to plead our cause, and judge between us and our accusers.—But, on the other hand, let us be careful not to censure those, who profess faith, hope, and love to our common Redeemer, and appear to have this "root of the matter in "them;" though they differ in many things from us, and are not without infirmities. Satan has peculiarly triumphed in exciting Christians thus to persecute each other: and when believers put their hands to this work, they may as certainly expect severe chastisements in this world, as unbelieving and impenitent persecutors will experience the severity of God's vengeance upon them, in the world to come. For our Redeemer liveth, not only to save the souls of his people, but to enter into judgment with all their enemies.

THEN answered ^aZophar the Naamathite, and said,

2 Therefore do ^bmy thoughts cause me to answer, ^cand for *this* ^dI make haste.

3 I have heard ^dthe check of my reproach, and ^ethe spirit of my understanding causeth me to answer.

4 Knowest ^fthou *not* this of old, since ^gman was placed upon earth,

5 That ^hthe triumphing of the wicked is ⁱshort, and ^jthe joy of the hypocrite *but* for a moment?

6 Though ^khis excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the ^lclouds;

7 *Yet* he shall ^mperish for ever like his own dung: they which have seen him ⁿshall say, Where is he?

8 He shall ^ofly away as a dream, and shall not be found: yea, he shall be chased away, as a vision of the night.

9 The ^peye also *which* saw him shall see him no more; neither shall his place any more behold him.

10 ^qHis children shall ^rseek to please the poor, and ^shis hands shall restore their goods.

11 His ^tbones are full of *the sin* of

his youth, ^uwhich shall lie down with him in the dust.

12 Though ^vwickedness be sweet in his mouth, *though* ^whe hide it under his tongue;

13 *Though* he ^xspare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still ^ywithin his mouth:

14 *Yet* ^zhis meat in his bowels is turned, *it is* ^{aa}the gall of asps within him.

15 He hath ^{ab}swallowed down riches, and he shall vomit them up again: God shall cast them out of his belly.

16 He shall suck the poison of asps: ^{ac}the viper's tongue shall slay him.

17 He ^{ad}shall not see ^{ae}the rivers, the ^{af}floods, the brooks ^{ag}of honey and butter.

18 That which he laboured for ^{ah}shall he restore, and shall not ^{ai}swallow it down: according to ^{aj}his substance shall the restitution be, ^{ak}and he shall not rejoice *therein*.

19 Because ^{al}he hath ^{am}oppressed *and* hath forsaken the poor; *because* ^{an}he hath violently taken away an house which he builded not;

13. 17. Ez. vii. 12. Hos. ix. 1. Jam. iv. 8, 9. g xxi. 27, 28. xxii. 6. xxiv. 2—12. xxxi. 13—22. 38, 39. xxxv. 9. 1 Sam. xii. 3, 4. Ps. x. 18. xii. 5. Prov. xiv. 31. xxii. 22, 23. Ec. iv. 1. v. 8. Ez. xxii. 29. Am. iv. 1—3. Jam. ii. 6. 13. v. 4. crushed. Deut. xxviii. 33. Lam. iii. 34. h xviii. 15. xxiv. 2. 1 Kings xxi. 19. Is. v. 7. 8. Mic. ii. 2. 9.

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1—3. Zophar seems to have interrupted Job's discourse; and, not taking the least notice of the excellent things contained in it, he hastily answered to the concluding warning. He was full of thoughts upon the subject, which were, in his opinion, so pertinent, that he thought himself warranted in thus hastily interposing. He considered the check, which Job had given to the censures of his friends, as a *reproach*; and he thought that his own answer would be the result of sound reason, "the spirit of his understanding:" yet he spoke with great severity and harshness.—"The abrupt beginning of this speech of Zophar shews that he was in a passion, which, though he pretends to bridle it, would not let him calmly consider the protestation, which Job made of his innocence.—But he goes on in the old common-place way of the certain downfall of the wicked, be they never so powerful and well supported; which he illustrates indeed in an excellent fashion, with great variety of figures, and remarks on histories as old as the world.—All the flaw in his discourse was this, (which was common to him with the rest,) that he imagined God never varied from his method; and therefore Job, without doubt, was a very bad man; though it did not appear he was so, any other

'way, but by his infelicity.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, v. 3—5 25—27. viii. 1—3. 20—22. ix. 22—24.)

V. 4—9. Zophar here asserted the same general truths, and fell into the same mistakes, as his friends before had done. He confounded this state of trial with the future state of retribution: he supposed that the dispensations of Providence were conducted by one invariable rule, according to the characters of men: and he misapplied his doctrine to Job, as if it evinced him to be a hypocrite.—He enquired, as in astonishment, whether Job did not know, what all reflecting men from the beginning of the world had observed, that "the triumphing of the wicked is short," and the joy of the hypocrite momentary. He might attain eminence in authority, wealth, and reputation; he might be so exalted, as to seem out of the reach of enemies and earthly vicissitudes; but he would be soon ruined, with contempt and abhorrence. Men would wonder what was become of him; he would vanish as a dream, and there would be a full end of him and of his prosperity. (Note, xv. 1—13.)

V. 10—29. In these verses, Zophar expatiated on the variety of miseries which awaited the wicked man, whether profane or hypocritical. His indigent and distressed children would court the favour of the poor, either for a morsel of bread, or to disarm their revenge for the injuries

ⁱ Ec. v. 13, 14. Is. lvii. 20, 21.
[•] Heb. *known*.
[†] Or, *be none left for his meat*. xviii. 19.

^k Jer. xvii. 11. Luke xvi. 24, 25.
^l xv. 29. xviii. 7. Ps. xxxix. 5. Ec. n. 18—20. Rev. xviii. 7.

^m i. 15. 17. xvi. 11. 2 Kings xxiv. 2. Is. x. 6.
[†] Or, *troublesome*. iii. 17.

ⁿ Num. xi. 33. Ps. lxxviii. 30, 31. Mal. ii. 2. Luke xii. 17—20.

^o Gen. xix. 24. Ex. ix. 23. Ps. xi. 6. Is. xxi. 4. 1 Kings xx. 30. Is. xxiv. 18. Jer. xlviii. 43, 44. Am. v. 19. ix. 1—3.

^q 2 Sam. xxii. 35. r Prov. vii. 23. s xvi. 13. Deut. xxxii. 41. 2 Sam. xviii. 14. Ps. vii. 12, 13.

20 Surely ⁱ he shall not ^{*} feel quietness in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired.

21 There shall [†] none of his meat ^k be left; therefore shall no man look for his goods.

22 In ^l the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits: ^m every hand of the [†] wicked shall come upon him.

23 When ⁿ he is about to fill his belly, God shall cast the fury of his wrath upon him, and shall ^o rain it upon him while he is eating.

24 He shall ^p flee from the iron weapon, and ^q the bow of steel shall ^r strike him through.

25 It is ^s drawn, and cometh out of

the body; yea, the glittering sword ^t cometh out of his gall: [†] terrors *are* upon him.

26 All ^u darkness *shall be hid* in his secret places: ^v a fire not blown shall consume him, ^{*} it shall go ill with him that is left in his tabernacle.

27 The ^y heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and ^{*} the earth shall rise up against him.

28 The ^z increase of his house shall depart, ^b and his goods shall flow away in the day of his wrath.

29 This ^c is ^{*} the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage [†] appointed unto him by God.

—28. Ps. xi. 5, 6. Matt. xxiv. 51. [†] Heb. *of his decree from God*. Lam. iii. 38.

^t vi. 4. xv. 21. xviii. 11. xxvii. 20. Ps. lxxviii. 19. lxxxviii. 15. Jer. xx. 3, 4. 2 Cor. v. 11.
^u xviii. 5, 6. Is. viii. 22. Matt. viii. 12. Jude 13.
^v Ps. xxi. 9. cxx. 4. Is. xxx. 33. Matt. iii. 12.
^x xviii. 19. Ps. cix. 9—15. Is. xiv. 20—22.
^y Ps. xlv. 20, 21. Jer. xxix. 23. Mal. iii. 5. Luke xii. 2, 8. Rom. ii. 16. 1 Cor. iv. 5.
^z xvi. 18. xviii. 18. Is. xxvi. 21.
^a 10. 18—22. v. 5. xxvii. 14—19. 2 Kings xx. 17. Rev. xviii. 17.
^b Prov. xi. 4. Zeph. i. 18. Matt. xvi. 26. Jam. v. 1—3.
^c xviii. 21. xxvii. 13. xxxi. 3. Deut. xxix. 20.

which they had endured. External compulsion, or inward remorse, would constrain him to restore their property. The licentiousness of his youth would expose him to dreadful diseases in his old age, and bring him down to the grave. The wickedness which he delighted in, concealed, spared, and would not forsake, but reserved as a sweet morsel to eat secretly, would create him such inward horror, such dreadful diseases, and such dire miseries, that it would be like the venom of the asp, or as if he had been bitten by the viper. He would be disappointed of all his expected pleasure and ease; and, along with his ill-gotten wealth, he would be deprived of all which he had laboured for, as a punishment of his injustice and oppression. He would have no comfort of his riches, while they remained; and he would be stripped of all, (as Job had been,) and have nothing for any one to covet. This would come upon him suddenly, in the height of his prosperity, by a combination of wicked men, as it had on Job. Nay, just when he would be ready to say, "Soul, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry;" God himself would pour the fury of his wrath upon him. (Notes, Num. xi. 31—34. Luke xii. 15—21.) There would be no escaping from the weapons of divine indignation; his inward terrors would equal his outward calamities, so that every kind of misery would be laid up in store against him. "A fire not blown should consume him." "He should be destroyed, as by a slow fire, a fire not rendered intense by blowing; but greatly aggravating and prolonging his miseries by its tardy but irresistible progress: for the judgments of God, without the intervention of men, would desolate his family. If his wickedness were before masked with hypocrisy, it should thus be brought to light. Persons of all descriptions would unite against him, and all which he had possessed would be totally dissipated. For this was uniformly "the portion of a wicked man from God," and his appointed heritage.—The reference in all this is manifest, not only to Job's calamities, but also to his complaints. His outward losses and inward anguish; the triumphs of his enemies, and the unkindness of his friends and relatives, are evidently hinted at. Says Zophar, "This is the heritage of a wicked man;" and therefore doubtless thou art one. (Notes, 1—3. xviii. 5—21.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They are frequently the most forward to dispute, who are most evidently in the wrong. We are pleased with our own thoughts, as with our own children; and fancy that others will equally admire them. Thus we are led to make indecent haste to speak, lest we should lose the credit and gratification of our pertinent observations; and lest others should lose the benefit of them. In this eagerness we consider each "check" as a *reproach*, and every *effusion of passion* is esteemed a *demonstration*. But others generally judge very differently: nay, we ourselves can seldom reflect afterwards on such debates, without shame and remorse. It is very difficult for men of warm passions entirely to repress this unbecoming propensity: but watchfulness and prayer will do great things, in a course of time; and we may profit by observing our own and others' errors, and by the rebukes and corrections of our heavenly Father.—We must not limit the dispensations of God by our rules; nor censure others out of fondness for our own notions. But though the wicked do often prosper even to the end of life: yet it is a decided matter among all wise men from the beginning hitherto, that "the triumphing of the wicked," and "the joy of the hypocrite," are transient and fleeting; and that they shall shortly perish disgracefully and for ever. Some kinds of wickedness generally ruin men's constitutions, if they are not cut off before they entail pain and disease on their old age, which carries them down to the grave; and the pleasures and gains of sin, like drinking sweet poison, or like the lulling venom of the asp, terminate in remorse, in anguish, and in ruin. A curse from God often corrodes the oppressor's abundance: he hath no enjoyment of it, and suffers none of those connected with him to have any ease or pleasure; and very often it is torn from him in an awful and sudden manner. "There is no peace, saith my God, for the wicked." (Notes, Is. xlviii. 20—22. lvii. 20, 21.)—But what are all weapons of iron and steel; yea, what is darkness or consuming fire, compared with the eternal vengeance of the Almighty, which is the heritage appointed unto the wicked in the world to come? There the hypocrite shall be detected, and have his portion with the unbelievers;

CHAP. XXI.

a xlii. 8, 4. xviii. 2. Job intreats a patient hearing, because of his singular calamities, 1—6. He shews that wicked men sometimes so prosper, as to grow bold in presumption, 7—16. Yet that they at length fall into destruction, 17—22. And that the dealings of God with them in life and death are greatly varied, as their judgment is deferred to the day of wrath, 23—34.

BUT Job answered and said,

2 ^a Hear diligently my speech, and ^b let this be your consolations.

3 Suffer me ^c that I may speak; and after that I have spoken, ^d mock on.

4 As for me, ^e is my complaint to man? and ^f if it were so, why should not my spirit be ^g troubled?

5 ^h Mark me, and ⁱ be astonished, and ^j lay *your* hand upon *your* mouth.

6 Even ^k when I remember, I am afraid, and trembling taketh hold on my flesh.

7 ¶ ^l Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are ^m mighty in power?

8 Their ⁿ seed is established in their sight with them, and their offspring before their eyes.

9 Their houses ^o are ^p safe from fear, neither is ^q the rod of God upon them.

10 Their bull gendereth and faileth not: ^r their cow calveth, and casteth not her calf.

11 They ^s send forth their little ones like a flock, and their children dance.

12 They ^t take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.

13 They ^u spend their days in ^v wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave.

14 Therefore ^w they say unto God, Depart from us; ^x for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.

15 What ^y is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and ^z what profit should we have, ^{aa} if we pray unto him?

16 Lo ^{ab} their good is not in their hand: ^{ac} the counsel of the wicked is far from me.

24. z i. 21. xii. 9, 10. Ps. xlix. 6, 7. lli. 5—7. Ec. viii. 8. Luke xvi. 2. 25. a xxii. 18. Gen. xlix. 6. Ps. i. 1. Prov. i. 10. v. 8.

whilst heaven and earth shall rise up against him: for “indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, are reserved for every soul of man, who” impenitently “doeth evil; but glory, honour, and peace to every one,” who proveth himself a true believer, by working that which is good in the sight of the Lord. (Note, Rom. ii. 7—11.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1—6. In this chapter Job discourses less on his own calamities, and more directly answers his opponents. He introduces his subject by intreating their attention, and desiring that they would neither interrupt him, as Zophar had; nor disregard and misunderstand his words, as they all had hitherto done. This he would take instead of those consolations, which he had vainly expected from them; and if, after a fair hearing, his discourse was found impertinent, and his reasonings inconclusive, he would consent that Zophar (whom he particularly addressed) should renew his mockery. Indeed, his complaint and appeal were directed to God, and not to them: otherwise his spirit might well be troubled, when sarcasms and reproaches were all which they afforded him, under his unprecedented sufferings. (Notes, vi. 1—7.) Yet, if they looked upon him, they might see misery sufficient to demand compassion: and, as they knew no evil against him, their bold interpretations of this mysterious providence should be turned into silent astonishment. For every recollection of the dreadful change, which he had experienced, filled him with trembling and consternation.

V. 7—16. If the doctrine, maintained by Zophar and Job's other opponents, was true, and Providence discriminated uniformly between the righteous and the wicked; how was it, that so many wicked men lived, grew old, and

continued in power and prosperity to the last? Perhaps no instance had occurred, of a truly pious person being so suddenly and dreadfully afflicted, as Job had been; and it was not possible for man to distinguish exactly between the true believer and the hypocrite. But it was undeniable, that numbers of notoriously profane and wicked men were advanced to wealth and authority, continued in prosperity to old age, and witnessed their posterity established in the most desirable settlements, before their death; that they were often more free from alarm and correction than others; that their cattle and substance rapidly increased; that their children, whom they trained up in vanity, sensuality, and dissipation, multiplied, and were in health and peace around them; that they lived even to extreme old age, (for so the original word signifies,) in outward ease and indulgence, and died without any remarkable pain or distress. So that, if men were to judge merely by outward prosperity, the wicked might be pronounced the most happy, and even the favourites of Heaven. Yet they grew more impious and presumptuous, even by prosperity; they openly cast off all regard to God, and neither knew, nor desired to learn, any thing about his truths, ordinances, and precepts; they despised his favour, defied his vengeance, and counted his service and worship irksome and unprofitable. (Notes, ix. 22—24. xii. 6—10. xv. 17—35. xx. 10—29. Ps. xvii. 13—15. lxxiii. 1—17. Jer. xii. 1—4. Mal. iii. 13—18.)—Now it must be allowed, that the Almighty, whom they despised and affronted, gave and continued to them these *their* good things, and could take them away when he pleased; nor were they so in their own hand, that they could retain them for a moment. Job, indeed, for his part, was far from approving their counsel or conduct, or desiring their prosperity; though his friends inferred, that he thought the wicked happy, because he

^b xviii. 5, 6. 18.
Prov. xiii. 9. xx.
20. xxiv. 20.
Matt. xxv. 8.
^c Or, lamp.
^c Ps. xxxii. 10. xc.
7—9. Luke xii.
46. Rom. ii. 8,
9.

17 How ^b oft is the ^{*} candle of the wicked put out? and *how oft* cometh their destruction upon them? *God* ^c distributeth sorrows in his anger.

^d xiii. 25. Ex. xv.
7. Ps. i. 4. xxxv.
5. lxxxiii. 13. Is.
v. 24. xvii. 13.
xxix. 5. xl. 24.
xii. 15, 16. Jer.
xiii. 24. Hos.
xiii. 3. Nah. i.
10. Matt. iii. 12.
[†] Heb. *stealeth*.
^e xxii. 34. Deut.
xxxii. 24. Matt.
vi. 19, 20. Rom.
ii. 5.

18 They are ^d as stubble before the wind, and as chaff that the storm [†] carrieth away.

19 God ^e layeth up his ^{*} iniquity ^f for his children: ^g he rewardeth him, and ^h he shall know *it*.

[†] That is, the punishment of his iniquity. Gen. iv. 7. Is. liii. 4—6.
2 Cor. v. 21.

20 His eyes shall ⁱ see his destruction, and he shall ^k drink the wrath of the Almighty.

^f Ex. xx. 5. Ps. cix. 9, &c. Is. xiv. 21. Ez. xviii. 19, 20. Matt. xxiii. 31—35.
^g Deut. xxxii. 41. 2 Sam. iii. 39. Ps. liv. 5. Matt. xvi. 27. 2 Tim. iv. 14. Rev. xviii. 6.

21 For ⁱ what pleasure *hath* he in his house after him, when ^m the number of his months is cut off in the midst?

^h Mal. iii. 18.
ⁱ xxvii. 19. Luke xvi. 23.

22 Shall *any* ⁿ teach God knowledge? seeing ^o he judgeth those that are high.

^k Ps. lxxv. 8. Is. li. 17. Jer. xxv. 15, 16. li. 7. Rev. xiv. 10. xix. 15.

23 One dieth in his ^p full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet.

^l xiv. 21. Ec. ii. 18, 19. Luke xvi. 27, 28.
^m xiv. 5. Ps. lv. 23. cii. 24.

24 ^p His ^q breasts are full of milk, and his bones are ^r moistened with marrow.

ⁿ xl. 2. Is. xl. 13, 14. xlv. 9. Rom. xi. 34. 1 Cor. ii. 16. o xxxiv. 17—19. Ps. cxiii. 5, 6. Ec. v. 8. Is. xl. 22, 23. 1 Cor. vi. 3. 2 Pet. ii. 4. Jude 6. Rev. xx. 1—3. 12—15. [†] Heb. in his very perfection, or, the strength of his perfection. xx. 22, 23. Ps. xlix. 17. lxxiii. 4, 5. Luke xii. 19—21. p xv. 27. Ps. xvii. 10. [‡] Or, milk-pails. q Prov. iii. 8.

argued, that they often prospered, while the righteous were afflicted. (Note, Ec. ix. 1—3.)

V. 17—22. All these verses may be read *interrogatively*. “How often” does it happen, that the prosperity of wicked men is extinguished with sudden and awful judgments? Sometimes indeed it is so, but more frequently, they live and die in outward ease and peace. “How often” does God in his anger distribute to them uncommon calamities, rendering them as stubble, or chaff, before the tempestuous wind? “How often” is it observed, that their iniquities are punished upon their children, while their eyes behold their destruction, and they know that they drink of the wrath of the Almighty, as a recompence for *their* crimes?—It had been laid down as a general rule, that God almost uniformly visited wicked men, with these and similar judgments: yet, in fact, instances in which they were clearly thus distinguished from others, but seldom occurred. And if they prospered till death, whether they lived till old age, or died in the vigour of life, the subsequent condition of their families would not affect them, either with pleasure or pain. Indeed, who shall presume to teach the Judge of the most exalted creatures, in what way he should administer his government? Or who shall presume to explain, or decide on, any of his dispensations, as if inconsistent with his justice or wisdom?

V. 23—26. Job, from his appeal to facts, justly inferred, that there was no exact discrimination observed in these dispensations. One haughty sinner comes peaceably to his end, having experienced a continual series of health, indulgence, and success; like cattle that feed in rich pas-

iii. 20 vii. 11. ix. 18. x. 1. 2 Sam. xvii. 8. *marg.* Prov. xiv. 10. Is. xxxviii. 15—17. s xx. 23. 1 Kings xvii. 12. Ec. vi. 2. Ez. iv. 16, 17. xii. 18. t iii. 18, 19. xx. 11. Ec. ix. 2. u xvii. 14. xix. 26. Ps. xlix. 14. Is. xiv. 11. x iv. 8—11. v. 3—5. viii. 3—6. xv. 20, &c. xx. 5. 29. Luke v. 22. y xxxii. 3. xlii. 7. Ps. lix. 4. cxix. 86. 1 Pet. ii. 19. z xx. 7. Ps. xxxvii. 36. lii. 5, 6. Hab. ii. 9—11. Zech. v. 4. * Heb. tent of the tabernacles. Num. xvi. 26—34. a Ps. cxxxix. 8. b Prov. xvi. 4. Nah. i. 2. 2 Pet. ii. 9. 17. iii. 7. Jude 13. c xx. 28. Ps. cx. 5. Prov. xi. 4. Zeph. i. 15. Rom. ii. 5. Rev. vi. 17. † Heb. *wraths*. d 2 Sam. xii. 7—12. 1 Kings xxi. 19—24. Ps. i. 21. Jer. ii. 33—35. Mark vi. 18. Acts xxiv. 25. Gal. ii. 11. e 19. xli. 11. Deut. vii. 10. Is. lix. 18. Rom. xii. 13. Jam. ii. 13. f Ps. xlix. 14. Ez. xxxii. 21—32. Luke xvi. 22. ‡ Heb. *graves*. § Heb. *watch in the heap*. g iii. 17, 18. h xxx. 23. Gen. iii. 19. Ec. i. 4. viii. 8. xii. 7. Heb. ix. 27

25 And another dieth ^r in the bitterness of his soul, and ^s never eateth with pleasure.

26 They shall lie down ^t alike in the dust, and ^u the worms shall cover them.

27 Behold, ^x I know your thoughts, and the devices *which* ^y ye wrongfully imagine against me.

28 For ye say, ^z Where is the house of the prince? and where *are* the ^{*} dwelling places of the wicked?

29 Have ye not asked them that ^a go by the way? and do ye not know their tokens?

30 That ^b the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction? they shall be brought forth to ^c the day of [†] wrath.

31 Who shall ^d declare his way to his face? and who shall ^e repay him *what* he hath done?

32 Yet shall ^f he be brought to the ^g grave, and shall ^h remain in the tomb.

33 The clods of the valley shall be ⁱ sweet unto him, and ^j every man shall draw after him, as *there are* innumerable before him.

tures. Others, perhaps not so wicked, never know any thing but pain, sickness, poverty, and trouble, and die in anguish and distress. Thus both go down to the dust alike, and become food for the worms.

The words translated, “His breasts are full of milk (24),” are differently interpreted. The word rendered *breasts* is not elsewhere used in the Hebrew; and some think it means *milk-pails*. But others, supposing it to coincide with the subsequent clause, thus translate the passage, “His ribs, (sides, or intestines, *viscera*,) are full of fat:” τα δε εγκατα αυτε πληρη σεατος. *Sept.* Probably this is the true sense of the words.—Perhaps עִצְבוֹת may be derived from the root עָבַר, *he covered*, or *inclosed*: as the Latin *abdomen* from *abdo*, *to hide*.

V. 27—30. Here Job brings the matter to an issue. He knew that his friends wrongfully condemned him, as one who had usurped or abused his authority, and who had been an unjust, oppressive magistrate, and a hypocrite; and that they considered his desolated habitation as the proof of his guilt. But any common traveller, to whom they might refer the case, could point out the flourishing habitations and splendid monuments of the ungodly, which they observed in their journeys: from these tokens they would conclude, that wicked men were not punished here, but were frequently exempted from the calamities which overtook others; being reserved to the day of wrath and destruction in another world. (Notes, xxii. 5—14. xxiv. 1—20. xxix. 12—17. xxxi. 35—40. Rom. ii. 4—6. 2 Pet. ii. 4—9.)

V. 31—33. Oppressors are often so powerful, that none

xvi. 2.

xiii. 4. xxxii. 3.

xlii. 7.

* Heb. transgression.

34 How then ¹ comfort ye me in vain, ² seeing in your answers there remaineth ³ falsehood?

CHAP. XXII.

Eliphaz shews that man's goodness cannot profit God, 1—4. He accuses Job of various crimes, which

dare call them to account, or reprove them: and at last they die in peace, are buried with magnificence, and sleep as quietly in the grave as others do. Death indeed closes their prosperity; but none, except two, have been, or ever shall be, exempted from this common doom: so that it is evident, there is no exact discrimination between the righteous and the wicked, in the outward dispensations of Providence. (*Notes, Ec. iv. 1—3. v. 8. Hab. i. 2—4.*)

V. 34. Job concluded with enquiring, why his friends comforted him in vain, with the hopes of returning *worldly* prosperity, in case he repented and sought unto the Lord. For there was no truth in their system; nay, there was falsehood interwoven with all their answers, which rendered them inconclusive, and inapplicable to the subject.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

It is not easy to obtain an attentive hearing from eager disputants. Interruption and disregard are commonly reciprocal; hence misapprehension, unfair conclusions, and unmerited contempt and reproach: and when men have been suffered to speak, and have spoken to the purpose, their opponents commonly "mock on," and treat the whole as trivial and contemptible. But this behaviour is peculiarly improper to the afflicted, who should at least have the consolation of being heard with patience and candour.—We might well yield to inward disquietude, if we had none to complain to in our distresses but man; or if the Lord were as severe against us, as our brethren sometimes are. But the true believer may speak to God at all times; and he will compassionately regard those complaints, and bear with those infirmities, which men disregard or condemn.—The afflictions of the faithful, compared with the prosperity of the wicked, have caused astonishment and discouragement to the servants of God in all ages. But we should adore the depths of those judgments which we cannot fathom: and the clear light of the gospel, with the discoveries of the eternal world, will explain the difficulty, and shew the wise designs of God in all these dispensations. Yet, under severe trials and temptations, the most established believer finds it as hard to apply his principles for immediate encouragement, as the most skillful mariner in a furious storm does to manage the vessel by the rules of navigation.—It is undeniable, that wicked men often grow rich and great, establish flourishing families, escape alarms and corrections, succeed in their projects, train up their children in pleasure; and, after a life of splendour and indulgence, go down to the grave in old age, without any remarkable calamity: yea, they are interred with magnificence, and many vain attempts are made to abate the horror of death, and the noisomeness of the grave. It is equally certain, that this has emboldened impiety and infidelity; and led many to infer, that there is no God, or that he takes no notice of human affairs, and that religion and morality are needless or useless.—Prosperity adds strength to men's pride and fuel to their lusts; and thus they grow hardened in presumptuous wickedness.—Alas, what numbers do we see in this land, where the

light of the gospel clearly shines, whose actions say unto God, "Depart from us!" Their open and constant violation of his law, and their contempt of his gospel; their profanation of his day, and desertion of his ordinances; their families left without the least appearance of religion; their incessant course of riot or dissipation; their inordinate pursuit of wealth or power; their discourse, devoid of all reverence to the name, truths, or precepts of God, and full of levity and folly, if not of ribaldry and profaneness:—these things seem to "say unto God, Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." Such persons do not desire to think, hear, speak, or read about him: they treat religion, as if it were beneath their rank, spirit, or genius: they do not deem the Almighty on any account entitled to their obedience or gratitude; and they suppose his service to be a mere drudgery, which can yield neither pleasure nor profit, and in neglecting which there can be no danger! Yet "these prosper in the world, and have riches in possession." And, though the Lord is sometimes "known by the judgments that he executes;" yet they and their families are seldom visited by remarkable calamities. Indeed they, as well as others, must shortly die: but many of them *outwardly* enjoy more pleasure and suffer less pain, while they live and when they die, than their pious neighbours. And though the pomp of their funerals, and the panegyrick of their flatterers, will afford them no real advantage, yet they fare as well as others: and whether their children prosper or are afflicted, after their death, it adds nothing to their joy or sorrow. It is evident, that *their* good things are bestowed upon them by God: yet he "distributes sorrows in his anger;" and, however spared for a time, they are as stubble before the wind, and as chaff for the fire of his indignation. For, indeed, it avails little whether wicked men enjoy on earth all the delights of sense, without pain, sickness, or hardship; or whether they live and die without enjoyment and in bitterness; as they are all "reserved to the day of wrath" and destruction, and the misery which is beyond the grave will swallow up all their former comfort. As they have said to God, "Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways:" they cannot reasonably expect any other event, than that He, the Fountain of felicity and Judge of the world, should at last say to them, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." (*Note, Matt. xxv. 41—46.*)

V. 17—34.

We are not competent to declare what God, the universal Judge, ought to do, or to comment on what he does: nor should we deem ourselves the objects of his love, or of his wrath, because of outward dispensations; or condemn any as sinners above other men, because visited with remarkable calamities: for in all conclusions and arguments of this kind, there is error, presumption, and self-sufficiency. (*Notes, Luke xiii. 1—5.*) The wicked man *may* suffer many dreadful calamities on earth, and *must* have many peculiar terrors and vexations; he wants that peace of conscience, that confidence in God, and that

he supposes had brought on him his calamities, 5—14. He contrasts the doom of sinners visited by divine judgments, with the security of the righteous, 15—20. He exhorts Job to repent, and encourages him to hope for mercy, 21—30.

THEN Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said,

2 Can ^aa man be profitable unto God, ^{*} as ^bhe that is wise may be profitable unto himself?

3 *Is it* ^cany pleasure to the Almighty, that thou art righteous? or *is it gain to him*, that ^dthou makest thy ways perfect?

4 Will he ^ereprove thee ^ffor fear of thee? ^gwill he enter with thee into judgment?

5 ¶ *Is* ^hnot thy wickedness great? and ⁱthine iniquities infinite?

6 For ^kthou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, ^land ^mstripped the naked of their clothing.

7 Thou hast ⁿnot given water to

the weary to drink, and thou hast withholden bread from the hungry.

8 But ^oas for the ^pmighty man, he had the earth; and the ^q'honourable man dwelt in it.

9 Thou hast sent ^rwidows away empty, and the ^s'arms of the fatherless have been broken.

10 Therefore ^t'snares *are* round about thee, and ^u'sudden fear troubleth thee;

11 Or ^v'darkness, *that* thou canst not see; and ^w'abundance of waters ^xcover thee.

12 *Is* ^ynot God in the height of heaven? and, behold, the ^z'height of ^{aa}'the stars, how high they are!

13 And thou sayest, ^{ab}'How ^{ac}'doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?

14 Thick ^{ad}'clouds *are* a covering to him, that he seeth not; and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.

hope of heaven, which the believer enjoys: prosperity increases his guilt, and strengthens his distempered passions: he has *all* his good things here, and nothing to look for hereafter, but unmixed and eternal misery, and may expect to be banished from the presence of God hereafter; while the righteous has *all* his evil here, and unmingled and eternal good in another world. (Note, Luke xvi. 24—26.) As, therefore, we are all speedily drawing toward the grave, must we not certainly conclude, that the most adverse lot of a true believer is infinitely preferable to the greatest prosperity of an unbeliever? Let us then put "far from us the counsel of the wicked;" let us seek the Lord, and desire the knowledge of his ways; let us count his service our liberty and pleasure; and the privilege of praying to him, our highest honour and richest charter. Let us look forward to the general judgment and the eternal world; and we shall see the prosperity of the wicked, and the trials of the righteous, perfectly consonant with the eternal wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness of God; and must cheerfully conclude, even when under his sharply correcting rod, that they, and they only, are blessed, who trust and serve him. (Note, Ps. lxxiii. 23—28.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1—4. Eliphaz still supposed Job to maintain that God favoured the wicked; and therefore he addressed him the third time. He intended, in this introduction, to shew that God, in all his appointments, acted out of pure love to justice, and was not influenced by interested or selfish affections.—He has nothing to fear, or hope, from any of his creatures; his essential glory and felicity receive no accession from their obedience, however perfect; he is not excited by the greatness of any one, to institute a legal process against him to bring him down; nor

can any one make him his debtor. A wise man consults his own advantage by serving God, but he cannot profit him by so doing. The Lord indeed approves and delights in holiness, because it is right in itself, and conducive to personal and social happiness; but not because he is any gainer by it. His justice therefore must be invariable and impartial; his rewards are the result of his love of good; and his punishments spring entirely from hatred of evil. (Notes, Ps. xvi. 2, 3. Luke xvii. 7—10.)—These are great truths, and were well understood by the disputants, though here rather incautiously stated: but Eliphaz and his associates, confounding this state of trial, with that of future retribution, misapplied them to the case of Job; as if the justice of God could not be vindicated, unless *he* were proved to be a wicked man!

V. 5—14. In these verses Eliphaz brought as particular a charge against Job, as if he had had evidences ready to prove every tittle: yet he had no reason for his rash accusation, except that Job was visited, as he supposed God always visited every wicked man, and none else! He demanded, whether Job could deny the greatness and immense number of his crimes?—Indeed all have committed innumerable sins, in which there is an inconceivable degree of criminality: but Eliphaz did not mean such transgressions as were common to Job with other believers, or even with men in general; but flagrant iniquities and impieties, which he had cloaked with the mask of hypocrisy.—He therefore directly charged him with depriving his poor brethren of their mean and scanty clothing, by taking it in pledge for debts which he unjustly claimed; and by withholding bread and water, or needful relief, from those who were perishing by want; of decreeing as a judge, in behalf of the rich and powerful, for their favour and bribes; and of sending away the widows and orphans

15 Hast thou marked ^a the old way, which wicked men have trodden?
 16 Which were ^b cut down out of time, ^c whose foundation was overflown with a flood;
 17 Which said unto God, ^d Depart from us: ^e and what can the Almighty do ^f for them?
 18 Yet ^g he filled their houses with good *things*: but ^h the counsel of the wicked is far from me.
 19 The ⁱ righteous see *it*, and are glad: and ^j the innocent laugh them to scorn.
 20 Whereas ^k our ^l substance is not cut down, but ^m the remnant of them ⁿ the fire consumeth.
 21 ¶ I Acquaint now thyself with him, and ^o be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee.
 22 ^p Receive, I pray thee, the law from his mouth, and ^q lay up his words in thine heart.
 23 If thou ^r return to the Almighty, thou shalt be ^s built up, ^t thou shalt

^a Gen. vi. 5. 11—13. Luke xvii. 26, 27.
^b xv. 32. Ps. lv. 23. cii. 24. Ec. vii. 17.
^c Heb. a flood was poured upon their foundation. Gen. vii. 17—24. Matt. xxiv. 37—39. 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20. 2 Pet. ii. 5.
^d xxi. 14, 15. Is. xxx. 11. Matt. viii. 29. 34. Rom. i. 28.
^e Ps. iv. 6. Mal. iii. 14.
^f Or, to them.
^g xii. 6. 1 Sam. ii. 7. Ps. xvii. 14. Jer. xii. 2. Acts xiv. 17.
^h xxi. 16. Ps. i. 1. Ps. xlviii. 11. lvi. 10. xcvi. 8. cvii. 42. Prov. xi. 10. Rev. xviii. 20. xix. 1—3.
ⁱ ix. 23. Ps. lii. 6. iv. 7. viii. 3, 4. xv. 5, 6. xx. 18, 19. xxi. 27, 28. Luke xiii. 1—5.
^j Or, estate.
^k Or, their excellency.
^l i. 16. xx. 26. Gen. xix. 24. Luke xvii. 29. 30. 2 Pet. ii. 6, 7.
^m 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. John xvii. 3. 2 Cor. iv. 6.
ⁿ That is, God.
^o Is. xxvii. 5. lvi. 19—21. Matt. v. 25. Acts x. 36. 2 Cor. v. 20. Eph. ii. 14—17.
^p Deut. vi. 6—9. Ps. cxix. 11. Prov. iv. 4. 21. Jer. xv. 16. Matt. xii. 35. xiii. 52. Luke ii. 19. 54. p viii. 5, 6. xi. 13. Is. lv. 6, 7. Hos. xiv. 1, 2. Zech. i. 3. Acts xxvi. 20. q xii. 14. Jer. xxxi. 4. Col. ii. 7. Jude 20 r xi. 14. xviii. 15. Josh. vii. 13—16. Is. xxxiii. 15. Zech. v. 3, 4.

robbed of their property, and bereaved of all power to recover their right. (Notes, xxiv. 2—12. xxix. 12—17. xxxi. 1—8. 13—23. Ex. xxii. 25—27. Neh. v. 1—7. Ez. xviii. 5—9. Am. ii. 6—8.) The unexpected calamities, with which Job was surrounded and entangled, were the punishment of these oppressions: and it was no wonder that he complained of being involved in darkness, distracted with terrors, and overwhelmed with afflictions, like impetuous torrents, when he was guilty of such crimes.—Some think, he meant that Job was blinded by his selfish prejudices, or judicially involved in mental darkness; or he would readily have perceived the reason of his calamities.—All parties were agreed that God displayed his presence and glory in heaven, and was infinitely exalted above all creatures: but Eliphaz charged Job with inferring from this, that God “could not know,” or *did not notice*, the actions of men, which were concealed by the intervening clouds; or that, satisfied with the enjoyment of his own felicity, he disregarded the affairs of his creatures. So that, if Job were not a direct atheist, he implicitly denied the divine perfections and providence; and therefore he feared no punishment for cloaking his injustice with the shew of piety, and vindicating his character, when visited by the just judgments of God. (Notes, Ps. x. 2—11. lxxiii. 11. xciv. 1—9. Ez. viii. 7—12. Zeph. i. 12.)

V. 15—20. Eliphaz here evidently adverted to the general deluge. The earth was then filled with violence; men had said unto God, “Depart from us;” and they enquired concerning Noah and his few associates, “What can the Almighty do for them?” (Notes, Gen. vi. 11, 12.

put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles.

24 Then shalt thou ^s lay up gold ^t as dust, and the *gold* of ^u Ophir as the stones of the brooks.

25 Yea, ^v the Almighty shall be thy ^w Defence, and thou shalt have ^x plenty of silver.

26 For then ^y shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt ^z lift up thy face unto God.

27 Thou shalt ^{aa} make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt ^{ab} pay thy vows.

28 Thou shalt also ^{ac} decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and ^{ad} the light shall shine upon thy ways.

29 When ^{ae} men are cast down, then thou shalt say, *There is* lifting up; and ^{af} he shall save ^{ag} the humble person.

30 ^{ah} He shall deliver the island of the innocent: and it is delivered by ^{ai} the ^{aj} pureness of thine hands.

1 Pet. v. 5. § Heb. him that hath low eyes. Ps. cxxxviii. 6. Is. lxvi. 2. Ez. xxi. 26, 27. Luke i. 52. ¶ Or, The innocent shall deliver the island. xlii. 8. Gen. xviii. 26—32. Is. lviii. 12. Jer. v. 1. Acts xxvii. 24. f Is. i. 15. Mal. i. 9. Matt. xvii. 19, 20. Acts xix. 15, 16. 1 Tim. ii. 8. Jam. v. 15, 16.

17.) But, though their houses were for a time filled, by a bountiful Providence, with good things, what way did they at length tread? They were cut down by an awful judgment, and the foundation of their confidence was overflowed and destroyed with the flood. (Notes, Gen. vii. 10—23. Matt. xxiv. 36—41.) This was well known; and therefore Eliphaz maintained that such judgments befall notorious sinners; and thought that he had the best reason to use Job's words, “The counsel of the wicked is far from me.” (xxi. 16.) And, as it was always matter of exultation and triumph to the righteous, when wicked oppressors were thus ruined; Job had no reason to wonder that they seemed to mock at his calamities and complaints, whom they considered to be such an one. “But,” added he, “our substance,” who are really godly men, “is not thus cut down;” while the vengeance of God, like fire, consumes every remnant of those who by their crimes are proper fuel for it. Perhaps he alluded to the destruction of Sodom. (Notes, Gen. xix. 24—29. Luke xvii. 32—37.)—Eliphaz's arguments and precedents by no means proved, that wicked men were *always* thus visited in this world. The Sabeans and Chaldeans did not act with greater injustice to Job, than he did, in this rash condemnation of him: and as he ascribed his own exemption, and that of his friends, to their piety, rather than to God's mercy, his discourse also savoured of pride and ingratitude.

V. 21—30. The former part of Eliphaz's answer must be condemned; but much of this conclusion merits great commendation, though it implied that Job had hitherto been a stranger to true religion, and that temporal pro-

CHAP. XXIII.

Job longs to plead his cause before God, being assured of a favourable event, 1—7. He laments that

prosperity would be the *sure* consequence of his sincere conversion. It contained, however, excellent advice and suitable encouragements. He exhorted Job to get acquainted with the divine perfections, and to seek an experimental knowledge of “the God of salvation,” whom a sinner may approach by faith and prayer. Thus he might have peace with him, and in his own conscience; and all possible good would be the consequence. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxviii. 9. *John* xvii. 1—3.) The revelations, which God had made to others, or would make to him, of his truth and will, should be received with submission of understanding, and with humble faith, and laid up in his heart as the principles and rule of his future obedience. Thus, returning to the Almighty, as his God and Portion, he would remove every kind of injustice far from his tabernacles; and might expect to have a prosperity built upon a firm foundation. He would grow rich in gold and silver; nay, the Lord would be his Treasure and Defence: he should have great delight and confidence in him; his prayers would be readily heard and answered; and he would be continually reminded to perform the vows which accompanied them. His purposes would be established; his path would be comfortable; and when the *wicked* were cast down, he would recollect with joyful exultation, how the Lord had lifted him up from his abject condition, and preserved him from similar calamities, after he had humbled himself before him. Eliphaz, perhaps meant, that when the righteous were afflicted or cast down, Job would be honoured as their helper and comforter; and that his pious example, endeavours, and fervent prayers, would render him a blessing to his neighbours, and to his country, in preserving it from publick calamities, and promoting the cause of religion and righteousness. (*Notes*, v. 17—27. viii. 4—7. xlii. 7—9. *Gen.* xii. 1—3. *Ps.* cvi. 19—23. *Acts* xxvii. 20—26.)—The word rendered *island*, sometimes signifies *region*, or *country*. (*Jer.* xlvii. 4. *Heb.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

True wisdom consists *with* seeking our own interest, yea, in seeking it, provided it be our true and everlasting interest, and we seek it in that way which God hath revealed: and godliness is always profitable to the possessor, having “the promise both of the life that now is, and of “that which is to come.” (*Notes*, 1 *Tim.* iv. 6—10. vi. 6—10.) But it is absurd to suppose, that we can be profitable to God, or merit any thing at his hands. Even the perfect obedience of angels, in these respects, is entirely unavailing: how much more then the defective services of polluted sinners! All our comforts therefore flow from the unmerited mercy of our God; and under all our afflictions we should acknowledge, that we suffer less than we deserve. He indeed acts as a Sovereign, who gives no account of his conduct to the presumptuous objector; but his sovereignty is perfectly wise, righteous, faithful, good, and merciful. He approves of the image of his own holiness, and delights in the fruits of his own Spirit; and he

he cannot perceive the presence of God: but is confident that God knows his way, and will bring him forth as gold, 8—10. He attests his own integrity, 11, 12; but is troubled by the immutable counsel of God, 13—17.

graciously accepts the thankful services of the humble believer, while he rejects the proud claim of the self-confident Pharisee.—It is, however, grievous to reflect, that many who speak excellently on the perfections of God, so far from being “imitators of him, as beloved children,” behave towards others in direct contrariety to this perfect pattern; and even cloke their own injustice and severity, by expatiating on the divine mercy and justice! Even good men frequently thus transgress, when being eager in disputation, they harshly censure or falsely accuse their brethren. Let us then beware of this common offence. Let us pity and defend such, as are suffering under the cruel injury of slanderous tongues. But should it be our lot to be thus afflicted, let us remember how Job was treated; yea, how Jesus was reviled; that we may be patient under the trial, and “not render railing for railing.” And let us examine ourselves, whether there be not some plausible ground for the reproach: that our minds may feel a deeper abhorrence of the crimes, of which we are accused, and that we may more watchfully avoid all appearance of them.—The injustice, rapine, cruelty to the poor, and oppression of the widow, the orphan, and the destitute, which too often prevail even in the place of judgment, or in the palaces of the great, evidently prove that numbers are practical atheists or infidels; that they have no proper sense of the perfections and authority of God; no realizing apprehensions of his presence with them, and his knowledge of their secret sins or secret thoughts; or no conviction that for “all these things he will bring them into judgment.”

V. 15—30.

How generally is the invisible God forgotten by men! “He is not in all their thoughts.” But they would do well to mark the old way of the transgressors before the flood, and that of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. More dreadful will be the doom of impenitent sinners ere long; however at present they prosper in their crimes, and their houses are filled with good things. Therefore every wise man will agree in saying, “The counsel of the wicked “be far from me.”—In this world we ought not to be “glad “at the calamities” even of the wicked. Instead of insulting over them when afflicted, we should pity them, and pray for their conversion; and we must by no means ascribe it to our own piety, but to the divine mercy, if we are exempted from grievous calamities. But hereafter, when the day of patience and grace shall be ended, and the wicked shall be cast into hell, the redeemed will cry out with exultation, “So let all thine enemies perish, O “LORD!”—Let us then here acquaint ourselves with him, that we may be reconciled to him, and enjoy his “peace, “which passeth all understanding:” thus, everlasting good will come unto us. Blessed be his name, we have immense advantages, which these ancient believers had not; we have both his precepts and his promises, his law and his gospel, in our hands: may we receive them as the words of his mouth, and treasure them up in our hearts: may we return unto him by living faith, and cleave to him in

THEN Job answered and said,

2 Even to day is ^amy complaint bitter: my ^bstroke is ^bheavier than my groaning.

3 ^cOh, that I knew ^dwhere I might find him! *that* ^eI might come *even* to his seat!

4 I would ^forder *my* cause before him, and ^gfill my mouth with arguments.

5 I would ^hknow the words *which* he would answer me, and understand what he would say unto me.

6 Will he ⁱplead against me with *his* great power? No, ^kbut he would put *strength* in me.

7 There ^lthe righteous might dispute with him: ^mso should I be delivered for ever from my Judge.

8 Behold, ⁿI go forward, but he is not *there*; and backward, but I cannot perceive him:

9 On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold *him*: ^ohe hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see *him*:

10 But ^phe knoweth ^qthe way that I take: *when* ^rhe hath tried me, ^sI shall come forth as gold.

11 My ^tfoot hath held his steps, ^uhis way have I kept, and not declined.

12 Neither ^vhave I gone back from the commandment of his lips; ^wI have ^xesteemed the words of his mouth more than my ^ynecessary *food*.

^u John vi. 66—69. viii. 31. Acts xiv. 22. Heb. x. 38, 39. 1 John ii. 19. 22. Ps. xix. 10. cxix. 103, 127. Jer. xv. 16. John iv. 34. 1 Pet. ii. 2. ^{hid, or laid up.} xxii. 22. Ps. cxix. 11. ^{Or, appointed portion.} Luke xii. 42, 46.

ⁿ ix. 11. Ps. x. 1. xiii. 1—3. Is. xlv. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 16. ^o Ps. lxxxix. 46. Is. viii. 17. ^p Gen. xviii. 19. 2 Kings xx. 5. Ps. i. 6. cxxxix. 1—3. John xxi. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 19. ^q Heb. the way that is with me. ^r i. 11, 12. ii. 5, 6. Dent. viii. 2. Ps. xvii. 3. lxxvi. 10. Prov. xvii. 3. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 2, 3. Heb. xi. 17. Jam. i. 2—4. 12. 1 Pet. i. 7. ^s xlii. 5—8. ^t 1 Sam. xii. 2—5. Ps. xviii. 20—24. xlv. 18. Acts xx. 18, 19. 33, 34. 2 Cor. i. 12. 1 Thes. ii. 10. ^u xvii. 9. Ps. xxxvi. 3. cxlv. 5. Zeph. i. 6. Luke viii. 13—15. Rom. ii. 7. 2 Pet. ii. 20—22. ^x xxii. ^z Heb.

holy love; and shew the reality of our conversion, by casting away all our transgressions, renouncing all our idols, obeying his commandments, and acquiescing in his will. Then, whether we be rich or poor, prosperous or afflicted, "the Almighty will be our Shield," and our Delight; (Notes, Ps. xliii. 4. lxxxiv. 11, 12;) our prayers will be heard and our thanksgivings will abound; our purposes will be established, and a light will shine upon our paths; we shall be preserved when the wicked perish; be lifted up from every depth of affliction; and, having been humbled under his mighty hand, we shall be exalted to the throne of glory. In the mean time, our examples, endeavours, prayers, and influence, will be useful in preserving or delivering some from sin and misery: and, whatever be our judgment of the character of others, we may safely recommend to them the same course, as the certain way to present peace and future felicity.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 2. Job's complaints were *bitter*, and his friends thought them *rebellious*; (as the word properly signifies:) but he maintained, that the calamities with which he had been visited, and the anguish which he felt, exceeded all that he could express.—The verse may be read as an exclamation: "Oh, that to-day my complaint should be accounted rebellion!" Or, as an interrogation: "Is my complaint, even to-day, rebellion? *When* my stroke is heavier than my groaning!"

V. 3—7. Job perceived, that his friends were resolved to condemn him; he therefore referred his cause to the judgment of God, and he was earnest to have it decided, as by a special commission.—Eliphaz had exhorted him to "acquaint himself with God;" and to this Job seems to have referred, when he *vehemently expressed his desire of knowing where he might find him*. He longed to know where and how he might carry his appeal into the presence of God, and before his tribunal, that it might be determined, whether he was a righteous man, or a hypocrite; which was the point on which he and his opponents were

at issue. He was assured that "the judgment of God" would be "according to truth:" before him he could order his cause with confidence, and produce many and conclusive arguments in his own vindication. He should then know what God would answer; and he did not fear submitting to his award: he seems also to have hoped that he should then understand the reason of his uncommon afflictions. He was assured, that God would not crush him by his power, or condemn him by prerogative; but would rather support him by his grace, and encourage him by his condescension, in ordering his cause before him. So that an upright person, when calumniated and condemned by man, might be allowed to argue the matter before God; and, having appealed to his mercy as a Saviour, and being declared a justified believer, he would have nothing more to fear from his just and holy Judge.—Some think that he meant Eliphaz, who, as his self-constituted judge, had already most unjustly brought him in guilty of many atrocious crimes, and pronounced sentence against him.—Job's consciousness of his integrity, and his confidence that the Lord would graciously decide in his favour, were well grounded: but there was a great want of reverence, humility, and patience, in his vehement manner of stating his desires; and in fact, the Lord did at last silence Job, by shewing him his presumption, in thus pleading against his almighty Sovereign. (Notes, xxxviii. 1—3. xl. 1—8. xlii. 1—6. 1 Cor. iv. 3—5.)

V. 8—12. Job was sensible that God was every where present, and he was troubled at his presence as the Author of his calamities (15): but his mind was in such confusion, that he could get no fixed apprehension of his merciful presence, so as to obtain comfort and support by spreading his case before him; and he could perceive no tokens of the Lord's approach to deliver him, or to silence his accusers. His efforts were all fruitless, and his views gloomy. The powerful operations of God were discernible: but his gracious presence was hid in anger; and he seemed to stand at a distance, or to frown upon him. Yet Job was assured that the heart-searching God knew and

ix. 12, 13. xi. 10. xii. 14. xxxiv. 29. Num. xxiii. 19, 20. Ec. i. 15. iii. 14. Rom. ix. 19. Jam. i. 17. Ps. cxv. 3. cxxxv. 6. Prov. xix. 21. Is. xiv. 24—27. xlv. 10. Dan. iv. 35. Eph. i. 9 —11. vii. 3. Mic. vi. 9. 1 Thes. iii. 3. v. 9. 1 Pet. ii. 8. 15. xxxi. 23. Ps. lxxvii. 3. cxix. 120. Hab. iii. 16.

13 But he *is* in one *mind*, and ^r who can turn him? ^s and *what* his soul desireth, even *that* he doeth.

14 For he performeth *the thing that is* ^a appointed for me: and ^b many such *things are* with him.

15 Therefore ^c am I troubled at his

presence: when I consider, I am afraid of him.

16 For God ^d maketh my heart soft, and ^e the Almighty troubleth me:

17 Because I was not ^f cut off before the darkness, *neither* hath he covered ^g the darkness from my face.

d Ps. xxii. 14. Is. vi. 5. lvii. 16. xxvii. 2. Ruth i. 20. Ps. lxxxviii. 16. Joel i. 15. f vi. 9. 2 Kings xxii. 20. Is. lvii. 1. g xv. 22. xviii. 6. 18. xix. 8. xxii. 11.

approved his general conduct and character; and that when his integrity had been suitably tried, he should be brought forth, purified as gold from the furnace. For he was conscious that he was an upright believer; that he had obeyed the commands of God, and followed the example of his justice and goodness; and that he had steadily kept that path, without declining, turning back, or growing weary. (Notes, 2 Sam. xxii. 21—28. 2 Cor. i. 12—14.) Nay, he had experienced more pleasure in the truth and commandments of the Lord, than in his necessary food; and would sooner have gone without his stated meals, than have deviated from his service. (Notes, Ps. xix. 7—11. cxix. 97—105. Jer. xv. 15—18.)—In these and similar protestations, it is evident that Job continually referred to the charges brought against him, and the advice given him, by his friends. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 13—17. At this time, Job seems to have felt that his vehement wishes and protestations were altogether vain, because he was aware that the purposes of God were irreversible, and his power irresistible; so that neither persuasion nor opposition could induce him to deviate from his settled plan. It was God's decree and fixed purpose thus to afflict him, though he knew not on what account; but there were many such deep mysteries in Providence. (Notes, xxxiv. 20—30. Dan. iv. 34—37. Rom. xi. 33—36.) The presence of the Almighty therefore filled him with terror, and melted his heart with anguish: and he could not conceive, why he had not been cut off by death before these days of darkness; or why God would not cover him in the grave, from the view of such distresses.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

They, and they alone, who have experienced the conflict between faith and unbelief, hope and despondency, the desire to submit, and the opposing power of self-will, during severe trials and sharp temptations, can clearly understand or account for the fluctuations observable in Job's language, and the state of his mind whence they arose: (Note, ix. 14—21 :) and the consideration, that so eminent a servant of God was harassed and perplexed, exactly as they are, cannot fail to afford them some relief. But our bitter complaints are very apt to savour of *rebellion*; and we should watch over ourselves in such circumstances, lest we provoke the Lord to increase his corrections.—When we meet with unkind treatment or unjust censures, we should seek help and comfort from him: yet we ought to come in humble reverence, and wait his time with patience. Blessed be God, we may know where to find him: he is “in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself;” and upon a mercy-seat, “waiting to be gracious.” Thither the sinner may go for salvation; and there the believer may order his cause, and fill his mouth with arguments,

taken from the perfections, promises, covenant, and glory of God, whatever his special requests may be. Nor need we ever be at a loss for a conclusive argument, why he should pardon, teach, protect, comfort, and help us, if we trust his mercy and seek his glory. He will answer our enquiries by his word, and our prayers in his providence, and by his Spirit; and cause us to understand and approve his decisions. He will not crush or overawe us with his absolute power, but assist and encourage our supplications: and the only way to be delivered from our *offended Judge*, is to appeal to his mercy as our *loving Saviour*; for “there is no condemnation” for those who are indeed true believers in Jesus Christ. (Note, Rom. viii. 1, 2.)—Yet, even for them, there may be many temptations, sorrows, and perplexities: they may lose the sense of the favour of their God, and, for a season, seek it in every ordinance, and by every means, in vain. But he knows and approves their path; he notices all their trials and difficulties; he will give them some distant intimation of a happy event; and when their uprightness is manifested, their graces increased, and their dross consumed, they shall come forth as the purest and most precious gold. But the Christian, of whom we speak, is conscious of having uprightly embraced the salvation of God, and set out in his ways, by repentance, faith, and true conversion; he has held his steps, and kept his path, without turning aside for the sake of worldly advantages, or for fear of the cross. Many false steps indeed he has made; but he has not been left to walk in the way of allowed sin: he obeys unreservedly, from love, and with the constancy of patient expectation. The word of God has been the food of his soul: he has an appetite for it; he relishes and digests it, converts it into nourishment, and is strengthened by it for service and for conflict. In his habitual judgment, he would rather want animal recreation, and starve with hunger, than be deprived of the spiritual sustenance of his soul: and therefore he takes pleasure in searching the scripture, and in attending on the ordinances of God. (Notes, Ps. xlii. 1—3. lxiii. 1—6. lxxxiv. 1, 2. Cant. i. 4.) Those who answer this description, may be alarmed and troubled at afflictive events; they may be disquieted at the view of the unchangeable decrees and irresistible sovereignty of God; and be perplexed about the reasons of his appointments. They may even think that the Almighty delights to trouble them, and wish that they had died before their trials; but this is their weakness, temptation, and sin. For nothing can come upon them, but what is appointed by infinite wisdom and love, and in order to humble, soften, and sanctify them; nothing, but what shall terminate in their benefit, and that of their brethren, and redound to the glory of God: and, in their sober judgment, they would be willing to endure darkness and distress for a time, for

CHAP. XXIV.

^a Ps xxxi. 15. Ec.
ⁱⁱⁱ 17. viii. 6, 7.
^{ix} 11, 12. Is. lx.
²² Dan. ii. 21.
^{Luke} xxi. 22—
²⁴ Acts i. 7.
^{xvii} 26. 1 Thes.
^{v. 1} 1 Tim. iv.
^{1. vi.} 15. 2 Pet.
^{ii. 3.} iii. 7, 8.
^b Ps. ix. 10. xxxvi.
^{10.} John xvii. 3.
^c Gen. vii. 4.
^{xviii.} 17, 20, 21.
^{Ps.} lxxiii. 16—
¹⁹ Jer. xii. 1—
^{3.} Matt. xxiv.
^{38.} Rom. ii. 5.
^d Deut. xix. 14.
^{xxvii.} 17. Prov.
^{xxii.} 28. xxiii.
^{10.} Hos. v. 10.
^e i. 15. 17. v. 5.
^{* Or, feed them.}
^f xxii. 6—9. xxxi.
^{16, 17.} Deut.
^{xxiv.} 6. 10—13.
^{17—21.} 1 Sam.
^{xii. 3.}
^g 14. xxxi. 16. Ps.
^{cix.} 16. Prov.
^{xxii.} 16. xxx. 14.
^{Is. x. 2.} Ez. xviii.
^{12.} 18. xxii. 29.
^{Am. ii. 7.} viii. 4.
^{—6.} Mic. ii. 1, 2.
^h Prov. xxviii. 12.
^{23.} Jam. v. 4—6.
ⁱ xxxix. 5—7. Jer.
^{ii. 24.} Hos. viii. 9.
^k 14. Prov. iv. 16.
^{Hos. vii.} 6. Mic.
^{ii. 1.} Zeph. iii. 3.
^{John} xviii. 28.
^{Acts} xxiii. 12.
^{1. v. 5.} xii. 6 Gen.
^{xvi. 12.} xxvii.
^{40.}

Job enquires why the judgments of God on the wicked are not evident to his people, 1. He shews that the most atrocious offenders often go unpunished in this life, and die as all other men, 2—24. He challenges any man to confute him, 25.

WHY, ^a seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do ^b they that know him ^c not see his days?

² Some remove the ^d landmarks; they ^e violently take away flocks, and ^f feed *thereof*.

³ They ^g drive away the ass of the fatherless, they take the widow's ox for a pledge.

⁴ They ^h turn the needy out of the way: the poor of the earth ⁱ hide themselves together.

⁵ Behold, as ^j wild asses in the desert go they forth to their work; ^k rising betimes for a prey: ^l the wilder-

ness *yieldeth* food for them *and* for their children.

⁶ They ^m reap *every one* his ⁿ corn in the field: and ^o they gather the vintage of the wicked.

⁷ They cause ^p the naked to lodge without clothing, that *they have* ^q no covering in the cold.

⁸ They are ^r wet with the showers of the mountains, and ^s embrace the rock for want of a shelter.

⁹ They ^t pluck the fatherless from the breast, and take a pledge of the poor.

¹⁰ They cause *him* to go naked without clothing, and ^u they take away the sheaf *from* the hungry;

¹¹ *Which* ^v make oil within their walls, and tread *their* wine-presses, and suffer thirst.

¹² Men ^w groan from out of the city, and the soul of the ^x wounded crieth out: ^y yet God layeth not folly *to them*.

^m Deut. xxviii. 33.
^{51.} Judg. vi. 3—
^{6.} Mic. vi. 15.
[†] Heb. mingled
corn, or dreuge.
[‡] Heb. the wicked
gather the vin-
tage.
ⁿ 10. xxii. 6. xxxi.
^{19, 20.} Ex. xxii.
^{26, 27.} Deut.
^{xxiv} 11—13. Is.
^{lviii.} 7. Acts ix.
^{39.}
^o Gen. xxxi. 40.
^{Prov.} xxxi. 21.
^{Marg.}
^p Cant. v. 2.
^q Lam. iv. 5.
^r Heb. xi. 38.
^s 2 Kings iv. 1.
^{Neh.} v. 5.

^s Deut. xxiv. 19.
^{Am. ii.} 7, 8. v.
^{11, 12.}
^t Deut. xxv. 4.
^{Jer.} xxii. 13.
^{Jam.} v. 4.
^u Ex. i. 13, 14. ii.
^{23, 24.} xxii. 27.
^{Judg.} x. 16. Ps.
^{xii.} 5. Ec. iv. 1.
^{Is.} lii. 5.
^x Ps. lxi. 26. cix.
^{22.}
^y Ps. i. 21. Ec.
^{viii.} 11, 12. Mal.
^{ii.} 17. iii. 15.
^{Rom.} ii. 4, 5.
^{2 Pet.} iii. 15.

these important purposes. May we then learn to obey and trust the Lord, even under tribulation; be willing to die when he pleases, for we know not from what evils we may thus be exempted; and to live as long as he sees good, as we are not aware for what good purposes our lives may be prolonged.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1. If God uniformly punished the wicked in this life, according to the opinion of Eliphaz and his friends; Job supposed, that wise and godly men, who are acquainted with him and his ways, would be able to give some account of the *times* of vengeance; to conclude how long the prosperity of the wicked would last; and to predict how it would terminate, and what degree of misery proportioned to their crimes would be inflicted: as those, acquainted with the mind of the prince, and the laws of the land, can foresee and expect the sentence, which will shortly be pronounced and executed upon notorious malefactors. There are *days* appointed for their trial, and *penalties* annexed to their crimes, and we know what to expect, as to the murderer or traitor. Doubtless, the Governor of the world also has his appointed times of vengeance; but why are they not discovered to his people? Why are they not marked or evident? They certainly would be, if exact justice were awarded in this world; and as they are not, it is evident that the time of trial, and of executing vengeance, is not appointed in this life. (Note, Ec. ix. 1—3.)

V. 2—12. In these verses Job proves from *facts*, that notorious tyrants, oppressors, and robbers, frequently escape adequate punishment in this world. Unjust rulers, under cover of law, often deprive men of their estates; and take

away their cattle and substance, as if forfeited: they oppress the orphans and widows, and drive the poor into concealment or banishment. Many likewise disdain the yoke of obedience to God or man, as the wild ass refuses to labour; and rapine and plunder are their daily employments. Thus troops of Ishmaelitic free-booters lived in the wilderness, by robbing the travellers: others reaped the corn, or gathered in the vintage, from the lands which they had violently seized; while the poor sufferers, whom they had ruined, were exposed, without clothing or shelter, to the inclemencies of the weather, and driven to make the rocks their refuge, and to live like wild beasts. Such tyrants would pluck away the fatherless children from their weeping mothers, to be their slaves; and take the children of the widows, or of any poor persons, into bondage, as a pledge for some debt, contracted to keep their families from perishing. (Notes, xxii. 5—14. Neh. v. 1—13. Jam. v. 1—6.) They regarded not the hunger, thirst, or nakedness even of those, who laboured to support their luxury: but would take away the sheaf which the poor had gleaned; and suffer them to perish for hunger and thirst, amidst the abundance, with which they were surrounded, and about which their labours had been employed. Men, thus wounded and crushed by oppression, publicly expressed their anguish in groans and lamentations; yet God inflicted no remarkable punishment upon the criminals, proportioned to their guilt, or equal to the miseries of the oppressed. Thus, in this life he did not expose and punish their folly, or impute folly unto them; as he certainly will do, when he shall “render to every man according to his works.”—The words translated “they take away the sheaf from the hungry” (10), may be rendered, “They are hungry that carry the sheaf:” that is, *Their reapers starve*.

13 They are of those that ^a rebel against the light; ^a they know not the ways thereof, ^b nor abide in the paths thereof.

14 The ^c murderer rising with the light killeth the poor and needy, and ^d in the night is as a thief.

15 The ^e eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, 'No eye shall see me: and ^f disguiseth his face.

16 In ^g the dark they dig through houses, *which* they had marked for themselves in the day-time; ^h they know not the light.

17 For the morning ⁱ is to them even as the shadow of death: if ^j one know *them they are* ^k in the terrors of the shadow of death.

18 He ^l is ^k swift as the waters; ^m their portion is cursed in the earth; he be- holdeth not the way of the vineyards.

19 ⁿ Drought and heat ^o consume the

z Luke xii. 47, 48.
John iii. 19, 20.
ix. 39-41. xv.
22-24. Rom. i.
32. ii. 17-24.
Jam. iv. 17.
a Prov. iv. 19.
John xii. 35, 40.
Rom. iii. 11-17.
2 Thes. ii. 10-12.
b xxiii. 11, 12.
John viii. 31, 44.
xv. 6, 2 Pet. ii.
20-22. 1 John
ii. 19. Jude 6.
c 2 Sam. xi. 14-17.
Ps. x. 8-10.
Mic. ii. 1, 2.
Eph. v. 7-11.
d Luke xii. 39.
1 Thes. v. 2.
Rev. iii. 3.
e Ex. xx. 14, 2 Sam.
xi. 4-13. xii. 12.
Ps. 1. 18. Prov.
vi. 32-35. vii. 9,
10.
f xxii. 13, 14. Ps.
x. 11. lxxiii. 11.
xciv. 7. Ez. viii.
12. ix. 9.
g Heb. setteth his
face in secret.
Gen. xxxviii. 14,
15.
h Ex. xxii. 2, 3.
Ez. xii. 5-7, 12.
Matt. xxiv. 43.
i 13. xxxviii. 12.
13. John iii. 20.
Eph. v. 11-13.
j See on iii. 5. Jer.
ii. 26. 2 Cor. v.
10, 11. Rev. vi.
16, 17.
k Ps. lviii. 7.
lxxiii. 18-20.
Is. xxiii. 10.
m vi. 15-17.

V. 13-17. Job here followed up his argument, by bringing instances of criminals, who escaped detection, and eluded justice, as those before mentioned *out-braved* it. Such persons "rebelled against the light," as if enemies to the sun; shunning all intercourse with it, as not being able to endure the discoveries which it would make. They therefore lay still all day; or only went out to mark their prey, and to make observations and form plans. Thus the murderer "rising with," or *before*, "the day-break," lay in wait for the early traveller, to murder him; or he spent the night in robbery. The adulterer waited for the dusk of the evening, and secretly, or having *put a mask on his face*, repaired to the haunts of his shameful practices. The house-breaker likewise concealed himself till all were asleep, and then forced his way into the habitations of honest men to plunder them; even digging through the walls, which perhaps were made of clay. All these offenders hated day-light; they dreaded the approach of morning, before they had accomplished their crimes; and detection was as death to them. (Notes, John iii. 19-21. Eph. v. 8-14. 1 Thes. v. 1-11.) Thus they often, through life, escaped the punishment due to their crimes.

V. 18-20. These atrocious offenders, and many others, proceeded swiftly and silently, like the gliding stream, into every iniquity: they acquired a portion on earth by such *accursed* practices, without bestowing pains to cultivate the land; spending their time in deserts, and being seldom seen in the ways towards the vineyards, which were frequented by those who laboured in them.—Yet, as dry weather and heat evaporate the waters, arising from the melted snows, or they sink into the earth imperceptibly and unnoticed: so numbers of these criminals went down unobserved into the grave. They were not ignominiously suspended on gibbets, to be devoured by the fowls of the

snow-waters: ^a so doth the grave *those* ^b which have sinned.

20 The womb shall forget him; ^c the worm shall feed sweetly on him; ^d he shall be no more remembered; and ^e wickedness shall be broken as a tree.

21 He ^f evil entreateth the barren ^g that beareth not: and ^h doeth not good to the widow.

22 He ⁱ draweth also the mighty with his power: he riseth up, and ^j no man is sure of life.

23 *Though* ^k it be given him *to be* in safety, ^l whereon he resteth; ^m yet his eyes ⁿ are upon their ways.

24 They ^o are exalted for a little while, but are ^p gone and brought low; they are ^q taken out of the way as all *other*, and ^r cut off as the tops of the ears of corn.

25 And if *it be* not *so* now, ^s who will make me a liar, and make my speech nothing worth?

n xxi. 23 32-34.
Ps. xlix. 14.
lviii. 8, 9. lxxviii.
2. Prov. xiv. 32.
Ec. ix. 4-6.
Luke xii. 20.
xvi. 22.
o xvii. 14. xix. 26.
p Prov. x. 7. Ec.
viii. 10.
q xiv. 7-10. xviii.
16, 17. Dan. iv.
14. Matt. iii. 10.
r 1 Sam. i. 6, 7.
s 3. xxix. 13. xxxi.
16-18.
t Esth. iii. 8-10.
Dan. vi. 4-9.
John xix. 12-16.
Rev. xvi. 13.
14. xvii. 2.
u Or, he trusteth
not his own life.
v Ps. lxxiii. 3-12.
Jer. xii. 1-3.
x Ec. viii. 11. Is.
x. 8-11. lvi. 12.
Luke xii. 16-20.
45. 1 Thes.
v. 3.
y Ps. x. 13, 14. xi.
4, 5. Prov. v. 21.
xv. 3. Ec. v. 8.
Am. viii. 7. ix.
3. Hab. i. 13.
Rev. ii. 23.
z xx. 5. Ps. xxxvii.
10, 35, 36. lxxiii.
19. xcii. 7. Jam.
i. 11. v. 1-3.
† Heb. not. viii.
22. marg.
‡ Heb. closed up.
a Is. xvii. 5, 6.
Rev. xiv. 14-20.
b ix. 24. xi. 2, 3.
xv. 2.

air; but were buried, and became a delicious morsel for the worms. And, as no remarkable misery or disgrace attended their lives or deaths, even their mothers and nearest relations were soon comforted for them, and they were forgotten, as if no more criminal than other men: so that their wickedness came to an end, as a tree that grows undisturbed, and is not cut down, but decays and is broken through length of time.

He is swift as the waters. (18) Or 'on the waters.' Some understand this as a description of pirates, who, sailing over the waters in light and swift vessels, grew rich by plunder; and despised, as mean and vile, the drudgery of cultivating the earth, and the profit acquired by it.

V. 21-25. According to the observation, which Job had made on human affairs, many escaped in this world, who had injured the childless and the widow.—Others, having become powerful by iniquity, were able to prevail even against the mighty; so that none could stand before them, or be secure even as to their lives, when they arose to plunder or murder: or they formed connexions with other powerful tyrants, for the purpose of oppression. Indeed, men often purchased their favour and protection; and, confiding in their promises, thought themselves safe: but these oppressors allowed them only a transient respite, and watched for every pretence or opportunity to injure them. Thus they had their season of exaltation: and then, (as all must die,) they were gone, and brought low, and removed in an advanced age, and with as much ease as other men.—Job, having stated these undeniable facts, challenged his friends or any other persons, to prove them false or inapplicable; or to refute his doctrine, 'that calamities are no proof of wickedness.'

He evil entreateth, &c. (21) The Heb. word נִקְרָא does not signify *evil entreateth*, in its general use, being the

CHAP. XXV.

^a 1x. 2-10. xxvi.

5-14. xl. 9-14.

1 Chr. xxix. 11.

12. Ps. xcix. 1-

3. Jer. x. 6, 7.

Dan. iv. 34-37.

Matt. vi. 13.

xxviii. 18. Eph.

i. 20, 21. Rev.

vi. 16.

^b 1s. lviii. 15. 19.

Matt. v. 9.

2 Cor. v. 18-

2. Eph. ii. 16,

17. Col. i. 20.

^c Ps. ciii. 20, 21.

cxlviii. 2-4. 1s.

xl. 26. Dan. vii.

10. Matt. xxvi.

53. Rev. v. 11.

Bildad asserts the dominion and power of God, before whom man cannot be justified, 1-6.

THEN answered Bildad the Shuhite, and said,

2 ^a Dominion and fear *are* with him, ^b he maketh peace in his high places.

3 Is ^c there any number of his

armies? and ^d upon whom doth not his light arise?

4 ^e How then can man be justified with God? or ^f how can he be clean *that is* born of a woman?

5 Behold ^g even to the moon, and it shineth not; yea, the stars are not pure in his sight.

6 How ^h much less man, *that is* a worm? and the son of man, *which is* a worm?

^d xxxviii. 12, 13.
Gen. i. 3-5.
14-16. Ps. xix.
4-6. Matt. v.
45. John i. 4. 9.
^e iv. 17-19. ix. 2.
xv. 14-16. Ps.
cxxx. 3. cxliii.
2. Rom. vi. 19,
20.
^f xiv. 3, 4. Ps. li.
2. Eph. ii. 3.
^g 1s. xxiv. 23. 1x.
19, 20. 2 Cor.
iii. 19.

^h iv. 19. Gen.
xxiii. 27. Ps.
xxii. 6. 1s. xli.
14.

yet their cries enter into "the ears of the LORD of hosts," who is their Patron; and who will at length shew before the whole world, that it is *most* dangerous to injure those, who are *least* able to defend themselves. But, "because" sentence against an evil work, is not executed speedily; "the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do" "evil." God does not immediately *impute folly to them*; and therefore they proceed, and encourage one another; and the earth continues full of violence and misery in multiplied and varied forms.

V. 13-25.

The workers of iniquity, however in other respects distinguished, universally "rebel against the light." If they did no violence to their own conscience, and to the common reason of mankind, there would be no need for them to bestow so much pains to conceal or palliate their crimes. But after all the efforts of infidels and profligates, their practices continue shameful, and court darkness; they hate the light of day, as well as the word of God, even when not exposed to the sword of the magistrate: and their fear of detection is an earnest of future conviction and punishment.—The murderer, the adulterer, and the robber, (characters associated in Scripture,) may enjoy their *accursed portion*, escape punishment from man, and live long, and go down quietly into the grave; and they may be ready to conclude, that "no harm shall happen to them." But "after death is the judgment:" and then they shall find that, while they abused the patience of God, and hardened themselves in impenitency, they "were *treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who shall render to every man according to his works.*" "Then will they return and discern, between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not." (Notes, Mal. iii. 13-18. Rom. ii. 4-6.) And where is he, who can disprove these doctrines, or deny that they are of infinite importance? Let us then be thankful, if we have been kept from crimes so atrocious and ruinous; and let us be as assiduous in seeking the salvation of our souls, and in doing good, as sinners are in doing evil; remembering the apostle's admonition: "Ye have need of patience; that, having done the will of God, ye may receive the promise." (Heb. x. 36.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1-6. The appeal to undeniable facts, which Job had made, seems to have reduced his opponents to great difficulties. They were not convinced of their

Benoni part. from *לֶחֶם* to feed, which sometimes means to devour. "He devoureth the barren, that he should not bear." Oppression discourages marriage, and prevents exceedingly the increase of the human species: as also does licentiousness, and the methods which the licentious take to prevent detection, which some think may be intimated.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-12.

The Lord knows the proper times for delivering his people, and for executing vengeance on his enemies; and he orders every thing in perfect wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth. Yet, to the wisest and best of men, the conduct of his providence appears involved in perplexity; but the approaching day of judgment will throw full light on all his ways and works. In the prospect of that solemn season, we should neither be stumbled and distressed at witnessing the prosperity of the wicked, nor discouraged if we share the troubles of the righteous.—The history of all ages and nations proclaims the desperate wickedness of the human heart. So far from "loving their neighbour as themselves," men, if not powerfully restrained, are induced by selfishness and idolatrous love of worldly objects, not only to withhold from others the *comforts* of life, but to deprive them, by fraud or violence, even of what is *necessary*, and to reduce them to abject misery. When this selfish and destructive principle has surmounted the fear of human justice, or climbed into a throne, iniquity is committed with a high hand, or even prescribed by law. At other times it operates by rapine or fraud: and in all cases it dictates manifold violations of justice, truth, and mercy to man, as well as a disregard of the duties which we owe to God. But who can express the crimes that have been committed, or the miseries which have been occasioned, by this inordinate self-love! Men, more savage than tigers, have in all ages and countries been disposed to prey on the helpless part of their own species; and to plunder, oppress, enslave, or murder them, as it might best suit their purposes, or as they were able to conceal or to defend what they had done; or, by their brutal lusts, to reduce individuals and families perhaps to still deeper and more exquisite misery. And though the groans of the poor, the naked, and the perishing; of the fatherless, the widow, the defrauded labourer; of those who are enslaved, dragged or driven from their native shores, and cruelly tormented by human avarice, ambition, malice, and sensuality, do not seem to interrupt the indulgence of their haughty licentious oppressors;

CHAP. XXVI.

Job derides Bildad's speech, as little to the purpose, 1—4. He shews the works and perfections of God to be unsearchable, 5—14.

BUT Job answered and said,
2 ^a How hast thou ^b helped *him* that is without power? *how* savest thou the arm that hath no strength?
3 How hast thou ^c counselled *him* that hath no wisdom? and *how* hast thou ^d plentifully declared the thing as it is?

a xii. 2. 1 Kings xviii. 27.
b iv. 3, 4. vi. 25. xvi. 4, 5. Is. xxxv. 3, 4. xli. 5—7.
c vi. 13. xii. 3. xiii. 5. xv. 8—10. xvii. 10. xxxiii. 11—13.
d xxxiii. 3. 33. xxxviii. 2. Ps. xlix. 1—4. lxxi. 15—18. Prov. viii. 6—9. Acts xx. 27.

4 To whom hast thou uttered words? and ^e whose spirit came from thee?
5 ¶ ^f Dead *things* are formed from under the waters, ^g and the inhabitants thereof.
6 ^h Hell is naked before him, and ⁱ destruction hath no covering.
7 He ^j stretched out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing.
8 He ^k bindeth up the waters in his ^l thick clouds; ^m and the cloud is not rent under them.

e xx. 3. xxxii. 18. 1 Kings xxii. 23, 24. 1 Cor. xii. 3. 1 John iv. 1—3. Rev. xvi. 13, 14. xli. 1, &c. Ps. civ. 25, 26. Ez. xxix. 3—5.
* Or, with.
g xi. 8. Ps. cxxxix. 8. Prov. xv. 11. Is. xiv. 9. Am. ix. 2. Heb. iv. 13.
h xxviii. 22. Ps. lxxxviii. 10—12.
i ix. 8. Gen. i. 1, 2. Ps. xxiv. 2. civ. 2—5. Prov. viii. 23—27. Is. xl. 22. 26. xlii. 5.
k xxxvi. 29. xxxviii. 9. 37. Ps. cxxxv. 7. Prov. xxx. 4. Jer. x. 13. in Is. v. 6.

l xxxvii. 11—16. Ps. xviii. 10, 11.

error; but they could not answer his arguments. Bildad, therefore, spoke but few words in reply; Zophar did not answer the third time; and Eliphaz declined leading on another attack. Bildad, however, thought that Job had spoken without a proper reverence of God, or a due sense of his own meanness and sinfulness. He reminded him, therefore, that the sovereign authority over all creatures belonged solely to the Lord; and that all ought to reverence his Majesty, and to fear his omnipotent displeasure. All the inhabitants of heaven, in perfect unity and harmony, obeyed him: his innumerable creatures, marshalled in exact order, were observant of his commands and entirely under his controul: and, as the light of his sun pervaded all the earth, so all that partook of his goodness, ought to submit to his authority. But, if the heavenly bodies were obscure when compared with his infinite glory, and in *his* view of them; how could sinful man abide the severity of his judgment, or be approved holy in his sight? Perhaps Bildad intimated that his very birth, amidst the sorrows and pains of his mother, proved him born in sin, and a fallen creature. And, as he was so mean a worm, and so vile at his best estate, he surely ought not to contend with God, or exalt himself above him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is better for Christians to avoid controversy, or to put an end to it, when they do not speedily come to an agreement; and to converse on such subjects, as all allow to be true and important.—The pious, however distinguished, agree that the wicked may flourish for a time, but shall be rooted out at the last: they should therefore be careful not to quarrel with each other, not to envy the wicked, and not to faint in tribulation.—If we were duly influenced by the reverential fear of God, we should submit to his sovereignty, do his will, seek his glory, and rejoice in his favour, in peace and harmony, and without murmuring and disputing; even as the angels in heaven do. Indeed, his innumerable armies, yea, all his creatures, except fallen angels and men, are, in their several ways, subject to his command. All things living partake of his bounty: ought we not then to bear deserved correction patiently, and use his gifts to his glory? And ought we not to imitate his kindness to “the unthankful and the evil?”—It is very important, that we should be convinced, that we are mean, guilty, and polluted creatures before him: and the

most important question which can possibly be asked, though often least attended to, is this, “How can man be justified with God? or how shall he be pure, who is born of a woman?” (Notes, ix. 1—3. xv. 14—16.) But the most atrocious sinners, when humbled before God, and disposed to accept of his salvation, may be “justified by faith,” made holy by divine grace, and exalted to glory in heaven; where the sun and moon will no longer shine, but “the LORD himself will be our everlasting light.” (Notes, Rev. xxi. 22—27. xxii. 2—5.)—Our vileness will thus commend his condescension and love; and the riches of his mercy, and the power of his grace, will be magnified in every redeemed sinner, to all eternity.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 1—4. Bildad had brought no argument tending to refute Job's doctrine; and therefore Job *ironically* admired the assistance, which Bildad had given to his friends in their extremity, and the instruction which he had afforded him in his perplexity. His friends had expected much help from him to their drooping cause; Job himself had hoped for some important counsel in his difficulties; and all had supposed that he would abundantly clear up the controversy, and fully shew how the matter really stood. But indeed he had spoken so little, and that little was so foreign to the business, that *they* were no stronger, nor *he* any wiser; and all parties were just where they had been. Surely, Bildad could not mean to utter words *to him*, as if he needed such counsel! Surely, he did not suppose his words to be the dictates of the Spirit of prophecy, or even the language of faith and grace; when it was evident, that he spake in his own spirit!—Some expositors, indeed, give another turn to the passage; and suppose that Job meant to deride Bildad's speech, as implying that the almighty and infinitely wise God needed such an advocate and counsellor! It is evident, however, that Job spoke with peevishness and self-preference; but it is surprising, that such a sufferer should have spirits for banter and ridicule.

Plentifully declared, &c. (3) Or, “Abundantly made known wisdom.”

V. 5—13. To shew Bildad that he did not want his instructions, Job began more particularly to discourse on the works of God.—The word translated “dead things,”

^u Ex. xx. 21. xxxiii. 20—23. xxxiv. 3. 1 Kings viii. 12. Ps. xcvi. 2. Hab. iii 3—5. 1 Tim. vi. 16.

9 He ⁿholdeth back the face of *his* throne, *and* spreadeth his cloud upon it.

^o xxxviii. 8—11. Ps. xxxiii. 7. civ. 6—9. Prov. viii. 29. Jer. v. 22.

10 He hath ^ocompassed the waters with bounds, ^puntil the ^{*}day and night come to an end.

^p Gen. viii. 22. Is. liv. 9, 10.

11 The ^apillars of heaven tremble, and ^rare astonished at his reproof.

^{*} Heb. end of light with darkness.

^q 1 Sam. ii. 8. Ps. xviii. 7. Hag. ii. 21. Heb. xii. 26. 27. 2 Pet. iii. 10. Rev. xx. 11.

12 He ^{*}divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding ^the smiteth through [†]the proud.

^r xv. 15.

^s Ex. xiv. 21, &c. Ps. xxix. 10. lxxiv. 13. xciii. 3, 4. cxiv. 2—7. Is. li. 15. Jer. xxxi. 35. t xl. 11. 12. Is. ii. 12. Dan. iv. 37. Jam. iv. 6. † Heb. pride. Ps. lxxxix. 9, 10. Is. li. 9.

13 By ^uhis spirit he hath garnished

the heavens; his hand hath formed ^{*}the crooked serpent.

14 Lo, these *are* parts of his ways: but ^yhow little a portion is heard of him? but ^zthe thunder of his power who can understand?

x Ps. lxxiv. 13, 14. Is. xxvii. 1. Rev. xii. 9. xi. 7—9. Ps. cxxxix. 6. cxlv. 3. Is. xl. 26—29. Rom. xi. 33. 1 Cor. xiii. 9—12. z xl. 9. 1 Sam. ii. 10. Ps. xxix. 3.

CHAP. XXVII.

Job solemnly attests his integrity, and resolves to vindicate it as long as he lives, 1—6. He declares the character and doom of the hypocrite, 7—10. He shews that the prosperity of the wicked is soon changed into hopeless misery, 11—23.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most important truths may be introduced unseasonably; and be so misstated and misapplied, as to deceive instead of convincing, and to distress instead of encouraging. We ought therefore to consider not only what is true and good, but what may be suitable and useful: we should advert to the person whom we address, and his situation and frame of mind: we should have some special intention in speaking; as to awaken a careless sinner or comfort a wounded conscience, to establish important truth or refute dangerous error: and we should select our subjects, and handle them with a view to this intention; otherwise we may be derided for speaking impertinently, when we have advanced doctrines, which, in other circumstances, would be worthy of great regard.—But disputants are in great danger of aiming at victory more than improvement: this produces mutual contempt and reciprocal boastings and revilings; and what seems to one party pregnant with instruction, decisive, and “fully declaring the thing as it is,” is often treated with ridicule by the other. It is well, however, when all parties agree to celebrate the praises of the LORD, and to extol his works: yet the effusions of passion, or ostentation, may be mistaken for the dictates of those holy affections, which come from the Spirit of God.—But wherever we turn our eyes, we may perceive the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of God. The earth and its wonderful revolutions and productions; the ocean under the divine controul, with all its monstrous and numerous inhabitants; the operations of nature, in the formation of the rains and dews; the dispensations of Providence, in governing the haughty tyrants of the earth, and in restraining the rage of Satan; the effects of God’s indignation, in earthquakes, hurricanes, and storms; and his authority over heaven, earth, and hell:—these are indeed a part of his wonderful works, but infinitely more is hidden from our view; nor could we hear, understand, or support, the thunder of his power, or the terrors of his law. (*Notes, Ex. xx. 18—25. Heb. xii. 18—21.*)—But in redemption all the other wonderful works of God are eclipsed: hither we may draw near, and hear of his glory without dismay; we may come and taste of his grace, and learn to love him and walk with delight in his ways: here we may contemplate the divine character to advantage; and adore the depths which we cannot comprehend, with the joyful expectation of at length “seeing him as he is,” and being for ever like him in purity and felicity.

may be rendered *giants*, or *monsters*. Enormous creatures are produced under the waters, among the numberless inhabitants of the deep, by the mighty power of God. Neither the bodies, which all over the earth are laid in the grave, nor the departed souls of men in their separate state, are concealed from his all-seeing eye; and even the place of punishment allotted to the wicked is under his inspection: the heavens are stretched out by him over the vast expanse of this *northern hemisphere*; and the earth is so wonderfully suspended in the pure space, that it needs no support: for this seems to have been known to some persons at this early period. Immense quantities of water are treasured up in the atmosphere; and are so confined in the clouds, as not to rush down impetuously, but gradually, as it is necessary for watering the earth. The throne of God in the heavens is hid by interposing clouds, being too dazzling for frail mortals to behold. He confines the raging ocean within its appointed bounds: nor will it ever break forth to cover the earth, while day and night endure. The mountains, (which appear as “the pillars of heaven,”) yea the heavens themselves, are astonished and tremble, when the Lord speaks in his wrath. He powerfully raises such storms in the ocean, as *divide it into ridges of mountains*; and he knows how to abase the proudest and stoutest of his enemies.—Some think that the *dividing* of the Red Sea, and the destruction of *Egypt*, or *Rahab*, (so the word is,) are here alluded to: but as there is no other reference to those events, as this is ambiguous, and as probably Job lived before that time; it probably refers to the general operations of the power of God.—Finally, by his creating Spirit, he has adorned the heavens with glorious luminaries, and replenished the worlds above with holy angels: and every formidable monster on the earth, and in the waters, as dreadful serpents, crocodiles, and whales, are his workmanship, and under his controul. Yea, the devil, who is subtle and poisonous, and of whom the serpent is the constant emblem, was originally the creature of God, and is still absolutely under his power. (*Notes, Gen. iii. 1. Is. xxvii. 1. Rev. xii. 7—12.*)

V. 14. Job here declared his subject to be inexhaustible. Men might discourse long on such things; yet a very little part of the works of God had come to their knowledge. And should God himself speak of his own power, in a manner becoming the subject; it must be in a voice like thunder, which, instead of instructing, would confound and dismay sinful man. (*Note, xxxviii. 1.*)

MOREOVER ^a Job ^{*} continued his parable, and said,
 2 *As* ^b God liveth, *who* hath ^c taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, *who* hath [†] vexed my soul;
 3 All the while my breath *is* in me, and ^{*} the spirit of God *is* in my nostrils;
 4 My ^d lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.
 5 God forbid that I should ^e justify you: till I die ^f I will not remove my integrity from me.
 6 My righteousness ^g I hold fast, and will not let it go: ^h my heart shall not reproach *me* ⁱ so long as I live.
 7 ¶ Let ^j mine enemy be as the wicked, and he that riseth up against me as the unrighteous.
 8 For ^k what *is* the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soul?
 9 Will ^l God hear ^m his cry when trouble cometh upon him?
 10 Will he ⁿ delight himself in the Almighty? ^o will he always call upon God?
 11 ¶ I will ^p teach you ^q by the hand of God: ^r that which is with the Almighty will I not conceal.
 12 Behold, all ^s ye yourselves have seen *it*; why then are ye thus ^t altogether vain?
 13 This *is* ^u the portion of a wicked man with God, and ^v the heritage of oppressors, *which* they shall receive of the Almighty.
 14 If his ^w children be multiplied, *it is* for the sword; and ^x his offspring shall not be satisfied with bread.
 15 Those ^y that remain of him shall

^a Num. xxii. 7. xxiv. 3. 15. Ps. xlix. 4. lxxviii. 2. Prov. xxvi. 7.
^b Heb. added to take up.
^c Num. xiv. 21. Ruth iii. 13. 1 Sam. xiv. 39. 45. xx. 21. xxv. 28. 34. 2 Sam. ii. 27. 1 Kings xvii. 1. xviii. 15. Jer. iv. 2. v. 2. xii. 16. Ez. xxxiii. 11.
^d x. 3. xxxiv. 5. 16. xl. 27.
^e Heb. made my soul bitter. Ruth i. 20. 21. 2 Kings iv. 27.
^f That is, the breath which God gave him. Gen. ii. 7. Is. vi. 22. Acts xvii. 25.
^g xiii. 7. xxxiv. 6. John viii. 55. 2 Cor. xi. 10.
^h xxxii. 3. xlii. 7. Deut. xxv. 1. Prov. xvii. 15. Gal. ii. 11.
ⁱ ii. 9. xiii. 15. xxix. 34. 2 Cor. i. 12.
^j ii. 3. Ps. xviii. 20—23. Prov. iv. 13.
^k Acts xxiv. 16. 2 Cor. xii. 11. 1 John iii. 20. 21. § Heb. from my days. i 1 Sam. xxv. 26. 2 Sam. xviii. 32. Dan. iv. 19. k xi. 20. xiii. 16. xv. 34. xx. 5. xxxi. 3. Is. xxxiii. 14, 15. Matt. xvi. 26. xxxiii. 14. Mark viii. 36, 37. Luke ix. 25. xii. 20, 21. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Jam. v. 1—3.

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 15 Those ^y that remain of him shall

^x xxi. 11, 12. Deut. xxviii. 32. 41. 2 Kings x. 6—10. Esth. v. 11. ix. 5—10. Ps. cix. 13. Hos. ix. 13, 14. Luke xxiii. 29. y 1 Sam. ii. 5. z 1 Kings xiv. 10, 11. xvi. 3, 4. xxi. 21—24.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 1. Perhaps Job had paused, to hear whether Zophar or his other friends would rejoin. But either they were unable to answer him, or they despaired of convincing him: so that at length they suffered him to speak without interruption; and he proceeded in a grave and instructive manner, and as one fully satisfied that he had truth on his side.

V. 2—6. Job solemnly protested, that, as sure as God lived, he had spoken and would speak the truth. But he was far from being impressed with due reverence, when he spoke of God, as “taking away his judgment, and vexing his soul.” He meant that God, having inflicted on him the heaviest calamities, left him exposed to the unjust charge of hypocrisy, and delayed to vindicate his character, which exceedingly embittered his soul. His language, however, was very exceptionable, and Elihu justly rebuked him for it. (Note, xxxiv. 5—9.) Job expected soon to be deprived of the *spirit*, or *breath*, which God had given him; and he most solemnly protested that, to the last, he would not speak falsehood, either in condemning or in excusing himself: he would by no means justify the censures of his accusers, by allowing himself to be a hypocrite; nor would he give up his integrity, or the confidence and comfort of it: his heart should not reproach him with bearing false witness against himself, or for any allowed wickedness; for this conscious integrity, and his hope in God as to another world, were all that he now had to support him. (Notes, 2 Sam. xxii. 21—28. Acts xxiv. 10—21. 2 Cor. i. 12—14. 1 John iii. 18—24.)

V. 7—10. It had been supposed, that Job counted the wicked happy, because he contended that they were *sometimes* prosperous; but he declared, that he could not devise a worse wish for his greatest enemy, who rose up to ruin

his character, seize on his property, reduce him to slavery, or murder him, than that he might have his lot with wicked men. Indeed, those who hypocritically professed to be religious, (as his friends imagined he had done,) might perhaps thus obtain many temporal advantages, and retain them during life: but what would this avail them, when God required their souls? (Note, Luke xii. 15—21.) Would he, in that or other seasons of anguish and trouble, hear the cries of those who had been dissemblers all their lives? As they had no delight in the favour and service of the Almighty, they would not call upon him at all times. In *publick*, “to be seen of men,” they would make long prayers, but not in *secret*: in distress perhaps they would cry for ease; but, being relieved, they would cease to pray. Their best was but a pang of devotion of no continuance; and therefore God would at last reject them, as workers of iniquity.

V. 11, 12. By the powerful teaching of God, Job purposed to explain this subject to his friends; nor would he conceal any thing, which he looked upon as a part of the truth. He thought even they must acknowledge, that the wicked sometimes prosper, even to the end of life, of which they had all seen many instances. Why then did they answer so vainly? Did they take a pleasure in misinterpreting, contradicting, and condemning his discourse?

V. 13—23. Job may be thought in these verses to have come over to the opinion of his opponents: but in fact he conceded all which he could, to obviate misconception, and to establish his own conclusions. He allowed that wicked tyrants and oppressors were often visited with heavy judgments, on themselves or their families, so that these might be called “their portion from God;” yet not so constantly and uniformly, as to be a rule of judgment for deciding on men’s characters: this he had undeniably disproved, and it was all that he contended against. Their

a Ps. lxxviii. 64. be buried in death: and ^ahis widows
Jer. xxii. 18. shall not weep.

b xxii. 24, 25. 16 Though he ^bheap up silver as
1 Kings x. 27. the dust, and ^cprepare raiment as the
Hab ii. 6. Zech. ix. 3. clay;

c Matt. vi. 19. 17 He may prepare *it*, ^dbut the just
Jam. v. 2. shall put *it* on, and the innocent shall
d Prov. xiii. 22. divide the silver.
xxviii. 8 Ec. ii. 26.

e viii. 14, 15. Is. li. 8. 18 He buildeth his house ^eas a
f Is. i. 8 xxxviii. 12. Lam. ii. 6. moth, and ^fas a booth *that* the keeper
g xiv. 13—15. xxi. 23—26. 30. xxx. 23. maketh.

h Gen. xlix. 10. 19 The rich man ^gshall lie down,
Jer. vii. 2. Matt. iii. 12. xxiii. 37. but he shall not be ^hgathered: ⁱhe
i xx. 7—9. Ps. lviii. 9. lxxiii. 19, 20. openeth his eyes, and ^khe *is* not.

k viii. 22. xiv. 10. 12. xxiv. 24. Marg. 20 ⁱTerrors take hold on him as
l xv. 21. xviii. 11. waters; ^ma tempest stealeth him away
xxii. 16. Ps. xviii. 4. xlii. 7. lxix. 14, 15. Jon. ii. 3. in the night.

m xx. 23. xxi. 18. 21 The ⁿeast wind carrieth him away,
Ex. xii. 29. 2 Kings xix. 35. Dan. v. 30.
n Jer. xviii. 17. Hos. xiii. 15.

numerous and prosperous families were often strangely impoverished and destroyed, while none were left to bury them, or weep over them; or they were hurried to the grave, and forgotten because abhorred. They often laboured to get estates, which eventually came into the possession of better men, who did much good with them. (Notes, Esth. viii. 1, 2. Prov. xiii. 22. xxviii. 8.) The establishment of their families, which they had diligently promoted, was destroyed, as a moth is shaken out of a garment; or it was removed as a tent, which was fixed for a temporary shelter to those, who guarded the vineyards or gardens: and if they escaped such calamities, they soon lay down in death; and of all their riches, had not so much as the vain distinction, of being gathered to their fathers by an honourable funeral: nor were they gathered among the righteous; but opened their eyes in hell, far from all their treasures and employments. The expectation of this doom overwhelmed them with terrors as an inundation, and unexpected calamities swept them away, as men are plundered or murdered in the night. In short, the wrath of God, like a furious tempest, hurled them out of their places on earth, and cast misery upon them, and did not spare: while they found it impossible to escape his dreaded and deserved vengeance; and those, whom they had oppressed, rejoiced at their death and detested their memory.—The chief difference between this passage, and the discourses of Job's friends on the same subject, is this:—they spoke of the misery of wicked men before and at their death, as uniformly proportioned to their crimes: Job intimated that it might be so; but if not, the consequence of their death would assuredly be dreadful.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We may safely make our appeal to God, when we are conscious of integrity before him, and are fairly called to it: but we are so apt to mix corrupt passions with our best services, to mistake delays for denials, and corrections for vexations, and to speak irreverently or impatiently when afflicted; that, without continual applications of the blood of sprinkling, we cannot possibly have any well grounded confidence before God.—As we ought not, without scrip-

and he departeth: and as ^aa storm
hurleth him out of his place.

22 For ^pGod shall cast upon him,
and ^qnot spare: ^rhe would fain flee
out of his hand.

23 Men shall ^sclap their hands at
him, and shall ^thiss him out of his
place.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Job shews that man is industrious and ingenious, in searching out the treasures hid in the earth, 1—11. But the more valuable treasure, of the knowledge of God, lies beyond his reach, 12—22. God alone comprehends it; and man's wisdom is to fear God, and depart from evil, 23—28.

SURELY there is a ^uvein for ^vthe
silver, and a place for gold ^wwhere they
fine *it*.

tural evidence, to conclude that we are in the way of salvation, so we should not be induced to condemn ourselves as hypocrites, if conscious that we trust in his mercy, and aim to do his will; nor should we justify those who censoriously condemn their brethren. A good conscience on evangelical principles, and a watchful opposition to sin, will prevent our own hearts from reproaching us, and inspire confidence in God, in the midst of afflictions and calumnies, and in the hour of death: and this we should hold fast as long as we live.—No greater misery can be imprecated, than the doom of the most prosperous sinner; no more dreadful case imagined, than that of the successful, specious hypocrite. He may indeed call on God, when frightened or distressed; but he will soon desist in weariness or despondency, and seek some other relief. But the humble penitent will knock at mercy's door, till it is opened, and not be induced by any delay to depart without a blessing; and he who delights in God, will *always* call upon him, in adversity and prosperity, in life and death.—If we would teach others, we must depend on the help of the Almighty, and not conceal his truth: and if we would convince the erroneous, we must guard against misconstructions, and carefully shew, in how many things we are agreed. In this, at least, all good men are of one judgment: that the wicked *may* be, and often are, grievously afflicted upon earth with outward calamities; that they *must* be subject to inward terrors and vexations; and that, even if they prosper till death, and die in outward peace, they will then be driven from riches, pleasures, and honourable stations, into eternal poverty, misery, and contempt, by the wrath of God, like a furious storm hurling them into destruction. In vain will they seek to flee out of his hand, while “he shall cast upon them, and not spare,” the punishments justly due to their crimes. “What, then, is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? And what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1—11. Job had maintained, that the dispensations of Providence were not regulated upon

c Gen. iv. 22. 2 *Iron is taken out of the *earth,
Num. xxxi. 22. and brass is molten out of the stone.
Deut. viii. 9.
1 Chr. xxii. 14.

* Or, dust. 3 He setteth an end to darkness,
and d searcheth out all perfection: e the
stones of darkness, and the shadow of
death.

4 The flood breaketh out from the
inhabitant; even the waters forgotten
of the foot: they are dried up, they are
gone away from men.

5 As for the earth, f out of it cometh
bread: and under it is turned up as it
were g fire.

6 The stones of it are the place
of h sapphires: and it hath i dust of
gold.

7 There is i a path which no fowl
knoweth, and which the vulture's eye
hath not seen:

8 The lion's whelps have not trodden
it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.

9 He putteth forth his hand upon
the j rock; k he overturneth the moun-
tains by the roots.

10 He cutteth out rivers among the
rocks; and his eye seeth l every pre-
cious thing.

11 He l bindeth the floods from
' overflowing; m and the thing that is
hid bringeth he forth to light.

12 But n where shall wisdom be
found? and where is the place of un-
derstanding?

13 Man o knoweth not the price
thereof; neither is it found p in the
land of the living.

14 The q depth saith, It is not in
me: and the sea saith, It is not with
me.

15 r It cannot be gotten for gold, s
neither shall silver be weighed for the
price thereof.

16 It cannot be valued with t the
gold of Ophir, with the precious u onyx,
or the sapphire.

17 The gold and the v crystal can-
not equal it: and the exchange of it
shall not be for w jewels of fine gold.

18 No mention shall be made of x
coral, or of y pearls: for the price of
wisdom is above z rubies.

19 The aa topaz of Ethiopia shall not
equal it, neither shall it be valued with
pure gold.

Is. xxxvii. 25.
xliv. 27.
§ Heb. weeping.
m Is. xlv. 2, 3.
1 Cor. iv. 5.

n 20. 28. 1 Kings
iii. 9. Ps. li. 6.
Prov. ii. 4-6.
xxviii. 1. Ec. vii.
23-25. 1 Cor. i.
19, 20. Col. ii. 3.
Jam. i. 5. 17.
o 15-19. Ps. xix.
10. cxix. 72.
Prov. iii. 14, 15.
viii. 11, 18, 19.
xvi. 16. xxiii. 23.
Ec. viii. 16, 17.
p 21, 22. Ps. lxxv. 5.
Is. xxxviii. 11.
liii. 8.
q Rom. xi. 33, 34.

Heb. Fine gold
shall not be
given for it. 18.

r 1 Chr. xxix. 4.
Ps. xlv. 9. Is.
xlii. 12.
s Ex. xxxviii. 20.
Ez. xxxviii. 13.

t Ez. i. 22. Rev. iv.
6. xxi. 11. xxii.
1.

* Or, vessels.

† Or, Ramoth. Ez.
xxvii. 16.

u Matt. vii. 6. xlii.
45, 46. 1 Tim. ii.
9. Rev. xvii. 4.

xviii. 12. xxi. 21.
Prov. iii. 15.

xxxi. 10. Lam.
iv. 7.
y Ex. xxxix. 10.
Rev. xxi. 20.

such principles as his friends contended for; but by a higher and incomprehensible wisdom: and to illustrate and confirm this, he here shewed, that the sagacity of men was chiefly competent for *natural things*, and employed in them; it could not therefore be supposed they were acquainted with the deep counsels of God. The all-wise Creator has treasured up the metals in the earth; but man's necessity, convenience, or avarice, prompts him to search for them. There he finds the ores of gold, silver, iron, and brass, mixed with other substances, and resembling stones: and he discovers ways of separating and refining them by fire. With their lamps, the miners, "put an end to the "darkness" of the subterraneous caverns, and search out all the valuable treasures contained in them; even those "stones of darkness," which are situated in such perilous and unwholesome places, as may be called "the shadow of "death." Here "floods break out upon the inhabitants" of these dreary regions; being those waters, which had sunk into the earth, from the *foot of man*, and formed subterraneous springs and streams: and the miners are forced, with great labour and danger, to make new channels, that the waters may run away from them. As, by the labour of man, corn and other things suited for his food grow upon the surface of the earth: so precious stones, sparkling like fire; or inflammable substances, as brimstone or coals, are dug out of it. Among the *stones* of the earth are *sapphires*, as well as the ore of gold. In pursuit of these treasures men travel under-ground, by a road which is unknown to the swiftest and most quick-sighted animals. By their persevering labour and contrivance, they undermine and

overturn rocks and *mountains*; they cut *rivers* and form banks under ground; while they seek out, and bring forth, every *hidden valuable treasure* there repositied.—This book is beyond all reasonable doubt, one of the most ancient in the world; yet the art of mining, and refining metals, and the use of precious stones, are spoken of as things well known in the east, where Job and his friends dwelt. But very many ages after, populous nations have been found, which were little acquainted with these things: the iron especially, (which is in fact the most *useful* of all metals,) seems to have been little known, or employed among the Greeks, in the very early ages of that nation; and it was totally unknown in America, when that continent was first discovered. So that the most ancient times appear to have been far more civilized, and acquainted with things useful, than subsequent ages: and barbarous ignorance seems to have prevailed gradually; as the knowledge possessed by the antediluvians, and doubtless communicated by Noah and his sons, was forgotten among their posterity. The Bible by no means favours the general notion, that the first ages of the world were the most rude and savage; nay, indeed, the accounts there given are totally inconsistent with it.

V. 12—19. Job here maintained, that "wisdom," (or the knowledge of God, and his works and ways, which led to a prudent and holy practice, and might enable men to unravel the mysteries of Providence,) was far more difficult to be found, than the subterraneous treasures before spoken of. Indeed, men in general knew neither where it might be obtained, nor its inestimable value. It was not to be

- 20 ^a Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?
- 21 Seeing it is ^a hid from the eyes of all living, and kept close ^b from the fowls of the ^a air.
- 22 ^c Destruction and death say, We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.
- 23 ^d God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.
- 24 For ^e he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven;
- ^a See on 12. Prov. ii. 6. Ec. vii. 23, 24. 1 Cor. ii. 6—15.
- ^b Ps. xlix. 3, 4. Matt. xi. 25. xlii. 17, 35. 1 Cor. ii. 7—10. Col. ii. 3.
- ^c Or, heaven.
- ^d 14. Ps. lxxxviii. 10—12.
- ^e Ps. xix. 7. cxlvii. 5. Prov. viii. 14. Matt. xi. 27. Luke x. 21, 22. Acts xv. 18. Rom. xi. 33. 1 Cor. i. 30. Jude 25.
- ^f 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Prov. xv. 3. Zech. iv. 10. Rev. v. 6.

- 25 To make ^f the weight for the winds; and he weigheth the waters by measure.
- 26 When ^g he made a decree for the rain, and ^h a way for the lightning of the thunder:
- 27 Then did he see it, and [†] declare it; ⁱ he prepared it, yea, and searched it out.
- 28 And ^k unto man he said, Behold, ^l the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and ^m to depart from evil is understanding.
- ^f Ps. cxxxv. 7. Is. xl. 12.
- ^g xxxvi. 26, 27. xxxviii. 25. Ps. cxlviii. 8. Jer. xiv. 22. Am. iv. 7. Zech. x. 1.
- ^h xxxvii. 3—5. Ps. xxix. 3—10.
- [†] Or, number it.
- ⁱ Ps. xix. 1. Prov. viii. 22—29.
- ^k Deut. xxix. 29. Prov. viii. 4, 5. 32—36.
- ^l Deut. iv. 6. Ps. cxi. 10. Prov. i. 7. ix. 10. Ec. xii. 13. Jam. iii. 13—17.
- ^m Ps. xxxiv. 14. Prov. v. 7. xlii. 14. xvi. 6. 17. Is. i. 16. 2 Tim. ii. 19. 1 Pet. iii. 11.

met with among the inhabitants of the earth, except as it came down from above. (Notes, Prov. ii. 1—7. Jam. i. 5—8. 16—18. iii. 13—18.) It could not be discovered, either by digging into the bowels of the earth, or diving into the bottom of the sea, or sailing to all parts of the world. By these means indeed, gold, silver, and all kinds of precious stones might be procured; but none of them, nor all of them together, could purchase wisdom.—Several different words are used in the original for *gold*; which are supposed to denote, either the place from which it came, the manner in which it had been purified, or the form in which it was offered to sale, whether wrought or unwrought. The words also, rendered “crystal,” “onyx,” “sapphire,” &c. are differently interpreted.

V. 20—22. As no wealth could purchase wisdom, so no creature could discover it. It was hid from the eyes of all living. Men of the greatest talents, who soared above the rest of mankind, as the fowls of the air above other creatures, could not, by all their speculations and discoveries, acquire wisdom. “Destruction and death,” indeed, brought reports of it: and if men deeply thought on these solemn subjects, they might understand something of the reasons, for which the wicked were permitted to prosper; and the event would at length clear up difficulties, and effectually shew what was man’s wisdom. But previous and more particular instruction was necessary to make men truly wise.—‘The grave is the only place where we may learn something of it.’ Bp. Patrick.—Surely nothing can be learned in the grave; and hell rather than the grave must be meant by the word (אֲבִיּוֹן) translated “destruction.” (Note, Rev. ix. 11.)

V. 23—28. All the preceding observations and enquiries were evidently intended as introductory to these closing instructions; in which Job shewed, that God alone was the Source and Giver of wisdom. He knew where it was laid up, and the way in which it might be found. He managed the whole creation in perfect wisdom; determining the force and direction of every wind, and the quantity of water to be formed into rains and dews; regulating the course of the clouds, and directing the thunder and lightning. At the creation, he had his whole plan before him, and declared unto man, as much as was good for him to know: and he had prepared the whole of his intended operations, as accurately, as if they had been searched out by intense study.—This implied, that as men could neither alter nor comprehend these works of God; they were

equally unable to discover the methods of his providence. God had from the beginning plainly declared to man, that his wisdom consisted not in the knowledge of the secrets of nature, or of the divine government, but in “fearing the LORD and departing from evil.” (Notes, Gen. xxii. 11, 12. Deut. xxix. 29. Ec. xii. 11—14.)—Thus Job intimated to the disputants, that they might shew their wisdom much more, by a conscientious performance of their own duty, than by presumptuously intruding into the secret reasons of the divine dispensations; or rashly condemning their afflicted friend as a hypocrite.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—11.

The riches of this world are sought with unwearied labour and extreme danger: the faculties of the soul and the vigour of the body are alike devoted to the pursuit; and, from age to age, men sacrifice their ease, ruin their health, and venture their lives, to acquire them! Indeed, they are good in themselves, and for the uses to which they were appointed: and the bountiful kindness of the Creator appears, in covering the surface, and storing the bowels, of the earth with so many useful productions: nor should the ingenuity or industry which men employ about them be condemned, except as disproportionate. (Note, Gen. i. 20—25.) Neither silver nor gold, but the love of them, “is the root of all evil:” and the avarice, pride, and luxury of the human heart, not the creatures which God hath made for our use, ought to bear the whole blame of the mischiefs, to which they merely give occasion. It is also observable, that whilst God gives us all these things, he gives them in the way of industry; the productions of nature cannot be prepared for use, without enduring hardship for them, and often venturing into perilous situations; and, in like manner, whilst wisdom and grace are freely bestowed, we must labour and deny ourselves, and face dangers and enemies, if we would appropriate them. But did we understand the infinite value of these gifts, and our urgent want of them, we should think every hardship and sacrifice comparatively small. All earthly treasures are insufficient and precarious: they cannot give peace of conscience, health, or contentment: they cannot prolong life, or abate the fear of death, or purchase exemption from future punishment: they must be left soon, and for ever, and an account must be given to God of the use which we have made of them. But true wisdom and

CHAP. XXIX.

Job regrets the loss of his comforts, and of the respect which had been shewn him, 1—11. He declares the good use which he had made of his authority, 12—17; and the grounds on which he had hoped

* Heb. *added to take up*. xxvii. 1.
a i. 1—5. vii. 3.
b i. 10. Ps. xxxvii. 28. Jude 1.
c xviii. 6. xxi. 17. Ps. xviii. 28. Prov. xxiv. 20.
† Or, *lamp*. Prov. xiii. 9. xx. 20.
d xxii. 28. Ps. iv. 6. xxvii. 1. lxxxiv. 11. Is. ii. 4. John viii. 12. xii. 46. Eph. v. 8. 14.
e i. 10. xv. 8. Ps. xxv. 14. xxvii. 5. xci. 1. Prov. iii. 32. Col. iii. 3. xxiii. 3. 8—10. Deut. xxxiii. 27—29. Josh. i. 9. Judg. vi. 12. 13. Ps. xxx. 7. xliii. 2. xlv. 8, 9. Cant. ii. 4. iii. 1, 2. Jer. xiv. 8. Matt. ix. 15.

MOREOVER, Job * continued his parable, and said,

2 Oh, that I were ^a as in months past, as in the days when ^b God preserved me;

3 When ^c his [†] candle shined upon my head, and when ^d by his light I walked through darkness;

4 As I was in the days of my youth, when ^e the secret of God was upon my tabernacle;

5 When ^f the Almighty was yet with

me, when ^g my children were about me;

6 When ^h I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured ⁱ me out rivers of oil;

7 When I went out ^j to the gate through the city, when I prepared my seat in the street!

8 The ^k young men saw me, and hid themselves: and ^l the aged arose, and stood up.

9 The princes ^m refrained talking, and ⁿ laid their hand on their mouth.

10 The ^o nobles held their peace, and ^p their tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth.

11 When ^q the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me.

g i. 2—5. xlii. 13—16. Ps. cxxvii. 3—5. cxxviii. 3. Prov. xvii. 6.
h xx. 17. Gen. xlix. 11. Deut. xxxii. 13. xxxiii. 24. Ps. lxxxii. 16.
† Heb. *with me*.
i Deut. xvi. 18. xxi. 19. Ruth iv. 1, 2. 11. Zech. viii. 16.
j Deut. xvi. 18. xxi. 19. Ruth iv. 1, 2. 11. Zech. viii. 16.
k Lev. xix. 32. Prov. xvi. 31. xx. 8. Rom. xiii. 3, 4. Tit. iii. 1. 1 Pet. v. 5.
l Rom. xiii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 17.
m iv. 2. vii. 11. Prov. x. 19. Jam. i. 19.
n xxi. 5. xl. 4. Judg. xviii. 19. Prov. xxx. 32.
o Heb. *voice of the nobles was hid*.
p Ps. cxxxvii. 6. Ez. iii. 26.
q xxxi. 20. Prov. xxix. 2. Luke xi. 27.

grace confer peace, and joy, and lively hope; they deprive death of his sting, and ensure an eternal inheritance. Who then can estimate their value? All the treasures of the world and the whole world itself, are worthless in the comparison: yet alas! every gilded bauble is preferred to them! No labour is deemed too great to employ about carnal things; yet every exertion is too much about our spiritual and eternal interests! "Go then to the *miner*, thou slug-gard, consider his ways, and be wise:" imitate his ingenuity, application, and intrepidity, in the affairs of thy soul: seek salvation, as he does the gold and silver ore, and thou shalt be enriched for ever. (*P. O. Prov. ii. 1—9.*)

V. 12—28.

Where is true wisdom to be found? In the heart of the earth? In the depth of the sea? Or in the schools of the learned? By no means: it is "the LORD that giveth wisdom." The treasures of it are "hid in Christ," revealed by the word of truth, and received by faith, through the operation of the Holy Spirit. There the Lord has prepared and declared it: there we may search for it and discover it. But it does not consist, in explaining all mysteries, settling all controversies, or solving all difficulties in the phenomena of nature, or in the divine government. It is not intended to feed our pride and vanity, to amuse our curiosity, or to embolden our presumption; but to teach us where and what we are, and whither we are going; to shew us our wants, and where they may be supplied. It instructs and encourages us sinners to "fear the LORD, and to depart from evil," in the exercise of repentance and faith: and it admonishes us in faith and hope, and by patient continuance in well doing, to wait for that world, to which death will soon convey us, for fuller light respecting all the ways and works of God. Our business here is, to believe, adore, love, and obey; not to comprehend and dispute. We receive the benefit of the rain, and avail ourselves of the winds and tides, and seek shelter from the storm, whether we understand the theory of them or not. Thus let us flee from the wrath to come, take refuge in the hope of the gospel, receive the

comforts of life thankfully, and bear its burdens cheerfully, without being desirous of knowing those "secret things" which belong to the LORD our God." The government of the world is his, and he neither needs nor asks our advice: but "to man he saith, The fear of the LORD, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIX. V. 1—6. It is probable, that when Job had finished his commendation of wisdom, he paused, to hear whether his friends had any thing to add: but as they were silent, he proceeded to contrast his former prosperity, and his honourable conduct as a magistrate, with his present abject misery; in order to excite their compassion, and to excuse his complaints, and perhaps to engage their more fixed attention to the other parts of his discourse. Indeed he could not but ardently desire that matters were so with him at the present, as formerly they had been. Then God preserved his health, his property, his family, his honour, and his peace, having "made a hedge about him." Providence smiled upon him, and he enjoyed spiritual consolations: so that he lived happily, and walked securely, in this dark and wretched world. Thus he had been favoured early in life: the *secret wisdom* of God had been communicated to him, and his *secret blessing* had rested upon him and prospered his habitation: his soul had been refreshed with the *secret pleasures* of communion with God, before whom he had walked as his almighty Friend; (*Note, Ps. xxv. 14;*) whilst his children shared and doubled his enjoyments. His cattle, fed in rich pastures, afforded such plenty of milk and butter, that he could, had he pleased, have washed his steps in it: and his olive-yards, planted upon the rocky grounds, yielded such abundance, that it was as rivers of oil.—But he intimated that God had now withdrawn his protection, and the light of his consolations; excluded him from communion with him, and bereaved him of his wealth and children, his health and peace, and reputation.

V. 7—11. Job next expatiated on the *honour*, which had been rendered him. He had acquired great influence

q xxii. 5—9. Neh. v. 2—13. Ps. lxxxii. 12. lxxxii. 2—4. Prov. xxi. 13. xxiv. 11, 12. Jer. xxii. 16.
r Ex. xxii. 22—24. Deut. x. 18. Ps. lxxviii. 5. Jam. i. 27.
s Deut. xxiv. 13. Acts ix. 39—41. 2 Cor. ix. 12—14. 2 Tim. i. 16—18.
t xxxi. 19. Deut. xxvi. 5. Prov. xxxi. 6—9. Is. xxvii. 13.
u Deut. xvi. 11. Neh. viii. 10—12. Philem. 7.
x Ps. lxxvii. 4. Is. lxxv. 14.
y Ps. cxxxii. 9. Is. lix. 17. lxi. 10. Rom. xiii. 14. 2 Cor. vi. 7. Eph. vi. 14. 1 Thes. v. 8. Rev. xix. 8.
z Is. xxviii. 5. lxii. 3.
a Num. x. 31. Matt. xi. 5. 1 Cor. xii. 12, &c.
b xxxi. 18. Esth. ii. 7. Ps. lxxviii. 5. Eph. v. 1. Jam. i. 27.
c Ex. xviii. 26. Deut. xiii. 14. xvii. 8—10. 1 Kings iii. 16—28. Prov. xxv. 2. xxix. 7. d Ps. iii. 7. lviii. 6. Prov. xxx. 14. * Heb. jaw teeth, or, grinders. e 1 Sam. xvii. 35. Ps. cxxiv. 3. 6. † Heb. cast. f Ps. xxx. 6, 7. Jer. xxii. 23. xlix. 16. Obad. 4. Hab. ii. 9. g v. 26. xlii. 16, 17. Ps. xci. 16. h Gen. xxxii. 12. xli. 49.

12 Because ^a I delivered the poor that cried, and ^r the fatherless, and *him that had none to help him.*

13 ^r The blessing of him that was ^t ready to perish came upon me: and ^s I caused the widow's heart to ^u sing for joy.

14 ^t I put on righteousness, and it clothed me: my judgment *was* as a robe and ^u a diadem.

15 I was ^x eyes to the blind, and feet *was* I to the lame.

16 I *was* ^y a father to the poor: and ^z the cause *which* I knew not I searched out.

17 And ^a I brake the ^b jaws of the wicked, ^c and ^d plucked the spoil out of his teeth.

18 Then I said, ^e I shall die in my nest, and I shall ^f multiply *my* days ^g as the sand.

19 My ⁱ root *was* ^j spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch.

20 My ^k glory *was* ^l fresh in me, and ^m my bow ⁿ was ^o renewed in my hand.

21 Unto me *men* ^p gave ear, and waited and kept silence at my counsel.

22 ^q After my words they spake not again; and ^r my speech dropped upon them.

23 And they waited for me ^s as for the rain; and they opened their mouth wide *as* for ^t the latter rain.

24 *If* I laughed on them, ^u they believed *it* not; and ^v the light of my countenance they cast not down.

25 I ^w chose out their way, and sat chief, and ^x dwelt as a king in the army, as ^y one *that* comforteth the mourners.

wild beast is disabled when its "jaw-teeth are broken;" and he constrained them to make restitution, as when "the prey is plucked out of their mouths." (Notes, Ps. lxxxii. 2—4. Prov. xxxi. 8, 9.)

V. 18—25. Thus respected, useful, and conscientious, and considering the whole as coming from the favour of God, Job had hoped to live long in prosperity, and to die in peace and honour in a good old age: for he seemed like a tree which had struck deep root in a well watered soil, and was refreshed every night by the kindly dew. Heaven and earth seemed to favour him continually. (Note, Ps. xxx. 6—8.) He had done nothing to impair his reputation or influence, or to prevent their increase. His counsel was silently attended to, and his decisions were waited for with great expectation, and were refreshing as the seasonable rain. His smile was counted a very great favour: and if he relaxed from his usual gravity, and shewed himself more affable with the people, they did not abate in their respect, or undervalue his kindness. Still they allowed him to counsel and command in all their affairs, as a king, with uncontrouled authority, rules over his troops: yet, amidst all, he never lost sight of the beneficent employment of comforting the mourners.—Some read all the latter verses in the *present* tense. "My roots are, &c." as, Job's recollection of his inward thoughts, during his prosperous days, when anticipating the continuance of them, in which he had been so grievously disappointed.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

The Lord protects and prospers us as he pleases; and he confers on those who love him whatever can be beneficial to them. Yet riches and flourishing families, though a "candle of the LORD," may be soon and finally extinguished: they do but little towards illuminating our way through this dark world, and nothing towards cheering the

and authority, and was become chief ruler over the neighbouring tribes; probably through his reputation for wisdom and justice, as well as on account of his affluence. So that when he went through the city to the gate, where his throne for administering justice was prepared, the young men stood so much in awe of him, and so feared his reprehension for their irregularities, that they kept out of the way; the aged rose in respect of his character; and the nobles and princes were silent, as if bereft of speech, that they might attend to his arguments and decisions, and be instructed by them; and, indeed, all who saw and heard him applauded his impartial justice, and bare testimony to his wisdom and discretion.

V. 12—17. 'Because Job's adversaries did so much charge him with wickedness, he is compelled to render account of his life.' And as no one attempted to disprove his attestations, no doubt he spoke what was undeniably true: indeed God himself, at the close, as it were, attested the truth of it.—He could confidently protest, that it was his constant object to redress the grievances of the orphans and destitute, who demanded justice against their powerful oppressors: so that widows and other persons, who were about to be crushed, murdered, or starved, thanked him and prayed for him as their patron, with joyful hearts. He never appeared in publick, but with an evident determination to do justice: the equity of his conduct was to him the *robe*, or the *badge of his authority*, and he deemed it more his honour, than any *royal diadem*. By counselling the ignorant how to manage their affairs, he became as "eyes to the blind;" by supporting the helpless with his power and authority, he was as "feet to the lame:" he was the general guardian and father to all poor people; and neither spared pains and expense, nor feared opposition, in searching out their causes, and rescuing them from oppression. Thus he deprived rich oppressors of their power to do mischief, as effectually, as a

CHAP. XXX.

Job complains that he is sunk into extreme contempt, 1—14; that he suffers great anguish of soul and body, 15—19; that God deals rigorously with him, 20—24; that he, who had comforted others, now suffers without a comforter, 25—31.

^a xix. 13—19.
^{xxix.} 8—10.
2 Kings ii. 23
Is. iii. 5.
^c Heb. of fewer days than I.
^b Ps. xxxv. 15, 16.
lxix. 12. Mark
xiv. 65. xv. 17—
20. Luke xxiii.
14, 18, 19, 35,
36, 39. Acts
xvii. 5. Tit. i.
12.

BUT now ^a *they that are* * younger than I have me in derision, ^b whose fathers I would have disdained to have set with the dogs of my flock.

vale of death. But when the mind is enlightened by the Holy Spirit; when a man walks in the light of God's comforting presence, and enjoys the *secret* pleasure of communion with him; every outward comfort is doubled, every trouble is diminished, and he may pass cheerfully, by this light, through life and death to heaven. The sensible comfort, however, of this happy state is often withdrawn from those who have enjoyed it; and they regret the months and days which they have formerly known, and long for their return. (Note, Ps. xlii. 4, 5.) In general, this change arises from negligence and "grieving the Holy Spirit;" but sometimes it may be a trial of a man's faith and grace. Yet it is always right in such cases to examine ourselves, to enquire into the cause by fervent prayer, and to redouble diligence and watchfulness.—Many, however, who *profess* that they have walked in this heavenly light, complain that now it is not with them "as in months past," and rest satisfied with unavailing lamentations! Depending on past experience, and concluding their state safe, they put up at present with worldly comforts, and are as negligent as they are joyless. And others, who have *really* walked with God, finding their comforts decline, are tempted to think all their past experience a delusion, and to conclude that the Almighty has finally forsaken them. But for those comforts, which are indeed from God, the true believer can find no substitute in the whole creation: and, though they may be withdrawn, they shall never be extinguished, but shall be restored, and endure till lost in the blaze of heavenly glory.

V. 7—23.

Years, rank, and authority, if connected with eminent justice, wisdom, and piety, confer peculiar dignity and influence: they over-awe the careless and lawless; command the respect of inferiors and equals; and procure a deference even from superiors. When a man's judgment and integrity have thus obtained him an established reputation, his opinions are readily approved, and his measures adopted. Then it is peculiarly happy for him and others, if he is preserved humble, zealous for the honour of God, and ambitious only of doing good: if he value the blessing of the needy and afflicted, and the testimony of men's consciences to his equity and humanity, as his robe, his diadem, and his recompence: if he continue a stranger to fear, favour, and affection, to covetousness and self-indulgence; and resolutely act as the patron of the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the oppressed; desiring that their hearts may rejoice, and that their prayers for their benefactor may be united with many

2 Yea, whereto *might* the strength of their hands *profit* me, in whom old age was perished?

3 For want and famine *they were* [†] solitary; [‡] fleeing into the wilderness [†] in former time desolate and waste.

4 Who cut up mallows by the bushes, and juniper roots ^d for their meat.

5 They were ^e driven forth from among men, (they cried after them as after a thief;)

[†] Or, dark as the night. xxiv. 13—16.
^c xxiv. 5. Heb. xi. 38.
[‡] Heb. yesternight.
^d 2 Kings iv. 38, 39. Am. vii. 14. Luke xv. 16.
^e Gen. iv. 12—14. Ps. cix. 10. Dan. iv. 25, 32, 33.

thanksgivings unto God: if, by the use of his wealth, authority, and wisdom, he be as "eyes to the blind, and "feet to the lame;" a father to the poor, and a terror and restraint to wealthy oppressors, and spare no labour for the effecting these valuable purposes. Such persons are publick blessings, their protection is courted, and their friendship valued, by all good men; though their excellency be hated, and their power dreaded, by the tyrants whose jaws they break, and whom they spoil of their prey. They prevent much mischief, make many disconsolate mourners joyful, and are an ornament to religion. And they have the peculiar honour to resemble him, who hath "put on righteousness as a robe, and is clad with zeal "as a cloke;" who rescues enslaved sinners from the power of Satan, and breaks the jaws of that devourer; who, in a far nobler sense, "is eyes to the blind, and feet to the "lame, and a Father to the poor;" whose words are all in wisdom, truth, and love, and his favour more refreshing than the latter rain; whose smile is so great a blessing to the desponding soul that waited for it, that he can hardly believe his own experience, when the Saviour manifests his love; and he will adore and revere him still more and more for his unspeakable condescension. How many, who were ready to perish, are now blessing him! How many mourners has he comforted! But who can shew forth all his praises? May we trust his mercy, and copy his equity, truth, and love!—Let us not however flatter ourselves with the expectation of continued honour and prosperity in this world. In the midst of all we should think of dying ere long; and even before death, of being deprived of all our outward comforts; though there should be every appearance, that life and prosperity will be continued to us. Storms will succeed to calms, and calms to storms, in this changeable world; but in heaven will be uninterrupted and unchangeable felicity. Let us then look to our Captain and King: he has chosen out our way, and has been chief in sorrows, as well as in honours: and as he comforts his mourning followers; so he has shewn the whole army of his saints the way to victory and glory, through tribulation, sufferings, and death; and has said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny "himself, and take up his cross, and follow me;" and, "Where I am, there shall my servant be."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXX. V. 1—14. Here Job most pathetically contrasts his present condition, with his former honour and authority. Now the youths, who before had hid themselves lest they should be punished for their crimes, (Note, xxix.

^l Judg. vi. 2. ¹ Sam. xxii. 1, 2. ² Is. ii. 19. ³ Rev. vi. 15. ⁴ Heb. holes. **6** To dwell in the clefts of the valleys, in caves of the earth, and in the rocks.

^g vi. 5. ^{xi} 12. ^h Gen. xvi. 12. ² Kings viii. 18. ²⁷ 2 Chr. xxii. 3. ^{Jer. vii. 18.} ^{Mark vi. 24.} ⁱ Prov. i. 7. ^{22.} ^{xvi. 22.} [†] Heb. men of no name. ^k xl. 4. ^{Ps. xv. 4.} ^{Is. xxxii. 6.} ^l xvii. 6. ^{Ps. xxxv. 15.} ^{16.} ^{xliv. 14.} ^{lxix. 12.} ^{Lam. iii. 14.} ^{63.} ^m xix. 19. ^{xliv. 6.} ^{Ps. lxxxviii. 8.} ^{Zech. xi. 8.} ⁿ xix. 13. ^{14.} ^{Ps. lxxxviii. 8.} ^{Prov. xix. 7.} ^{Matt. xxvi. 56.} [†] Heb. withhold not spittle from. ^o Num. xii. 14. ^{Deut. xxv. 9.} ^{Is. i. 6.} ^{Matt. xxvi. 67.} ^{xxvii. 30.} ^p xii. 18. ^{21.} ² Sam. xvi. 5. ^{—8.} ^q Ps. xxxv. 21. ^{Matt. xxvi. 67.} ^{68.} ^{xxvii. 39—44.} ^{Jam. i. 26.} ^r xix. 18. ^{Is. iii. 5.} ^s xix. 12. ^t Ps. lxix. 26. ^{Zech. i. 15.} ^u xxii. 16. ^{Ps. xviii. 4.} ^{lxix. 14.} ^{15.} ^{Is. viii. 7.} ^{8.} **7** Among the bushes they brayed; under the nettles they were gathered together.

⁸ They were children of fools, yea, children of base men: they were viler than the earth.

⁹ And now am I their song, yea, I am their by-word.

¹⁰ They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face.

¹¹ Because he hath loosed my cord, and afflicted me, they have also let loose the bridle before me.

¹² Upon my right hand rise the youth: they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction.

¹³ They mar my path, they set forward my calamity, they have no helper.

¹⁴ They came upon me as a wide

breaking in of waters: in the desolation they rolled themselves upon me.

¹⁵ Terrors are turned upon me: they pursue my soul as the wind; and my welfare passeth away as a cloud.

¹⁶ And now my soul is poured out upon me; the days of affliction have taken hold upon me.

¹⁷ My bones are pierced in me in the night-season: and my sinews take no rest.

¹⁸ By the great force of my disease is my garment changed; it bindeth me about as the collar of my coat.

¹⁹ He hath cast me into the mire, and I am become like dust and ashes:

²⁰ I cry unto thee, and thou dost not hear me: I stand up, and thou regardest me not.

²¹ Thou art become cruel to me: with thy strong hand thou opposest thyself against me.

²² Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou causest me to ride upon it, and dissolvest my substance.

^x vi. 4. ^{vii. 14.} ^{ix. 27.} ^{28.} ^{x. 16.} ^{Ps. lxxxviii. 15.} [†] Heb. principal one. ^y Is. xlv. 22. ^{Hos. vi. 4.} ^{xiii. 3.} ^z Ps. xxii. 14. ^{xliv. 4.} ^{Is. liii. 12.} ^a Ps. xl. 12. ^b xxxiii. 19—21. ^{Ps. vi. 2—6.} ^{xxxviii. 2—8.} ^c vii. 4. ^{Ps. xxii. 13.} ^{Is. xxxviii. 13.} ^d ii. 7. ^{vii. 5.} ^{xix. 20.} ^{Ps. xxxviii. 5.} ^{Is. i. 5.} ^{6.} ^e ix. 31. ^{Ps. lxix. 1.} ^{2.} ^{Jer. xxxviii. 6.} ^f ii. 8. ^{xliv. 6.} ^{Gen. xviii. 27.} ^g xix. 7. ^{xxvii. 9.} ^{Ps. xxii. 2.} ^{lxxx. 4.} ^{5.} ^{Lam. iii. 8.} ^{44.} ^{Matt. xv. 23.} [†] Heb. turned to be. ^h vii. 20. ^{21.} ^{x. 14—17.} ^{xiii. 25—28.} ^{xvi. 9—14.} ^{xix. 6—9.} ^{Ps. lxxxvii. 7—9.} ^{Jer. xxx. 14.} [†] Heb. the strength of thy hand. ⁱ vi. 9. ^{xxiii. 6.} ^{Ps. lxxxix. 13.} ¹ Pet. v. 6. ^k xxi. 18. ^{Ps. i. 4.} ^{Is. xvii. 13.} ^{Jer. iv. 11.} ^{12.} ^{Ez. v. 2.} ^{Hos. iv. 19.} ^{xiii. 3.} ^{Ps. xviii. 10.} ^{civ. 3.} [†] Or, wisdom.

7—11,) treated him with the greatest contempt: nay the children of the most abject persons imaginable insulted him, whom he described as the vilest outcasts of society. These objects were so destitute of fidelity and honesty, so lazy and ignorant, that they were not capable of doing so much good as the dogs of his flock; and he would have disdained to employ them in the meanest services about his cattle. Their lives, wasted in wickedness, had left them debilitated and ignorant, debauched and infamous, in old age; and, being burdens and nuisances by their crimes, they were expelled from society in a most miserable manner. Incapable of obtaining an honest livelihood, and afraid of being punished for their past offences, they had fled into the most desolate parts of the wilderness; and there miserably subsisted upon roots and herbs not fitted to sustain the life of man. For they were driven away as thieves, and concealed themselves in dens and caves from the search of pursuers; or among the weeds and bushes, where they grew savage like the wild asses. Such worthless wretches, of whom Job's active magistracy had rid the country, returned with their families when he was reduced: and, though their ignorant and profligate parents had neglected to give their children any good instructions; yet they had learned to make songs and jests about Job, and to shew their contempt and abhorrence, by affecting to shun him as a loathsome object, or drawing near him to spit in his face. (Marg. Ref. m—o.) It may be supposed, that these were the expressions of their resentment for his former opposition to their villainy; and of their joy that his authority was terminated. Because the Lord had loosed his cord, by depriving him of power and affluence, they behaved with unbridled insolence, and attempted to

injure him by every means which they could devise. It is likely that they accused Job of oppression, because he had punished them for their crimes; and thus they endeavoured to "fortify against him the ways of their destruction," or to secure themselves from punishment in their abandoned courses. By these methods they marred, or vilified, his path, and helped forward his calamity, exciting his friends to treat him as a hypocrite: and "no helper unto them;" that is, they had no need of help from Job's former friends, being already sufficiently daring and ingenious in their malice. For they came upon him as a torrent of waters, which bursts the banks, and rolls on with rapid desolation. (Notes, 2 Sam. xxii. 5, 6. Ps. xxii. 4—8. lxix. 1—4. 10—12.)

V. 15—19. Job again complained of terrors, which doubtless arose, in great measure, from Satan's temptations. (Notes, vi. 1—4. vii. 13, 14. Ps. lxxxviii. 15—17.) These agitated and pursued his soul like a tempest, and drove all his comfort away as a cloud vanisheth: so that all his courage and resolution were destroyed, and his very soul poured out as if melted by the fire. (Marg. Ref. z.) For affliction had so seized upon him that he was unable to escape. His bones and sinews also were in such incessant anguish, that they seemed to be pierced with a sword, and he could have no rest. His sores defiled his garments, and so confined him that he could not move without extreme pain. He was as disgusting to the sight, through the calamity which God had inflicted, as if he had been rolled in the mire: yea, he was become like dust and ashes, before he was laid in the grave. (Notes, ii. 7, 8. xix. 5—22. Ps. xxxviii. 1—10.)

V. 20—24. It added greatly to Job's distress, that he

m xiv. 5. xxi. 33. Gen. iii. 19. 2 Sam. xiv. 14. Ec. viii. 8. ix. 5. xii. 5-7. Heb. ix. 27. * Heb. heap. n Judg. v. 31. Ps. xxxv. 25. Matt. xxvii. 39-44. o Ps. xxxv. 13. Jer. xiii. 17. xviii. 20. Luke xix. 41. John xi. 35. Rom. xii. 15. + Heb. hard of day. p xxxi. 16-21. Ps. xii. 1. Prov. xiv. 21. 31. xvii. 5. xix. 17. xxviii. 8. Is. lviii. 7, 8. Dan. iv. 27. 2 Cor. ix. 9. q iii. 25, 26. xxix. 18. Jer. viii. 15. xiv 19. xv. 18. Mic. i. 12. r xviii. 6. 18. xxiii. 17. Ps. xcvi. 11. Is. i. 10.

23 For I know *that* thou wilt bring me to death, and to ^m the house appointed for all living.

24 Howbeit he will not stretch out his hand to the ^{*}grave, though ⁿ they cry in his destruction.

25 ¶ Did not I weep for him that was [†] in trouble? ^p was *not* my soul grieved for the poor?

26 When I looked for good, then evil came *unto me*: and when I waited for ^rlight, there came darkness.

s Ps. xxii. 14. Jer. iv 19. xxxi. 20. Lam. i. 20. ii. 11. Ps. xxxviii. 6. xlii. 9. xliii. 2. Is. liii. 3, 4. Lam. iii. 1-3. u xvii. 14. Ps. cii. 6. Is. xlii. 21. 22. xxxviii. 14. Mic. i. 8. Mal. i. 3. † Or, ostriches. x Ps. cxix. 83. Lam. iii. 4. iv. 8. v. 10. y Ps. cii. 3. z Ps. cxxxvii. 1-4. Ec. iii. 4. Is. xxi. 4. xxii. 12. xxiv. 7-9. Lam. v. 15. Dan. vi. 18.

27 ^s My bowels boiled, and rested not: the days of affliction prevented me.

28 ^t I went mourning without the sun: I stood up, *and* I cried in the congregation.

29 I am ^u a brother to dragons, and a companion to ^v owls.

30 ^x My skin is black upon me, and ^y my bones are burned with heat.

31 ^z My harp also is *turned* to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.

could obtain no answer to his prayers; and though he stood up to appeal to God, respecting his injured character, he was disregarded. He therefore rashly concluded that the Lord was become rigorous to him, even to a degree of cruelty; and used his power expressly to oppose and distress him: so that he, as it were, lifted him up into the air, to be the sport of conflicting winds, and to be driven from one misery to another; and his whole body was dissolving with excessive heat and debility, as if by the fire of the divine indignation; nay, he thought he might be sure, that God intended to pursue him to the grave with these extreme miseries. (Notes, Ps. xxii. 14, 15.) But in that "house appointed for all living," he hoped to be at ease, and that the Lord would not stretch out his hand against him in, or beyond, the grave: though some would interpret his miserable death, as a token of his final destruction; and exult over him, upon the supposition that he was thus proved to be a wicked man: while others, by loud wailings, would perhaps deplore his deliverance from pain, as if it were destruction.

V. 25-31. These events were the more overwhelming to Job, because they were so contrary to his expectation. He was conscious, however, and could appeal to God, that he had always sympathized with the afflicted, and relieved the poor, and never oppressed them: and on this ground he had hoped for much comfort, at the very time when these dark and dreadful trials came upon him. This astonishing change so affected him, that he spent his time in mourning, as one immured from the light of the sun: nor could he help crying out in the bitterness of his soul, even in the midst of those who condemned him. He was no longer fit for the society of men; but he was driven into solitude, or caused to associate with noxious and ominous creatures, like dragons or owls, as if they were his relatives and his friends. His skin was become black by the effect of his boils; his bones were burned with a fever; and his joyful praises, which he used to accompany with the harp or timbrel, were turned into doleful lamentations.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-14.

All earthly honour, prosperity, and comfort are precarious: and 'they build too low, who build beneath the 'skies.' But if a contrast, so affecting as this narrative exhibits, may be drawn, between the summit of earthly felicity, and the depth of earthly misery; how inconceivable must be the distance between eternal life and eternal

punishment! And if the thoughts of former enjoyments greatly enhance the anguish of present sufferings; in what a wretched case will the wealthy, honoured, and self-indulgent sinner be, when it shall be said to him, "Remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst *thy* good things!" (Notes, Luke xvi. 22-26.)—The vicious and debauched, who live in sloth and riot by fraud and rapine, hate those who attempt to make them labour and live honestly, or punish them for their crimes.—A few individuals prosper by iniquity, and live in splendour; but multitudes are by their vices reduced to the most extreme misery. They forfeit their characters, as well as ruin their circumstances and constitutions; every one suspects them, and becomes averse to employ them; their lives are wasted in brutality, fraud, and extravagance; and for the peace of society, they must be confined, destroyed, or driven away, like ravenous beasts. In distant regions, or desolate places, they drag on a miserable existence, without the comforts, and often almost without the necessities of life. Their folly and their wickedness are alike great: their present condition and future prospects are both deplorable. A Christian, indeed, must not disdain nor despair of any fellow-creature, nor reproach men for their poverty, nor indulge resentment; and they who, through incapacity or the imbecility of old age, cannot work, have a right to be maintained by others: yet men may persevere in so base a conduct, that no wise man can employ, trust, or favour them; and whilst they continue in their vile practices, they are less entitled to regard, than the meanest of the inoffensive and useful brute creatures. There are numbers, who cannot, by any human wisdom or power, be preserved from present and future ruin: we may lament to see them dying with disease and in misery; but we cannot make them willing to be done good to: and in some scenes, it is equally surprising and afflicting to notice the multitudes which answer to this description. As, however, some of every sort may be rescued from ruin, it is *our* part to do what we can in the use of proper means; and to look to him, with whom all things are possible, for an effectual blessing.—But they, who are themselves base and foolish, train up families of children of the same character, inured to vice, and fitted to be the nuisance of society. So that, except some method be devised to prevent the rising generations, one after another, from being corrupted, no extensive reformation can take place; and alas! the sword of the magistrate will still find abundance of employment. These are they, who take the lead in reviling, insulting,

CHAP. XXXI.

Job solemnly, before God, protests, that he was not guilty of unchastity or dishonesty, 1—12; of unkindness to his servants, or to the poor, 13—22; of trusting in riches; of idolatry, revenge, neglect of hospitality, hypocrisy, or fear of man, 23—34. He ap-

peals to God, and challenges his accusers to prove their allegations, 35—40.

^a Gen. vi. 2. ² Sam. xi. 2—4. Ps. cxix. 37. Prov. iv. 25. xxiii. 31—33. Matt. v. 28, 29. ¹ John ii.

I MADE ^a a covenant with mine

and opposing the wise and pious reformer or the active magistrate: as much as they dare, and as soon as authority is at all relaxed, they give a loose to their insolence: and if such as have rebuked or chastised their crimes, fall into affliction; they shew their enmity by every kind of indignity. But, instead of regretting it, we should rejoice if we are despised, reviled, and hated, only by wicked men: and we should look “unto Jesus, who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself;” and against whom (as against Job,) the very objects were gathered together, to insult, mock, and spit upon him. (Notes, Is. l. 5, 6. liii. 2, 3. Matt. xxvi. 63—68. xxvii. 27—31. 39—44.) Considering who he was, and what we are, and how much lighter our sufferings are, than those which he endured; we may well be ashamed to complain of the insults and injuries which we experience.

V. 15—31.

When inward temptations unite with outward calamities, the soul often loses its firmness, is hurried on as in a tempest, and is filled with confusion. It then becomes difficult to speak, or complain, without seeming “to charge God foolishly,” as if he dealt too rigorously with us, and were become our *Enemy*. But woe be to those, who have him for an *Enemy*! They will not only be brought with others to the grave, but to the bottomless pit of destruction. Compared with this “perdition of ungodly men,” what are all outward, or even inward, *temporal* afflictions? If our whole bodies were filled with exquisite pain, and were rendered loathsome by disease; if we were shut up in a dungeon, driven from society, or thrown into the mire; if our friends were become cruel, and our enemies triumphant; if the Lord frowned, Satan tempted, and the world loaded us with infamy;—yet, while we retained a hope that death would terminate our sorrows, and bring us to a state of happiness, we might well mingle joy with our mourning, and thanksgiving with our lamentations. “No chastening, however, seemeth to be joyous, but grievous;” and unexpected afflictions are hardest to be endured. They will therefore mar our cheerfulness: but we should not yield to despondency, nor convert grounds of consolation into topicks of discouragement. If none are disposed to pity us, as we have sympathized with others, our correcting God pities us, “even as a father pitieth his own children.” But, as the grave is the house appointed for all living, let us look more to the things which are unseen and eternal. In that world, into which death will speedily remove us, the true believer, who has been the most afflicted, calumniated, and tempted, will take his golden harp, and most

eyes; why then should I ^b think upon a maid?

2 For ^c what portion of God *is there* from above? and *what* inheritance of the Almighty from on high?

3 *Is not* ^d destruction to the wicked? and ^e a strange *punishment* to the workers of iniquity?

4 ‘Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?’

^b Jam. i. 14, 15. ^c xx. 29. xxvii. 13. Heb. xiii. 4. ^d xxi. 30. Ps. lv. 23. lxxxiii. 13. Prov. i. 27. x. 29. xxi. 15. Matt. vii. 13. Rom. ix. 22. 1 Thes. v. 3. 2 Thes. i. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 1. ^e Is. xxviii. 21. Jude 7. ^f xiv. 16. xxxiv. 21. Gen. xvi. 13. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Ps. xlv. 21. cxxxix. 1—3. Prov. v. 21. xv. 3. Jer. xvi. 17. xxxiii. 19. Heb. iv. 13.

joyfully celebrate the praises of redeeming love. (Note, Rev. vii. 13—17.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXI. V. 1—4. Job had been accused of many crimes; and as his accusers could not prove his guilt, so it would have been difficult for him to prove his innocence: he was therefore compelled, as it were, to answer upon oath; and he solemnly appealed to God that he was not guilty of the charges, which had been brought against him. He adduced a variety of particulars, to obviate the suspicion of any secret iniquity having been committed by him: and he shewed that he acted upon *principle* in his whole conduct. Indeed, it appears, from this protestation, that he understood the spiritual nature of the divine commandments, as reaching to the thoughts and intents of the heart, far better, than almost any of those did, to whom the written law was delivered, and among whom it was preserved. (Notes, Rom. vii. 9—14.)—He first appealed to God, that he had avoided all unchastity, and had kept to the original institution of marriage; and that he strictly inhibited his eyes from gazing upon any woman, however beautiful, to lust after her, though she were unmarried, or his inferior. (Notes, Ex. xx. 14. Matt. v. 27, 28.) He had *covenanted* with them, that they should be confined to the beholding of the beauties of creation, and the examining of the works of God, and not be allowed to admit a licentious desire into his heart: and no doubt his imagination was equally forbidden to entertain the polluting thought, by which lust is conceived, and sin is produced. (Note, James i. 13—15.) For, however man might excuse these things, Job knew that God abhorred them: and if he were guilty of them, he could expect nothing from above, but destruction in another world; and perhaps some strange punishment in this life, such as befell the inhabitants of Sodom, which seems to be referred to: for God saw all his ways and marked his steps, though he might conceal them from man.—In this chapter and in the twenty-ninth, much more is contained of genuine purity and equity; of condescending, liberal, self-denying kindness to the poor and needy; of superiority to the love of the world and the fear of men, and all corrupt motives, as well as of sterling piety, than in all the writings of pagan antiquity combined. The standard of duty is fixed as high as in the moral law, and explained as spiritually as in our Saviour’s sermon on the mount. And the entire coincidence of this ancient book with the New Testament, in this essential matter, as well as in the grand doctrines of revealed religion, and the effect of them on the practice

5 ^g If I have ^h walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit ;
 6 ^{*} Let me be ⁱ weighed in an even balance, that God may ^k know mine integrity.
 7 ^l If my step hath turned out of the way, and ^m mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath ⁿ cleaved to mine hands ;
 8 ^o Then ^p let me sow, and let another eat ; yea, ^q let my offspring be rooted out.
 9 ^r If mine heart hath been deceived by a woman, or ^s if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door ;
 10 ^t Then let my wife ^u grind unto another, ^v and let others bow down upon her.

g Ps. vii. 3—5.
 h Ps. iv. 2. xii. 2.
 Prov. xii. 11.
 Jer. ii. 5. Ez. xiii. 8.
 * Heb. Let him weigh me in balances of justice
 l Sam. ii. 3. Ps. vii. 8, 9. xvii. 2, 3. xxvi. 1. Prov. xvi. 11. Is. xxvi. 7. Dan. v. 27. Mic. vi. 11.
 k Josh. xxii. 22. Ps. i. 6. cxxxix. 23. Matt. vii. 23. n 2 Tim. ii. 19
 o Ps. xiv. 20, 21. m Num. xv. 39. Ec. xi. 9. Ez. vi. 9. Matt. v. 29.
 p Ps. ci. 3. Is. xxxiii. 15.
 q v. 5. xxiv. 6. Lev. xxvii. 16. Deut. xxviii. 30—33. 51. Judg. vi. 3—6. Mic. vi. 15.
 r Ps. 4. xv. 30. xviii. 19. Ps. cix. 13.
 s Judg. xvi. 5. 1 Kings xi. 4. Neh. xiii. 26. Prov. ii. 16—19. v. 3, &c. vi. 25. vii. 21. xxii. 14. Ec. vii. 26. v. 8. Hos. vii. 4. t 2 Sam. xii. 11. Jer. viii. 10. Hos. iv. 13, 14.

11 For this is ^u an heinous crime, yea, it is ^x an iniquity to be punished by the judges.
 12 For it is ^y a fire that consumeth to destruction, and would root out all mine increase.
 13 ¶ If I did despise ^z the cause of my man-servant or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me ;
 14 ^a What then shall I do when God riseth up ? and ^b when he visiteth, ^c what shall I answer him ?
 15 ^d Did not he that made me in the womb make him ? and ^e did not one fashion us in the womb ?
 16 If I have ^f withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused ^g the eyes of the widow to fail ;

u Gen. xx. 9. xxvi. 10. xxxix. 9. Ex. xx. 14. Prov. vi. 29—33.
 x Gen. xxxviii. 24. Lev. xx. 10. Deut. xxii. 22—24. Ez. xvi. 38. y Prov. iii. 33. vi. 27. Jer. v. 7—9. z Ex. xxi. 20, 21. 26, 27. Lev. xxv. 43. 46. Deut. xv. 12—15. Jer. xxxiv. 14—17. Eph. vi. 9. Col. iv. 1.
 a ix. 32. x. 2. Ps. vii. 6. ix. 12. 19. x. 12—15. lxxvi. 9. cxliii. 2. Is. x. 3. Zech. ii. 13. b Hos. ix. 7. Mic. vii. 4. Matt. vii. 2. Jam. ii. 13. c Rom. iii. 19. d xxxiv. 19. Neh. v. 5. Prov. xiv. 31. xxii. 2. Is. lviii. 7. Mal. ii. 10.
 e Or, did he not fashion us in one womb ? x. 8—12. Ps. cxxxix. 14—16.
 f Deut. xxviii. 32. Ps. xxiv. 7—9. Deut. xxviii. 32. Ps. lxix. 3. cxix. 82, 123. Is. xxxviii. 14. Lam. iv. 17.

of true believers, forms a striking proof, that it was “written by inspiration from God ;” that all the sacred writers “spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost ;” and that true religion has been the same for substance in every age from the beginning.—Job’s conduct as a magistrate, in his publick capacity, was before exhibited : this chapter contains an avowal of his habitual conduct in private life.

V. 5—8. Job next solemnly protested, that he had not yielded to covetous desires. He had not dealt fraudulently, or imposed on others by vain pretences, or hastily and secretly seized unjust advantages, or turned aside from the direct path of honesty. He had not looked on his neighbour’s goods to covet them, and then devised means to obtain them : for this seems to be the meaning of the phrase, “If mine heart walked after mine eyes.” (Notes, Gen. iii. 6. Ex. xx. 17. Josh. vii. 21. 1 Kings xxi. 1, 2.) There was no blot of this kind on his hands. In this matter he desired an impartial trial, and that God would know, or make known, and approve, his integrity : but if he were guilty, he submitted to the sentence as most just ; even, if in future, all the fruits of his industry in cultivating the earth should be seized upon by others for their own use ; and if any children, or descendants, which he might hereafter have, should be cut off and extirpated, as his late flourishing family had been. (Note, v. 3—5.)

V. 9—12. Job next solemnly protested, that his heart had not been deceived, by the beauty or blandishments of another man’s wife, to entertain a sinful affection for her, or to wait for an opportunity of committing adultery with her. If he ever had attempted such a crime, he was willing that his guilt should be detected, by his own wife becoming the vilest slave, or even concubine to others. But, as he should abhor the thought of her being so wicked or so wretched, so he equally abhorred the thought of adultery : for he knew that it was not only hateful to God, but destructive to society, and deserved to be punished by the civil magistrates ; as it would consume like a fire, not only the soul of him who committed it, but every thing valuable in social and domestick life. (Note, Ex. xx. 14.)

V. 13—15. Job was not only conscious, that he was clear from the guilt of cruelly oppressing his servants ; but that he had not disdained to hearken to their cause, when they objected to his orders, or complained of his conduct towards them ; being ever ready to do them justice, and make them comfortable. He knew that before his Master in heaven, he could not vindicate any oppression of an inferior, when he should arise to visit the transgressions of sinners upon them : (Notes, Eph. vi. 5—9. Col. iv. 1 :) and he was sensible that they had a right to equity and kindness ; being equally the creatures of God, partakers of the same rational nature, and descended from the same common parents with himself.—Compare this statement, and the motives here adduced, with the conduct of the most civilized pagans towards their slaves, and the opinions of their strictest moralists on this subject ; and note the immense disparity, between natural principles, and that religion which God has revealed !

V. 16—23. Instead of having oppressed the poor, the orphan, and the widow, as it had been asserted of him, (Note, xxii. 5—14,) Job could appeal to God that he had ever been their kind friend. He had not only supplied their urgent necessities, but regarded their reasonable desires ; and had not left the poor widow to behold, with unavailing wishes, the abundance of which she might not partake. He had shared his plenty with the fatherless and the destitute : for he had been educated to such maxims and habits ; and, from his earliest youth, he had been accustomed to bring up poor orphans, and to counsel, protect, and provide for the widows. He had made clothes of his wool, for those who were destitute of proper covering, so that, being made comfortable by him, they were excited to pray for him. And if he had ever used his authority and influence to defraud the helpless orphan, he would consent that God should manifest his iniquity, by causing his arm to wither, and drop off from his shoulder-blade. But indeed he had feared a more dreadful destruction from God, in another world : and, as the mightiest princes could not endure before his holy Majesty, this fear alone

g Deut. xv. 11, 14.
Neh. viii. 10.
Luke xi. 41.
John xiii. 29.
Acts iv. 32.
h xxix. 13—16. Ez.
xviii. 7, 16. Rom.
xii. 13. Jam. i.
27. 1 John iii. 17.
* That is, the
widow.
i xxii. 6. 2 Chr.
xxviii. 15. Is.
lviii. 7. Matt.
xxv. 36, 43. Luke
iii. 11. Acts ix.
39. Jam. ii. 16.
1 John iii. 18.
k xxix. 11. Deut.
xxiv. 13.
l vi. 27. xxii. 9.
xxiv. 9. xxix. 12.
Prov. xxiii. 10.
11. Jer. v. 28.
Ez. xxii. 7.
m Mic. ii. 1, 2.
vii. 3.
n 10. 40. Josh.
xxii. 22, 23.
Ps. vii. 4, 5.
cxxxvii. 6.
† Or, chanel-bone.
o xx. 23. xxi. 20.
Gen. xxxix. 9.
Ps. cxix. 120. Is.
xiii. 6. Joel i. 15.
2 Cor. v. 11.
p xiii. 11. xl. 9.
xlii. 5, 6.
q Gen. xxxi. 1.
Deut. viii. 12—
14. Ps. xlix. 6,
7, 17. lxxii. 7. lxxii.
10. Prov. x. 15.
xi. 28. xxx. 9.
Mark x. 24. Luke
xii. 15. Col. iii. 5.
1 Tim. vi. 10, 17.
r Esth. v. 11.
Prov. xxiii. 5.
Jer. ix. 23. Ez.
xxviii. 5. Luke
xii. 19. xvi. 19
25.

17 Or ^g have eaten my morsel my-
self alone, and ^h the fatherless hath not
eaten thereof;

18 (For from my youth he was
brought up with me, as *with* a father,
and I have guided ^{*} her from my mo-
ther's womb;)

19 If I have seen any ⁱ perish for
want of clothing, or any poor without
covering;

20 If ^k his loins have not blessed me,
and *if* he were *not* warmed with the
fleece of my sheep;

21 If I have ^l lifted up my hand
against the fatherless, ^m when I saw my
help in the gate;

22 *Then* ⁿ let mine arm fall from my
shoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken
from the ^o bone.

23 For ^p destruction *from* God *was*
a terror to me, and ^q by reason of his
highness I could not endure.

24 ¶ If I have ^r made gold my hope,
or have said to the fine gold, *Thou art*
my confidence;

25 If I ^s rejoiced because my wealth

was great, and ^t because mine hand had
^u gotten much:

26 If I ^v beheld the ^w sun when it
shined, or ^x the moon walking ^y in
brightness;

27 And ^z my heart hath been secretly
enticed, or ^a my mouth hath ^b kissed
my hand:

28 This also *were* ^c an iniquity *to be*
punished by the judge: ^d for I should
have denied the God *that is* above.

29 ¶ If ^e I rejoiced at the destruc-
tion of him that hated me, or lifted up
myself when evil found him:

30 Neither ^f have I suffered ^g my
^h mouth to sin, by wishing a curse to
his soul.

31 If ⁱ the men of my tabernacle
said not, 'Oh, that we had of his flesh!
we cannot be satisfied.

32 ^j The stranger did not lodge in
the street: *but* I opened my doors to
the ^k traveller.

iii. 9. d Ec. v. 2, 6. Matt. v. 22. xii. 36. Jam. iii. 6, 9, 10.
palate. e 1 Sam. xxiv. 4, 10. xxvi. 8. 2 Sam. xvi. 9, 10. xix. 21, 22. Jer. xl.
15, 16. Luke ix. 54, 55. xxii. 50, 51. f xix. 22. Ps. xxvii. 2. xxxv. 25. Prov.
i. 11, 12, 18. Mic. iii. 2, 3. g 17, 18. Gen. xix. 2, 3. Judg. xix. 15, 20, 21.
Matt. xxv. 35, 40, 44, 45. Rom. xii. 13. 1 Tim. v. 10. Heb. xiii. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 9.
† Or, way.

Deut. viii. 17, 18.
Is. x. 13, 14.
Dan. iv. 30.
Hos. xii. 8. Hab.
i. 16.
† Heb. found.
t Gen. i. 16—18.
Deut. iv. 19.
xvii. 3. 2 Kings
xxiii. 5, 11. Jer.
viii. 2. Ez. viii.
16.
§ Heb. light.
u Ps. viii. 3, 4.
Jer. xlv. 17.
|| Heb. bright.
x Deut. xi. 16.
xiii. 6. Is. xlv.
20. Rom. i. 21.
28.
* Heb. my hand
hath kissed my
mouth.
y 1 Kings xix. 18.
Ps. ii. 12. Hos.
xiii. 2.
z 11. ix. 15. xxiii.
7. Gen. xviii.
25. Deut. xvii.
9. Judg. xi. 27.
Ps. i. 6. Heb.
xii. 23.
a Josh. xxiv. 23.
27. Prov. xxx.
9. Tit. i. 16.
2 Pet. ii. 1.
1 John ii. 23.
Jude 4.
b 2 Sam. i. 12. iv.
10, 11. xvi. 5—8.
Ps. xxxv. 13, 14.
25, 26. Prov.
xvii. 5. xxiv. 17.
18.
c Ex. xxiii. 4, 5.
Matt. v. 43, 44.
Rom. xii. 14.
1 Pet. ii. 22, 23.
† Heb.
x. 21. Jer. xl.
xix. 22. Prov.
xxv. 25.

was sufficient to restrain him from such iniquities.—The most of Job's servants had been killed, the rest were disobedient to him, and his cattle had been taken away from him: it was therefore a comfort to him to reflect, that he had behaved well to the one, and made a good use of the other, whilst he had them; and especially, that he had acted, in these respects, not from regard to man, but from the fear of God, and reverence to his authority. (Note, 2 Cor. i. 12—14.)—In what other ancient book, not written by an Israelite, shall we meet with sentiments so kind and considerate concerning the lower orders in society?

V. 24—28. Job had been very rich: (i. 3:) but he was conscious, that he had neither gloried, rejoiced, or confided in his wealth; nor thought himself, on that account, a wiser, better, or happier man. But, considering himself as a steward, in respect of his possessions, and expecting to account for them, he had shunned this common idolatry. He had also entirely kept himself from all gross idolatry, open or secret; he had never in the smallest instance given that honour to the sun or moon, those splendid and useful creatures, which belonged to the Creator alone. (Marg. Ref. t. Note, Deut. iv. 19.) For he knew that this was a denial of the unity, sovereignty, and exclusive right to adoration, of the God above. The words, rendered "an iniquity to be punished by the judge," have led some to think that this book was written, after the giving of the Mosaic law; but the circumstance of no idolatry, except that of the sun and moon being mentioned, is a much more probable argument in favour of a higher antiquity. The judicial law for punishing idolatry by the magistrate, seems to have been intended for Israel alone, as under the

Sinai-covenant. The plural of the same word is used and rendered *judges*, when the punishment of adulterers is spoken of (11). Adultery is a crime, which tends to destroy the peace of society, and, as such, falls directly under the cognizance of magistrates; but idolatry is committed immediately against God: and if our translation be just, He, as the Judge of the world, seems meant, and not the civil magistrate.

An iniquity to be punished by the judge. (28) *יָצַד פְּלִי* *Iniquitas judicata, aut judicanda; vel, judice digna.* Robertson's Thesaur. But may not *יָצַד פְּלִי* signify *my Judge*, meaning God himself? Especially as Job was speaking of a supposed crime, concealed from man. (Note, Deut. xxvii. 15.)

V. 29—32. So far from hating his enemies, or revenging himself on them, Job protested that, as he valued the favour of God above, he had not allowed himself to rejoice or triumph when mischief befell them, or to wish them any harm. (Notes, Ex. xxiii. 4, 5. Prov. xxiv. 17, 18. xxv. 21, 22. Matt. v. 43—48.) Nay, when his dependents were so enraged at those who injured him, that they were ready to devour them, he would by no means permit them to follow the impulse of their vindictive rage. (Notes, 1 Sam. xxiv. 4—7. xxvi. 8—12.) At the same time, in imitation of faithful Abraham, he was ever ready to entertain strangers and travellers, as circumstances required.—Bishop Hall thus paraphrases the thirty-first verse:—'If the people of my house were not so taken up with the offices of my hospitality to others, that they had no leisure to feed themselves, and therefore complained for the want of that flesh, which they dressed for others.'—The words

^h Gen. iii. 7, 8. 12. Josh. vii. 11. Prov. xxviii. 13. Acts v. 8. 1 John i. 8—10.
^a Or, after the manner of men. Hos. vi. 7.
ⁱ Ex. xxiii. 2. Prov. xxix. 25. Jer. xxxviii. 4, 5. 16. 19. Matt. xxvii. 20—26.
^k xxii. 8. xxxiv. 19. Ex. xxxii. 27. Num. xxv. 14, 15. Neh. v. 7. xiii. 4—8. 28. 2 Cor. v. 16.
^l Esth. iv. 11. 14. Prov. xxiv. 11. 12. Am. v. 11—13. Mic. vii. 3.
^m xiii. 3. xvii. 3. xxiii. 3—7. xxxiii. 6. xxxviii. 1—3. xl. 4, 5.
ⁿ Or, my sign is that the Almighty will answer me. n xiii. 21, 22. Ps. xxvi. 1. p Ex. xxviii. 12. Is. xxii. 22.
^o xiii. 24. xix. 11. 23, 24. xxxiii. 10, 11. Matt. v. 25.

33 If I ^h covered my transgressions
as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in
my bosom:
34 ⁱ Did I fear a great multitude, or
did ^k the contempt of families terrify
me, ^l that I kept silence, and went not
out of the door?
35 ^m Oh, that one would hear me!
behold, ⁿ my desire is, ^o that the
Almighty would answer me, and
that ^p mine adversary had written a
book.
36 Surely ^q I would take it upon my

shoulder, and bind it as ^r a crown to
me.
37 I would ^s declare unto him the
number of my steps: ^t as a prince
would I go near unto him.
38 ^u If my land ^v cry against me, or
that the furrows likewise thereof ^w com-
plain;
39 If I have eaten the ^x fruits thereof
without money, or have ^y caused the
owners thereof ^z to lose their life;
40 ^a Let thistles grow instead of
wheat, and ^b cockle instead of barley.
^y The words of Job are ended.

^q xxxix. 14. Is. lxii. 3. Phil. iv. 1.
^r ix. 3. xlii. 15.
^s xiv. 16. xlii. 3—6. Ps. xix. 12.
^t Gen. xxxii. 28. Eph. iii. 12. Heb. iv. 15, 16. 1 John iii. 19—21.
^u xx. 27. Hab. ii. 11. Jam. v. 4.
^v Heb. weep. Ps. lxxv. 13.
^w Heb. strength. Gen. iv. 12.
^x Heb. caused the soul of the owners thereof to expire, or, breathe out.
^y 1 Kings xxi. 13—16. Prov. i. 19. Is. xxvi. 21. Ez. xxii. 6, 12, 13.
^z Gen. iii. 17, 18. Is. vii. 23. Zeph. ii. 9. Mal. i. 3.
^a Or, noisome weeds.
^b Ps. lxxii. 20.

may be literally rendered, “Who will give us of his flesh?
“we shall not be satisfied.”

V. 33, 34. So far from being a hypocrite, Job was con-
scious that he had not, after the example of Adam, or “the
“manner of man,” attempted to conceal or justify his
faults: (Notes, Gen. iii. 7—13. Hos. vi. 7 :) but he was
ever open to conviction, and ready to confess his offence
to God or man, as there was occasion; not fearing re-
proach or contempt on that account: ‘whereby it is evident
‘that he justified himself before men, and not before God.’
Nor was he ever induced, by the fear of the multitude, or
the contempt of the great families around, to neglect any
part of his duty as a magistrate.

V. 35—37. After this particular protestation of his in-
tegrity, Job renewed his appeal to God, desiring that he
would hear and decide his cause. “Behold, my object”
(the scope and aim of all my discourse,) “is, that the Al-
“mighty would answer me.” Job challenged his *adversary*,
or *accuser*, to produce a libel, or written indictment against
him: he was confident that it would prove no disgrace to
him, but an honour; as every article would be disproved
and the reverse be manifested. He was ready to go through
his whole life, step by step, even assisting his accuser in
drawing up the charge; and prepared in every particular
to justify himself from the crimes alledged against him:
and he would appear in court with the confidence of a
prince who came to be crowned, not with the dejection of
a criminal who dreaded condemnation.—Upon the whole,
this protestation and appeal were well grounded, and
honourable to Job’s character. St. Paul in different places
makes similar appeals; but in a more modest and reveren-
tial manner. (Notes, 1 Cor. iv. 3—5. ix. 13—27. x. 29—33.
2 Cor. i. 12—14. vi. 3—10. vii. 2—4. xi. 7—12. xii. 11—
16. Phil. iii. 12—19. 1 Thes. ii. 1—12.)

V. 38—40. As Job was about to conclude, another par-
ticular seems to have occurred to him, concerning which
he had not exculpated himself. He had never seized upon
lands, by putting the owner to death as a criminal, and
confiscating his estate; or by any other oppression or fraud.
Nor had he reaped his harvest, without duly paying his
labourers their wages. If he had, let God avenge it, by
rendering the whole accursed, producing nothing but use-
less and noxious weeds. (Notes, Gen. iii. 17—19. iv. 10—
12. Jam. v. 1—6.)—With this Job concluded, as with an
ir of triumph and confidence.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

“The grace of God, which bringeth salvation,” has,
in all ages, “taught men to deny ungodliness and worldly
“lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this
“present world.” Repentance and faith produce hatred
of sin, and love to God and man; and our interest in re-
deeming love is evidenced by a course of conscientious
obedience. In general, however, it is best to let our
actions speak for us: and though, in some cases, we owe
to ourselves and to the cause of God, a solemn protestation
of innocency, as to those crimes of which we are falsely
accused; yet this is seldom made without some *real*
or *apparent* ostentation.—Every wickedness is first con-
ceived in the heart, where ten thousand enormities are
devised which are never perpetrated; being prevented by
fear of man, regard to character, or want of opportunity
and ability. The eye, the ear, and all the senses are the
common inlets of those evil thoughts which excite inward
concupiscence: we must therefore keep a strict guard upon
them; and upon the imagination also, if we would keep
out of the way of temptation and transgression. While we
pray to the Lord “to turn away our eyes from beholding
“vanity,” we should be careful to have all our senses and
faculties occupied about lawful things: and, lest secrecy
or the hope of impunity entice us, we should habitually
recollect, that “the LORD sees our ways and counts all
“our steps.”—Without strict honesty and fidelity in all
our dealings, we can have no good evidence of true godli-
ness. Yet how many, who profess to believe the gospel
of Christ, are unable to bear this touchstone! Most men
haste to deceive: they covet riches, “their heart walketh
“after their eyes,” and they turn aside; manifest blots
defile their hands; God sees, and man often detects, their
dishonesty; and it is well if the ruin of their substance
prevent the ruin of their souls.—Alas! that adultery also
should be so common among professed Christians! It is
indeed highly desirable that the authority of the magistrate
should stop the spread of this fire, which destroys domes-
tick peace and every principle of purity, honesty, truth,
and conscience; and which often provokes retaliation, till
whole nations are filled with wickedness. But, if men
suffer the criminals to escape, the Judge of the world will

CHAP. XXXII.

Job's three friends being silenced, Elihu speaks, and is angry both with Job and them, 1—5. He excuses his interference, though young; because great and aged men are not always wise, 6—10. He complains, that the reasonings of the disputants were not suited to produce conviction, 11—14. He shews that he is earnestly desirous of speaking; and declares that he will be impartial, 15—22.

• Heb. from answering.

a vi. 29. x. 2. 7. xiii. 15. xxiii. 7. xxvii. 4—6. xxix. 11—17. xxxi. 1, &c. xxxiii. 9. b Ps. lxix. 9. Mark iii. 5. Eph. iv. 26.

SO these three men ceased * to answer Job, because he *was* * righteous in his own eyes.

2 Then was ^b kindled the wrath of

Elihu the son of Barachel the * Buzite, c Gen. xxii. 21. of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, ^d because he justified [†] himself rather than God.

3 Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, * because they had found no answer, 'and yet had condemned Job.

4 Now Elihu had * waited till Job had spoken, because they *were* 'elder than he.

5 When Elihu saw that *there was* no answer in the mouth of *these* three men, then ^g his wrath was kindled.

d x. 3. xxvii. 2. xxxiv. 5, 6. 17, 18. xxxv. 2. xl. 8. Luke x. 29. † Heb. his soul.

e 1. xxiv. 25. xxv. 2—6. xxvi. 2—4. viii. 6. xv. 34. xxii. 5, &c. Acts xxiv. 5. 13.

f Heb. expected Job in words. 11, 12. Prov. xviii. 13. g Heb. elder for days.

g 2. Ex. xxxii. 19.

surely call them to a severe account; and this is sufficient to put all that fear him on their guard, lest their hearts should at any time be deceived.

V. 13—28.

Genuine religion uniformly teaches us to treat inferiors and domesticks with humanity, equity, and affection; to bear with their faults, to sympathize in their troubles, to hearken to their complaints, and to seek their present and future welfare: remembering that they are our brethren, as near to the great Creator, and as capable of eternal salvation, as ourselves. It disposes us likewise to kindness as well as justice towards the poor; to consult their inclinations, to share our comforts with them, whether we have abundance, or only a moderate provision; and to seek an interest in the grateful prayers of the fatherless and the widow, by sparing from our own indulgence, to feed, clothe, educate, or protect them. How contrary then must it be to Christianity, for men to enslave, oppress, and plunder the poor, because they "see their help in the gate," and have the law of the land and the countenance of the ruler on their side! A worse punishment, than the falling off of the arm from the shoulder-blade, awaits such oppressors, especially when they bear and disgrace the Christian name; even "destruction from the LORD, before whose highness they cannot endure." (Jam. ii. 13.) These crimes spring from covetousness, which makes gold a man's confidence, hope, and joy; as if his life consisted in the abundance of his possessions. But divine grace destroys this idolatry, by teaching us to seek our whole happiness from God; to subordinate all other affections to the love of him; and to receive and use all worldly possessions as his stewards, and to his glory. Yet it is to be feared, that but few prosperous Christians can properly appeal to a heart-searching God, that they have not rejoiced because their gains were great. Through the determination to be rich, numbers fall into temptations which ruin their souls, or pierce them through with many sorrows. (Note, 1 Tim. vi. 6—10.) This is the *idolatry*, to which *we* are most tempted: but it is a great favour to be preserved from all the false and fashionable kinds of religion, which from age to age supplant "the truth as it is in Jesus," and its sanctifying effects; and which eventually prove "a denial of God above."

V. 29—40.

The Holy Spirit has always taught the children of God to do good against evil; to bless, and not to curse, their enemies; to repress revenge; to forgive as they hope to be forgiven; to avoid all rejoicing in calamities; and to restrain others from revenge and cruelty.—In respect of all these things, and in every particular, we should examine with prayer, how far we are followers of this ancient believer: whether we "use hospitality without grudging," and are "ready for every good work:" whether the fear of reproach or resentment, from the great or the many, do not induce us to neglect our known duty: whether we possess any ill-gotten property to cry out against us; or whether we deprive the labourer of his wages. If our conscience testify for us in these and similar enquiries, we should give God the praise, but we may have confidence now before his mercy-seat; and may hope to stand with humble boldness, as justified believers before his judgment-seat: we need fear no adversary, or accusation, or scrutiny; for "who is he that condemneth? It is God that justifieth;" and the slanders of our enemies will then be our crown: as princes we shall go near unto him, and enter into his glory, and sit down with him on his throne. But let us all judge ourselves, and not cover our sins as Adam: and where we are guilty, let us seek forgiveness; intreating 'the Lord to have mercy upon us, and to write 'all his laws in our hearts,' by the new creating power of his Holy Spirit.

NOTES

CHAP. XXXII. V. 1. Job's opponents were at length silenced, though not convinced. They could not answer his arguments, but they retained their unfavourable opinion of him; and they declined all further dispute, because he was "righteous in his own eyes," and determined, as they thought, at any rate to vindicate himself.

V. 2—5. It is evident, that others besides the disputants were present during this controversy, and Elihu among the rest. His name signifies *My God is he*. He was the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the kindred of Ram, which some suppose to have been the original name of Abraham, to whom Buz was nearly related; though others think that Aram, the son of Kemuel, is meant. (Gen. xxii. 21.) —

^h Lev. xix. 32. **6** And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, ^h *I am* * young, and ⁱ ye *are* very old; wherefore I was afraid, and [†] durst not shew you mine opinion.

^k viii. 8—10. xii. 12. 1 Kings xii. 6—8. Ps. xxxiv. 11, 12. Prov. i. 1—4. xvi. 31. Heb. v. 12. **7** I said, * Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom.

^l iv. 12—21. xxxiii. 16. xxxv. 11. xxxviii. 36. Gen. xli. 39. 1 Kings iii. 12. 28. iv. 29. Prov. ii. 6. Ec. ii. 26. Dan. i. 17. ii. 21. 1 Cor. ii. 10—12. xii. 8. 2 Tim. iii. 16. Jam. i. 5. **8** But *there is* a spirit in man: and [†] the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

^m Jer. v. 5. Matt. xi. 25. John vii. 48. 1 Cor. i. 26. ii. 7, 8. Jam. ii. 6, 7. **9** * Great men are not *always* wise: ⁿ neither do the aged understand judgment.

^o l Cor. vii. 25. 40. **10** Therefore I said, ° Harken to me; I also will shew mine opinion.

^p 4. xxix. 21. 23. **11** Behold [†] I waited for your words; I gave ear to your * reasons, [†] while ye searched out [†] what to say.

^q v. 27. Prov. xviii. 17. xxviii. 11. Ec. xii. 9, 10. **12** Yea, I attended unto you, and, [†] behold, *there was* none of you that convinced Job, *or* that answered his words:

^r 3. 1 Tim. i. 7. **13** * Lest ye should say, 'We have found out wisdom: ° God thrusteth him down, not man.

^s Gen. xiv. 23. Judg. vii. 2. 1s. xlvi. 5. 7. Zech. xii. 7. ^t xii. 2. xv. 8—10. 1s. v. 21. Jer. ix. 23. Ez. xxviii. 3. 1 Cor. i. 19—21. 27—29. iii. 18. ^u i. 21. ii. 10. iv. 9. vi. 4. xix. 6. 21. John xix. 11.

[†] Heb. ordered. **14** Now he hath not [†] directed *his* words against me: neither will I answer him with your speeches.

^x vi. 24, 25. xxix. 22. Matt. vii. 29. xxii. 22. 33, 34. 46. **15** They were * amazed, they answered no more: they * left off speaking.

^y xiii. 5. Prov. xvii. 28. Am. v. 13. Jam. i. 19. **16** When I had waited, ([†] for they spake not, but stood still, *and* answered no more;)

^z 10. xxxiii. 12. xxxv. 3, 4. **17** *I said*, ° I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion.

[†] Heb. words. **18** For I am full of [†] matter, ° the spirit * within me constraineth me.

^a Ps. xxxix. 3. Jer. xx. 9. Ez. iii. 14, &c. Acts iv. 20. 2 Cor. v. 13, 14. **19** Behold my belly *is* as wine *which* [†] hath no vent; it is ready to burst like [†] new bottles.

^b Matt. ix. 17. **20** ° I will speak, that I may [†] be refreshed: ° I will open my lips and answer.

^c xiii. 13. 19. xx. 2. xxi. 3. **21** Let me not, I pray you, ° accept any man's person, neither let me give [†] flattering titles unto man.

^d Prov. viii. 6, 7. **22** For [†] I know not to give flattering titles; *in so doing* my Maker would soon take me away.

^e xiii. 8. xxxiv. 19. Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 17. xvi. 19. Prov. xxiv. 23. Matt. xxii. 16. ^f 2 Sam. xiv. 17. 20. Acts xii. 22, 23. xxiv. 2, 8. ^g xvii. 5. Ps. xii. 2, 3. Prov. xxix. 5. 1 Thes. ii. 5.

Many singular opinions have been formed concerning Elihu: yet it is evident, that he was a young man of singular modesty and wisdom; and not more than man, as some have imagined. He came indeed nearer the true state of the case, than any other of the contending parties; but he bore too hard on Job, and, in some instances, put harsh constructions on his words. (*Note*, xxxiv. 5—9.) He, however, charged him with no crime, except his misconduct in the management of the argument; and in this respect he was justly displeased both with him and with his friends. He alledged with truth, that Job had been more anxious to vindicate his own character, than to clear up the justice and goodness of God in afflicting him; and that his friends had persisted in condemning him, as a hypocrite, though unable to refute his doctrine, or to answer his arguments. But, as he was younger than they, he had modestly waited till the controversy was dropped, before he attempted to declare his opinion.

V. 6—14. Young men are commonly most forward to dispute, and aged men best qualified to be moderators; but here the case was reversed. Elihu allowed it to be a good general rule, that they who had the advantage of long experience should speak first, and teach wisdom to the young. But he observed, that there was a rational soul in man, and that God gave wisdom, both natural and spiritual, as he pleased; so that facts proved that the greatest and most aged were not always the wisest. This reflection therefore at length emboldened him to state his opinion. He had carefully listened to the arguments of the disputants, as long as they could find any thing to say: but he perceived, that they could neither convict Job of iniquity, nor refute

his doctrine. Indeed Elihu thought that they were left to be thus foiled, lest they should glory in their own wisdom, and improperly exult over Job, as proved to be a wicked man, by the testimony of God in his dealings with him. Or, (as some explain the words,) they reluctantly yielded that they were overcome, by counting it their wisdom to be silent, and by leaving it to God to confute Job by continuing his afflictions. But as Job had not spoken against Elihu, he purposed to answer him in a different manner; and, without attempting to prove him a hypocrite, he would reprove some things in which he was evidently culpable.

V. 15—17. These verses favour the opinion, that Elihu was the writer of this book: for he seems here to address himself as *the historian to the reader*, rather than as *a speaker to that company*. (*Preface*.)—He observed, that the disputants had been amazed to hear Job so confidently protest his own integrity, and perplexed to reconcile his situation with the divine justice and goodness, unless he were a wicked man. They had given up the argument, as if deprived of speech; and they seemed to look for some one else to throw light upon the subject. So that he had full liberty to speak his sentiments; having patiently waited for this opening. (*Note*, 1 Cor. xiv. 26—33.)

V. 18—22. Elihu's mind was full of thoughts, in consequence of his having for a long time silently reflected on the subject, and he was inwardly constrained to speak. With much uneasiness he had refrained himself: his mind was agitated by his own meditations, in the manner that fermenting wine is ready to burst the bottle when it cannot have vent; so that it would be a *relief*, or *enlargement*,

CHAP. XXXIII.

Elihu requires Job's attention, while he pleads with him, in God's stead, and without terrifying him, 1—7. He blames him for being too earnest in vindicating himself, and for irreverently complaining of God, 8—13. He shews how God instructs men by dreams, afflictions, and messengers; that repenting they may find mercy, 14—30. He calls on Job to answer, or patiently to attend to his discourse, 31—33.

WHEREFORE, Job, I pray thee, ^ahear my speeches, and hearken to all my words.

2 Behold now ^bI have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my ^cmouth.

^a xlii. 6. xxxiv. 2. Ps. xlix. 1—3. Mark iv. 9.

^b lli. 1. Ps. lxxxviii. 2. Matt. v. 2.

^c Heb. palate. xxxi. 30. marg.

to him to speak, though it should not profit them. (Notes, Jer. vi. 10—12. xx. 7—9. Ez. iii. 12—15.) He intended to be impartial, and not to flatter either party, though they were his seniors and superiors; but he would freely reprove what he thought wrong in them, without respect of persons. Indeed, he was not used to give flattering titles to any man, and he knew it would displease his Maker; therefore, as he feared his awful displeasure and desired mercy from him, he was determined to avoid them.—The original word signifies, to give an additional name, as a title of distinction.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

The self-flattery of the human heart often prevents men from being convinced of their errors, or from acknowledging that they are; so that, even when not determined at all events to have the last word, they will imagine or pretend some plausible reason for declining an argument, in which they have been foiled, whilst they hold their former sentiments, and criminate their opponents. Indeed, it is not worth while to persist in arguing with the pertinacious and self-sufficient, or with such as are “righteous in their own eyes:” yet sometimes those who are accepted with God, and have truth and justice on their side, are unjustly charged with obstinacy and self-confidence.—An unprejudiced by-stander frequently understands controverted points, better than the eager disputants: in almost all contests much may be reprov'd on both sides; and they who endeavour to distinguish between what is right, and what is wrong, among all parties, will seldom be approved by the zealots of any, but will commonly come nearest to the truth.—If we perceive others in a fault, it is generally adviseable, to mention it before them: and it is not sinful anger, if we are *greatly displeased* to hear God dishonoured, his truths misrepresented, and men unjustly condemned, or fatally deceived. (Note, Mark iii. 5.)—It belongs to the aged to take the lead in conversation, and to teach wisdom; and modesty, and deference towards seniors and superiors, always become the young. Yet reason is common to man, and God communicates both natural abilities and spiritual gifts, in measure as he pleases. “So that great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment:” and by an attention to the word of God, and dependence upon his Spirit, the young may become

3 My words *shall be of* ^cthe uprightness of my heart: and ^dmy lips shall utter knowledge clearly.

4 ^eThe Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

5 ^fIf thou canst answer me, ^gset thy words in order before me: ^hstand up.

6 Behold, ⁱI am according to thy ^jwish ^kin God's stead: ^lI am also ^mformed out of the clay.

7 Behold, ⁿmy terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall ^omy hand be heavy upon thee.

^m ix. 34. xlii. 21. Ps. lxxxviii. 16.

^c xxvii. 4. Prov. viii. 7, 8. 1 Thes. ii. 3, 4.
^d xv. 2. xxxvi. 3, 4. xxxviii. 2. Ps. xxxvii. 30, 31. Prov. xv. 2. 7. xx. 15. xxii. 17, 18.
^e x. 12. xxxii. 8. Gen. ii. 7. Ps. xxxiii. 6. Rom. viii. 2. 1 Cor. xv. 45.
^f 32, 33. xxxii. 1. 12.
^g xxxiii. 4. 5. xxxii. 14. Ps. i. 21.
^h Acts x. 26.
ⁱ ix. 32. 35. xlii. 3. 21, 22. xxxii. 3, 4. xxxi. 35.
^j Heb. mouth.
^k Gen. xxx. 2. Ex. iv. 16. 2 Cor. v. 20.
^l iv. 19. x. 9. xlii. 12. Gen. ii. 7. iii. 19. 2 Cor. v. 1.
^m Heb. cut out of. n Ps. xxxi. 4.

wiser than the aged, than their teachers, and their rulers. (Note, Ps. cxix. 98—100.) But this wisdom will render them “swift to hear, and slow to speak,” and disposed to give others a patient attention, though they seem to argue inconclusively, and to say little to the purpose. However full we may think ourselves of suitable matter, for the conviction of others, and the termination of a controversy; and whatever uneasiness we feel in keeping silence, when others are discoursing, as we think, in a manner contrary to truth; we should remember, that it is indecent, and savours of arrogance, to interrupt them. Nay, if we were sure, that the Spirit of God suggested to us what we were about to say, we ought to refrain, until it fairly come to our turn to speak: for “the spirits of the prophets were subject to the prophets,” and God is the Source of order, and not of confusion. (1 Cor. xiv. 32, 33.) But the faithful minister of God, who is filled with the knowledge of his truth and will, and with zeal for his glory and compassion for souls, must be greatly pained by every attempt to silence him: nay, indeed, he cannot be silenced; whatever be the consequence, he cannot but speak the things which he has heard and believed. (Note, Acts iv. 13—22.) Times and seasons he will regard; but he must speak, that he may be refreshed, whether men will hear or forbear; and he must speak faithfully, without respect of persons, or knowing to give flattering titles: for “he is not a man-pleaser, but a servant of Jesus Christ;” and is ambitious, whether present or absent, of being accepted of him. (Notes, 2 Cor. v. 9—12. 16. 1 Thes. ii. 1—8.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIII. V. 1—7. Elihu had given his reasons for speaking, and here he demanded the attention of Job in particular; for Job himself had sufficiently answered his friends. He did not speak in haste or passion, but deliberately, and with recollection. He meant to speak his undisguised sentiments, in the plainest and most instructive manner: he was the creature of God, dependent on him, and accountable to him; from whose life-giving Spirit he derived his being, and rational nature. Job might therefore stand up before him to make the best of his cause. He had desired an impartial judge to be appointed in God's stead, to decide upon his appeal. (Notes, ix. 25—35. xlii. 20—23. xlii. 3—7. xxxi. 35—37.) And be-

* Heb. ears. Deut. xiii. 14. Jer. xxxix. 23.
o ix. 17. x. 7. xl. 4. xvi. 17. xxiii. 11, 12. xxvii. 5, 6. xxix. 14. xxxi. 1, &c.

8 Surely thou hast spoken in mine ^o hearing, and I have heard the voice of ^{thy} words, *saying*,

9 I am ^o clean without transgression, I am ^p innocent; neither is there iniquity in me.

10 Behold, ^a he findeth occasions against me, ^h he counteth me for his enemy.

11 He ^h putteth my feet in the stocks, ^t he marketh all my paths.

12 Behold, in this ^u thou art not just: ^x I will answer thee, that ^y God is greater than man.

13 Why dost thou ^z strive against him? for ^z he ^z giveth not account of any of his matters.

14 For ^a God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man ^a perceiveth it not.

15 In ^a a dream, in a vision of the night, when ^a deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed;

16 Then ^a he ^a openeth the ears of men, and ^a sealeth their instruction,

17 That he may ^a withdraw man

from his ^a purpose, and ^a hide pride from man.

18 He ^a keepeth back his soul from the pit, and his life from ^a perishing by the sword.

19 He is ^a chastened also with ^m pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong *pain*:

20 So that ^a his life abhorreth bread, and his soul ^a dainty meat.

21 ^a His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seen; and ^a his bones *that* were not seen stick out.

22 Yea, ^a his soul draweth near unto the grave, and ^a his life to the destroyers.

23 If there be ^a a messenger with him, ^a an interpreter, ^a one among a thousand, ^a to shew unto man his uprightness:

24 ^a Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, ^a Deliver him from going down to the pit; ^a I have found ^a a ransom.

ii. 7. iii. 1. 2 Cor. v. 20. t xxxiv. 32. Ps. xciv. 12. Is. lxi. 1-3. Acts viii. 30, 31. 1 Cor. xi. 30-32. Heb. xii. 5-12. u ix. 3. Ec. vii. 28. Rom. xi. 13. x xi. 6. xxxiv. 10, 12. xxxv. 14. xxxvi. 3, 8-13. xxxvii. 23. Neh. ix. 33. Ps. cxix. 75. Lam. iii. 22, 23. 32. 39-41. Ez. xviii. 25-28. Dan. ix. 14. y v. 18. xxii. 21. Ex. xxxiii. 19. xxxiv. 6, 7. Ps. lxxxvi. 5, 15. Hos. xiv. 2, 4. Mic. vii. 18-20. Rom. v. 20, 21. z xxxvi. 10, 11. Ex. xv. 26. Ps. xxx. 9-12. xl. 2. lxxi. 3. lxxxvi. 13. Is. xxxviii. 17-19. Jer. xxxi. 20. Zech. ix. 11. a xxxvi. 18. Ps. xlix. 7, 8. Matt. xx. 28. Rom. iii. 24-26. 1 Tim. ii. 6. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. t Or, an atonement.

Heb. work
Deut. viii. 16.
2 Chr. xxxii. 26.
Is. ii. 11.
Dan. iv. 30-37.
2 Cor. xii. 7.
Jam. iv. 10.
k Acts xvi. 27-33. Rom. ii. 4.
2 Pet. iii. 9, 15.
Heb. passing.
v. 17, 18. Deut. viii. 5. Ps. xciv. 12, 13. cxix. 67.
71. Is. xxxvii. 9.
1 Cor. xi. 32.
Rev. iii. 19.
m vii. 4. xx. 11.
xxx. 17, 18. 30.
2 Chr. xvi. 10.
12. Ps. xxxviii. 1-8. Is. xxxviii. 12, 13.
n Ps. cvii. 17, 18.
* Heb. meat of desire. Gen. iii. 6.
Jer. iii. 19. Am. v. 11. Marg.
o vii. 5. xlii. 28.
xiv. 20. 22. xix. 20. Ps. xxxii. 3, 4. xxxix. 11. cii. 3-5. Prov. v. 11.
p Ps. xxii. 15-17.
q vii. 7. xvii. 1. 13-16. 1 Sam. ii. 6. Ps. xxx. 3. lxxxviii. 3-5. Is. xxxviii. 10.
r xv. 21. Ex. xii. 23. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. Ps. xvii. 4. Acts xii. 23. 1 Cor. x. 10. Rev. ix. 11.
s Judg. ii. 1. Marg. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 15, 16. Hag. i. 13. Mal. Acts viii. 30, 31. x xi. 6. xxxiv. 10, 12. xxxv. 14. xxxvi. 3, 8-13. xxxvii. 23. Neh. ix. 33. Ps. cxix. 75. Lam. iii. 22, 23. 32. 39-41. Ez. xviii. 25-28. Dan. ix. 14. y v. 18. xxii. 21. Ex. xxxiii. 19. xxxiv. 6, 7. Ps. lxxxvi. 5, 15. Hos. xiv. 2, 4. Mic. vii. 18-20. Rom. v. 20, 21. z xxxvi. 10, 11. Ex. xv. 26. Ps. xxx. 9-12. xl. 2. lxxi. 3. lxxxvi. 13. Is. xxxviii. 17-19. Jer. xxxi. 20. Zech. ix. 11. a xxxvi. 18. Ps. xlix. 7, 8. Matt. xx. 28. Rom. iii. 24-26. 1 Tim. ii. 6. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. t Or, an atonement.

hold here was one according to his wish, a man like himself, who would neither terrify nor hurt him, as the glorious God might have done, if he had entered into judgment with him; nay, who would not bear so hard on him as his other friends had done.

V. 8-11. Elihu had heard Job's words, and did not condemn him upon suspicion, as his friends had done. He did not accuse him of being a hypocrite; but of having spoken language unbecoming a man of piety. He had so strenuously insisted upon his own integrity, that he seemed to say, "I am clean without transgression, I am innocent; neither is there any iniquity in me." Job had not said exactly these words; nay, he had avowed the contrary doctrine: but he had used incautious expressions which admitted of such a construction. The other words charged upon him were nearly what he had spoken. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, x. 4-7. xi. 1-4. xvi. 17-22. xxiii. 8-12.)

V. 12, 13. In this thing at least, Elihu maintained, that Job had been culpable; he had charged God foolishly and unjustly, as if his dealings with him were causelessly severe. But he ought to have recollected the infinite greatness of the almighty Sovereign, which made it the height of madness and presumption to contend with him. He gives no account of his conduct; and which of his creatures has a right to demand an explanation of his reasons, where he sees good to conceal them? (*Notes*, xl. 1, 2. Dan. iv. 34-37. Matt. xx. 1-16. Rom. ix. 19-21. xi. 33-36.)

V. 14-18. In many things God acts as a Sovereign,

who explains not the meaning of his orders; but in general he shews himself a merciful and kind Father. He does not ask men what methods he should use, but he employs such as are most proper. He *speaks* to them in various ways, and with *frequent repetitions*; yet they are so dull, careless, and prejudiced, that *they perceive not his meaning*.—Elihu lived before there was a written revelation, and therefore that grand medium of communication is not mentioned: but God, in that age of the world, frequently spake to men in dreams and visions; and thus, in the dark and retired hours of the night, he caused them even in their sleep to attend to him, and deeply impressed his instructions on their memories. This was intended, not to enable men to understand the reasons of the divine dispensations, but to withdraw them from their sinful purposes, and from their proud rebellion; that, being humbled in repentance, and made sensible of their guilt and depravity, and humbly seeking mercy, by faith and prayer, they might be preserved from that destruction of soul and body, into which they were about to be hurried. Nay, the long-suffering of God, by preserving men from sudden and violent death, when living in sin, kept back their souls from hell, and gave them space for repentance.

V. 19-26. When men disregard the warnings and despise the patience of God, he often sends severe afflictions. And if Job had been afflicted on this account, instead of murmuring against God, and justifying himself, he ought to have considered what sins he had committed, and what duties he had neglected. For God, in love,

^b 2 Kings v. 14. ^c Heb. *childhood*.
^c xlii. 16. Deut. xxxiv. 7. Josh. xiv. 10, 11. Ps. ciii. 5. Hos. ii. 15.
 25 ^b His flesh shall be fresher than
 * a child's: he shall ^c return to the days
 of his youth:

^d 2 Kings xx. 2—5. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. 19. Ps. vi. 1—9. xxviii. 1, 2. 6. xxx. 7—11. xli. 8—11. l. 15. xci. 15. cxvi. 1—6. Is. xxx. 19. Jer. xxxiii. 3. Jon. ii. 2—7. Acts ix. 11.
 26 He shall ^d pray unto God, and he
 will be favourable unto him: ^e and he
 shall see his face with joy: for ^f he will
 render unto man his righteousness.

^e xlii. 8, 9. Num. vi. 25, 26. Ps. iv. 6, 7. xvi. 11. xxx. 5. lxviii. 1. Acts ii. 28. Jude 24.
 27 ^g He ^h looketh upon men, and if
 any say, ⁱ I have sinned, and ^j perverted
 that which was ^k right, and ^l it profited
 me not;

^f xxxiv. 11. 1 Sam. xxvi. 23. Ps. xviii. 20. lxii. 12. Prov. xxiv. 12. Matt. x. 41, 42. Heb. xi. 26. g Gen. xvi. 13. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Ps. xi. 4. xiv. 2. cxxxix. 1—4. Prov. v. 21. xv. 3. Jer. xxiii. 24.
 + Or, shall look upon men, and say I have sinned, &c. h vii. 20. Num. xii. 11. 2 Sam. xii. 13. Prov. xxviii. 13. Jer. iii. 13. xxxi. 18, 19. Luke xv. 18—22. xviii. 13. 1 John i. 8—10. i Ec. v. 8. k Ps. xix. 7, 8. cxix. 128. Rom. vii. 12—14. 16. 22. l xxxiv. 9. Jer. ii. 8. Matt. xvi. 26. Rom. vi. 21. + Or, hath delivered my soul, &c. m 18. 24. xvii. 16. Ps. lv. 23. lxix. 15. Is. xxxviii. 17, 18. Rev. xx. 1—3.

going into the pit, and his life shall
 see the light.

29 Lo, ^o all these *things* worketh God
 oftentimes with man,

30 ^p To bring back his soul from the
 pit, to be ^q enlightened with the light
 of the living.

31 ^r Mark well, O Job, hearken
 unto me: hold thy peace, and I will
 speak.

32 If thou hast any thing to say,
 answer me: speak, ^s for I desire to jus-
 tify thee.

33 If not, ^t hearken unto me: hold
 thy peace, and ^u I shall teach thee wis-
 dom.

n 20. 22. iii. 9. 16.
 20. Ps. xlix. 19.
 1s. ix. 2. John
 xi. 9.
 o 14—17. 1 Cor.
 xii. 6. 2 Cor. v.
 5. Eph. i. 11
 Phil. ii. 13. Col.
 i. 29. Heb. xiii.
 21.
 § Heb. twice and
 thrice. 14. xl. 5
 2 Kings vi. 10.
 2 Cor. xii. 8.
 p 24. Ps. xl. 2.
 cxviii. 17, 18.
 q Ps. lvi. 13. Is. ii.
 5. John viii. 12
 r xiii. 6. xviii. 2
 xxi. 2. xxxii. 11.
 s xv. 4, 5. xxi. 27
 xxii. 5—9. xxvii
 5.
 t Ps. xxxiv. 11.
 Prov. iv. 1, 2. v.
 1, 2.
 u 3. Ps. xlix. 3.
 Prov. viii. 5.

frequently confined men to beds of sickness, and filled them with exquisite pain in every part, causing them to loathe even the most necessary or delicious food, and reducing them to mere skeletons: and whilst it appeared, that the body was about to drop into the grave, the poor sufferer was perhaps affrighted, lest the soul should fall into the hands of the destroyers. (Note, Ps. cvii. 17—22.) Yet all this tended to good, and often terminated well: especially if some pious person were sent as the “messenger of God,” (as Elihu hoped he was to Job,) to be an interpreter of the painful dispensation, and of the truth and will of God, and to shew the sufferer the way of pardon and peace. (Note, xvii. 1, 2.) As such interpreters were scarce, not one among a thousand being capable of the service, they were the more to be valued: for they would shew the sinner the justice of God in his sufferings and condemnation; his way of pardoning and justifying the penitent believer; his sincerity and faithfulness to his promises; and the way of holiness. Such a messenger frequently proved the instrument of a man's conversion: and the Lord in mercy commanded his deliverance from the pit of destruction, through the ransom, or atonement, which he had appointed and revealed, even that of the promised Messiah; and sometimes restored his health, vigour, and comeliness, as if he were become young again. Thus the sinner was taught to pray unto God, and was pardoned and accepted; thus he had comfortable communion with him at his mercy-seat, and hoped to see his face with joy in heaven; and would at length be graciously recompensed for all the works of righteousness, which he had performed in humble faith and love.—Some interpret this *Messenger*, or *Angel*, of Christ himself the *Interpreter* of God's will to man, the Chief among the ten thousands of his saints and servants. But, as in general he comes to men by his messengers, or ministers; and as their instructions and encouragements are deduced from his meditation, and are made effectual by his gracious presence; it is not very material, whether we interpret the passage, of the messengers of God pointing to the Saviour, or the Saviour revealing himself by their ministry. It is equally immaterial, whether the words, “Deliver him from going down to the pit,” be considered as the language of Christ's intercession, pleading the ransom of his blood, in

behalf of the sinner; or the words of the Father accepting of this plea, and giving command to save the sinner, as satisfied with that appointed ransom. It cannot reasonably be doubted, that Elihu had reference to the promised Redeemer, though he might also intend the sacrifices which prefigured the great atonement. (1 Pet. i. 19, 20. Rev. xiii. 8. Notes, Gen. iii. 21. iv. 3—5. viii. 20—22. xii. 6, 7.)

V. 27—30. Elihu further shewed, that God always observed the ways of men; and when any sinner humbly confessed his transgressions of his *just* and *good* laws, as unreasonable and unprofitable, being ashamed and weary of them, and grieved and self-condemned for them; he would “deliver his soul from going down into the pit” of destruction, and he should live to enjoy his favour. Thus he brought back sinners from the brink of ruin, to be enlightened in the living and life-giving knowledge of salvation. He awakened their consciences by visions; he visited them with afflictions; he sent them his messengers and his gospel; and by his goodness he thus led them to repentance and salvation. Therefore Job had no reason to think that God was become his enemy; but to hope that he should derive great advantage from his calamities.—The original is rather difficult as to the construction, and has been variously translated: but the grand outline of instruction is not at all affected by the different renderings.

V. 31—33. Elihu again demanded Job's attention, as he had much more to say; but, if he could answer any thing to what he had urged, he would have him speak before he proceeded; for he greatly desired to find that he was a righteous man, and to clear up his aspersed character. But if Job could not refute his charge, let him be silent, and he would proceed to instruct him further in true wisdom.—It seems, that Job was so far convinced by his discourse, that he would not attempt an answer.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

We ought always to discourse on religious subjects, with seriousness, recollection, candour, sincerity, and plainness; if we expect to be heard with attention, and to convince and instruct others. When we have evident truth on our side, we may often convince our opponents, that they can-

CHAP. XXXIV.

Elihu calls on the wise to judge in the cause; and charges Job with arraigning the divine justice, 1—9. He affirms, that the all-powerful and all-perfect God cannot do iniquity; and vindicates his dealings with men, 10—30. He shews Job, that he ought to humble himself before God; and sharply reproves his words, 31—37.

not stand before the tribunal of God, by shewing them that they cannot justify their conduct before a fellow sinner; who will not dismay nor hurt them, while he pleads against them in the behalf of God.—In the heat of controversy, and when greatly afflicted and tempted, we are apt to utter words which cannot be justified: and if a worse construction be put upon them than we intended, we need not wonder, and should not be offended.—Publick offences should be publickly rebuked or retracted, to prevent scandal; but we may allow a man's general character to be good, and yet reprove him for particular offences. If we seem to justify our whole conduct, and murmur against God, in this we are not just: for when we adopt this conduct, the subject impeaches the Sovereign, and the foolish, sinful worm arraigns the conduct of the wise and righteous Lord of all! The infinite power and authority of God should deter us from thus contending with him; for he will not, he cannot, submit his conduct to our judgment. But when we consider that he excels the noblest of his creatures in all things else, as much as in his majesty and greatness, and is in all respects consummate perfection; we must perceive, that every objection to his dispensations is rebellion and ingratitude.

V. 14—33.

The general tendency of all the Lord's dealings with men, is to lead them to repent and to turn unto him; but the proud, careless rebel does not regard, though God speak to him again and again. The works of creation proclaim his eternal power and Godhead, and leave all those without excuse, who neither worship him nor are thankful. He speaks by conscience; but her voice is silenced by the clamorous demands of men's lusts and passions. Terrifying dreams convey forcibly salutary alarms; but unless the Lord open the ear, and seal the instruction, they are speedily forgotten. The judgments of God on others have a warning voice to us; and should serve to withdraw us from our sinful purposes, and to induce us to humble ourselves before him, that we may be kept from the pit of destruction; whilst his merciful protection of us, when others are cut off and we are in danger, should lead us to repentance. When these methods are ineffectual, sharp afflictions become the voice of God. Wasting sickness and excruciating pain mar our relish of every comfort, and remind us of death and eternity. This proclaims the vanity of the world, the evil of sin, the power of God's wrath, our need of mercy, and the danger to which we are exposed. But how many repeatedly endure all this, and yet remain unhumbled and unchanged! It is, however, a token for good, when the servants and ministers of God are sent, to interpret to the afflicted his dispensations and word. This is a good service, and it is lamentable that so

FURTHERMORE Elihu answered and said,

2 Hear my words, ^a O ye wise men; and give ear unto me, ye that have knowledge.

3 For ^b the ear trieth words, as the ^c mouth tasteth meat.

4 Let us ^e choose to us judgment:

^a Prov. i. 5. 1 Cor. x. 15. xiv. 20.
^b vi. 30. xii. 11.
1 Cor. ii. 15.
Heb. v. 14.
^c Heb. *palate*.
xxx. 30. xxxiii. 2. *mag.*
36. Judg. xix. 30. xx. 7. 1 Cor. vi. 2—5. Gal. ii. 11—14. 1 Thes. v. 21.

few are qualified for it, and take pleasure in it: and it is a most important additional charity, when the sick in hospitals are diligently attended by faithful instructors; as it often proves the means of salvation to their souls. But Christ himself is the only effectual *Interpreter*; by his Spirit he shews the sinner the way of acceptance and salvation; who, believing, receives the gift of righteousness, and partakes of sanctification. Through the ransom of the atoning blood, his prayers are answered, his soul is rescued, and perhaps his health and comforts are restored: he comes with joy before the mercy-seat, and beholds by faith the countenance of his reconciled Father; while he waits for the Saviour's appearing to judge the world, with animating hope of receiving that crown of righteousness, which is laid up for him in heaven. In short, the eyes of the Lord are upon all the ways of the children of men: he sees them when committing their secret abominations; he sees them when, convinced of guilt, they condemn themselves, abhor their crimes, are covered with shame, and filled with fear of wrath; and when weary of their sins they long for deliverance: and he will assuredly have mercy upon them, and save them. (*Notes, Jer. xxxi. 18—20. Luke xv. 17—24.*)—By what means soever we are kept back from the pit to be “enlightened with the light of the living,” we shall bless the Lord for them at last, and should bless him for them now, though painful and distressing. To the end of our lives corrections are the needful and salutary means of keeping us near, or bringing us nearer, to God; and, as such, are not only to be submitted to, but to be valued as pledges of his love: for it is immensely better to be “chastened of the Lord, than to be condemned with the world.”—Finally, we should desire to justify others, as far as it can be done consistently with truth: but a wise man will be afraid of too strenuously justifying himself; he will rather hearken to reproof and receive instruction, that he may increase in wisdom and knowledge.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIV. V. 1—4. Elihu, having paused to hear whether Job had any thing to answer, proceeded to call on those present to attend to his discourse. He addressed them as men of wisdom and discernment; and doubted not, that their understandings would decide, whether the expressions which Job had used were proper or not, as readily as the palate distinguishes the taste of meat: “for the ear should try words, as the mouth tasteth food.” This ought to be the case, and was so with men of knowledge. He desired therefore that certain principles might be laid down, according to which they might form a judgment; and that they would confer among

d Is. xi. 2—5. let us ^d know among ourselves what is good.
John vii. 24.
Rom. xii. 2.

e x. 7. xi. 4. xvi. 17. xxix. 14. xxxii. 1. xxxiii. 9.
f ix. 17. xxvii. 2. xxviii. 4—6.
g Heb. arrow. vi. 4. xvi. 13.

h xv. 16. Deut. xxix. 19. Prov. i. 22. iv. 17. ii. 10. xi. 3. xv. 5. Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4. 1. 18. lxxiii. 12—15. Prov. i. 15. ii. 12. iv. 14. xiii. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 33.

k ix. 22. 23. 30. 31. xxi. 14—16. 30. xxii. 17. xxxv. 3. Mal. iii. 14.

l xxvii. 10. Ps. xxxvii. 4.
m Heb. heart. 2. 3. 34. Prov. vi. 32. xv. 32. marg. xxxvii. 23. Gen. xviii. 25. Deut. xxxii. 4. 2 Chr. xix. 7. Ps. xcii. 15. Jer. xii. 1. Rom. iii. 4. 5. ix. 14. Jam. i. 13.

n xxxiii. 26. Ps. lxii. 12. Prov. xxiv. 12. Jer. xxxii. 19. Ez. xxxiii. 17—20. Matt. xvi. 27. Rom. ii. 6. 2 Cor. v. 10. 1 Pet. i. 17. Rev. xxii. 12.

o Prov. i. 31. Gal. vi. 7, 8.
p Ps. xi. 7. cxlv. 17. Hab. i. 12, 13.

11 For ⁿ the work of a man shall he render unto him, and ^o cause every man to find according to *his* ways.

12 Yea, ^p surely God will not do

wickedly, neither will the Almighty ^a pervert judgment.

13 ^r Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath disposed ^t the whole world?

14 If he ^u set his heart ^v upon man, ^w if ^x he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath;

15 ^y All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.

16 If now ^z thou hast understanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words.

17 Shall ^a even he that hateth right ^b govern? and ^c wilt thou condemn him that is most just

18 *Is it fit* ^d to say to a king, *Thou art wicked?* and to princes, *Ye are ungodly?*

19 *How much less to him that* ^e accepteth not the persons of ^f princes, nor ^g regardeth the rich more than the poor? for ^h they all *are* the work of his hands.

q viii. 3. r xxxvi. 23. xxxviii. 4. &c. xl. 8—11. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Prov. viii. 23—30. Is. xl. 13. 14. Dan. iv. 35. Rom. xi. 34—36. t Heb. the world, all of it. u vii. 17. ix. 4. v Heb. upon him. t Ps. civ. 29. Is. xxiv. 22. u xxx. 23. Gen. iii. 19. Ps. xc. 3 —10. Ec. xii. 7. Is. xxvii. 4. lvii. 16. x xii. 3. xiii. 2—6. y Gen. xviii. 25. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. Rom. iii. 5—7. z Heb. bind. a i. 22. xl. 8. 2 Sam. xix. 21. Rom. ix. 14. Ex. xxii. 28. Prov. xvii. 26. Acts xxiii. 3. 5. Rom. xiii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 17. 2 Pet. ii. 10. Jude 8. b xiii. 8. Deut. x. 17. 2 Chr. xix. 7. Acts x. 34. Rom. ii. 11. Gal. ii. 6. Eph. vi. 9. Col. iii. 25. 1 Pet. i. 17. c xii. 19. 21. Ps. ii. 2—4. Ec. v. 8. Is. iii. 14. d xxxvi. 19. Ps. xlix. 6, 7. Jam. ii. 5. e xxxi. 15. Prov. xiv. 31. xxii. 2.

themselves, and come to an explicit determination on the subject.

V. 5—9. In vindicating his character, Job had used language which seemed to imply an intention of fully justifying himself; and, whilst he complained that God dealt rigorously with him, he expressed himself so vehemently, that he appeared to charge God with *injustice*: when urged to confess his crimes, he still more earnestly protested his righteousness, and a determination not to accuse himself falsely; and in his bitter complainings he spake of his *wound as incurable*, without admitting that his *transgressions had deserved it*. (Notes, ix. 14—24. x. 4—7. 14—17. xvi. 17—22. xxi. 7—16. xxvii. 2—6. xxxi. 35—40.) These expressions induced Elihu to conclude, that Job allowed himself in an astonishing licence of language; that he took pleasure in scoffing at the works and truths of God, as well as in scorning the warnings and counsels of his friends; and that he agreed in principles and practice with wicked men, whose company he seemed to prefer, and whose conduct he encouraged; having indeed asserted that no profit would accrue to those, who delighted in God and in his worship and service. Yet Job by no means intended all that Elihu charged upon him. He had not spoken precisely all the words, which, Elihu, quoting from memory, attributed to him; those, which he had used, might admit of a more favourable construction; and other parts of his discourse plainly shewed that his deliberate judgment widely differed from the sentiments, apparently conveyed by some of his detached expressions. He had repeatedly owned that he was a sinner; and he spake of the wicked as reserved to the day of wrath and destruction. (Note, xxi. 27—30.) But Elihu did not condemn Job as

a hypocrite: he therefore quietly submitted to his reproof; choosing, as we may suppose, rather to bear more blame than he deserved, than to vindicate himself when he knew that he had been criminal.—*Which goeth, &c.* (8.) Note, ii. 10.

V. 10—15. Elihu next laid down the principle, by which he desired that Job's conduct might be tried. It must appear, to every pious mind, impious and blasphemous, to intimate that God was capable of committing injustice: but whatever expressions seemed to imply, that he punished without cause, partook of this impiety; and as Job's words implied this charge, they must be condemned. On the contrary it was certain, that the righteous Judge of all would render to every man according to his works; punishing no one above his deserts, nor suffering any of the wicked to escape with impunity; yet graciously rewarding the good works of his upright servants.—And surely none could think that the almighty Sovereign of the world would pervert judgment! His perfections and authority being underived, independent, and absolute, he must be all-sufficient for his own glory and felicity; so that he could not be biassed by fear or partiality. Indeed, if he were disposed to exercise rigorous justice, and to set his heart *upon*, or *against*, man; the world was so absolutely at his disposal, that he needed only to recall the spirit, or soul, and withdraw the breath that he had given; and all the inhabitants of the earth would perish, without being able to make the least resistance. (Notes, vii. 17—21. ix. 4—13.)

V. 16—19. In the next place Elihu appealed to Job himself, who was reputed to be a man of understanding, Could he suppose that the great God resembled those earthly

^f Ps. lxxiii. 19. Is. xxx. 13. xxxvii. 38. Dan. v. 30. Luke xii. 20. Acts xii. 23. 1 Thes. v. 2. 2 Pet. ii. 3. ^g Ex. xii. 29. Is. xxxvii. 36. Matt. xxv. 6. Luke xvii. 26—29. ^{* Heb. they shall take away the mighty.}

20 In ^a a moment shall they die, and the people shall be ^z troubled at midnight, and pass away: and ^{*} the mighty shall be taken away ^h without hand.

21 For ⁱ his eyes *are* upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings.

22 *There is* ^k no darkness, ^l nor shadow of death, where ^m the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

23 For ⁿ he will not lay upon man more *than right*; ^o that he should enter into judgment with God.

24 He shall ^p break in pieces mighty men without ^q number, and ^r set others in their stead.

25 Therefore ^r he knoweth their works, and he overturneth *them* ^s in the night, so that they are ^t destroyed.

^u Prov. x. 29. Matt. vii. 23. Luke xiii. 27. n 10—12. xi. 6. Ezra ix. 13. Ps. cxix. 137. Dan. ix. 7—9. o ix. 32, 33. xvi. 21. xxiii. 7. Jer. ii. 5. Rom. ix. 20. ^{† Heb. go.} p xix. 2. Ps. ii. 9. lxxii. 4. xciv. 5. Jer. li. 20—23. Dan. ii. 34, 35. 44, 45. ^{‡ Heb. searching out.} q 1 Sam. ii. 30—36. xv. 28. 1 Kings xiv. 7, 8, 14. Ps. cxiii. 7, 8. Dan. v. 28—31. r Ps. xxxiii. 15. Is. lxvi. 18. Hos. vii. 2. Am. viii. 7. Rev. xx. 12. s 20. Cant. iii. 8. Is. xv. 1. 1 Thes. v. 2. ^{§ Heb. crushed.}

princes, who hate right, and abuse their authority, and who are unfit to rule, being the scourges of mankind? If he abhorred that idea, would he allow God to be most just, and yet condemn his conduct in afflicting him? It would be highly criminal, and extremely imprudent, to revile an earthly monarch as a tyrant, or even his nobles as iniquitous and oppressive: or even, to charge blame upon them, without cause. How impious and infatuated must it then be to accuse the almighty God in such a manner, whose justice is as absolute as his authority; and who in perfect impartiality regards the poor as much as the rich, having formed both as his creatures, and made the one poor and the other rich, in his providence! (Notes, Ex. xxiii. 6—9. Prov. xxii. 2. Acts x. 34, 35. Jam. ii. 1—7.)

V. 20—30. Men respect the great, from dread of their resentment, as well as desire of their favour; but God could have no inducement of this kind. If then he saw good to inflict vengeance, he was able to cut off the most powerful, by a sudden and irresistible stroke: as earthquakes or other calamities sometimes in a moment overwhelmed whole multitudes, at midnight, when asleep or most secure; at once they were troubled and destroyed, even the mightiest of them, without any human concurrence. (Notes, Gen. xix. 24, 25. Ex. xii. 29, 30. xiv. 24—31. 2 Kings xix. 35—37. Ps. lxxiii. 18—22.) His omnipresence and omniscience could not be evaded, nor his omnipotence resisted; (Marg. Ref. i—1;) yet he would punish none above their deserts, nor use his power to oppress, that any one should have just cause to institute a process against him. But whilst he crushed the mightiest without number, (or *search*, as if he must take time to examine evidences,) and exalted others to their stations; he knew all their secret sins, and therefore destroyed them at once. Many he thus openly punished, for an example to others, as malefactors are scourged or executed publicly: especially apostates, or impious persons, or hypocrites; who by their oppression of the poor, caused them to cry

26 He striketh them as wicked men ^t in the ^u open sight of others;

27 Because they ^v turned back ^{*} from him, and ^w would not consider any of his ways.

28 So that ^x they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, ^y and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.

29 ^a When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and ^b when he hideth *his* face, ^c who then can behold him? ^d whether *it be done* against a nation, or against a man only:

30 ^e That the hypocrite reign not, lest the people be ensnared.

31 Surely ^f it is meet to be said unto God, I have born ^g *chastisement*, I will not offend *any more*:

^{xxx. 7. cxliii. 7. c xii. 14. xxiii. 13. d 2 Kings xviii. 9—12 2 Chr. xxxvi. 14—17. Jer. xxvii. 8. e 21. 1 Kings xii. 28—30. 2 Kings xxi. 9. Ps. xii. 8. Ec. ix. 18. Hos. v. 11. xiii. 11. Mic. vi. 16. 2 Thes. ii. 4—11. Rev. xiii. 3, 4. 11—14. f xxxiii. 27. xl. 3—5. xlii. 6. Lev. xxvi. 41. Ezra ix. 13, 14. Neh. ix. 33—38. Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. Dan. ix. 7—14. Mic. vii. 9.}

and pray unto him, and he heard and avenged them. (Notes, xxii. 5—14. xxiv. 2—12. xxxi. 16—23. 38—40.) In short, if he were pleased to give outward prosperity or inward peace, none could interrupt it: but if he in anger withdrew his protecting or comforting presence, none could obtain the benefit or enjoyment of it; and whole nations were as liable to these changes as individuals. Indeed, one great design of all these dispensations was, to deprive ambitious hypocrites of the authority, which they sought by iniquitous means, and abused to bad purposes; ensnaring, corrupting, oppressing, or fatally prejudicing the people, over whom they aspired to reign.—Even Elihu seems to have had some suspicions, that Job was a dissembler; and spake as if he was at a loss how to reconcile his calamities with his character for piety; and thought the case would have been plain, if he had been a hypocrite, advanced to authority, but now depressed, lest he should lead the people into sin and misery. Yet he did not venture to condemn him, but hoped the best.

When he giveth, &c. (29) Or, “If he impart peace, “who can condemn a man as wicked?” (Notes, Rom. v. 1, 2. viii. 28—34.)

V. 31—37. Elihu maintained, that it behoved Job to speak and act in a far different manner under his afflictions: it was meet that any man, in his situation, should express himself with humble resignation to the will of God; should consider his afflictions as a chastisement, and a call to repent of his sins; and should purpose and promise greater watchfulness against them. He ought to intreat the Lord to teach him what he did not know, and to convince him of those sins which he did not recollect; determining by divine grace to repent and forsake them. But could Job suppose, that things would be ordered according to his mind, while he continued so rebellious? Did he expect that God would change his plan to please him? No; he would certainly recompense him for his harsh and rash speeches, and his other sins, whether he

g x. 2. Ps. xix. 12. xxv. 4, 5. cxxxix. 23, 24. cxliii 8—10. h Prov xxviii. 13. Luke iii. 8—14. Eph. iv. 25—28. i ix. 12. xviii. 4. Is. xlv. 9. Rom. ix. 20. xi. 35. * Heb. *from with thee?* k 11. xv. 31. Ps. lxxxix. 30—32. Prov xi. 31. 2 Thes. i. 6, 7. Heb. ii. 2. xi. 26. l Ps. cxxxv. 6. Matt. xx. 12—15. m xxxiii. 5, 32.

32 *That^s which* I see not, teach thou me: ^h if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

33 ⁱ *Should it be* ^{*} according to thy mind? ^k he will recompense it, ^l whether thou refuse, or whether thou choose; and not I: therefore speak ^m what thou knowest.

34 Let men of [†] understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.

† Heb. *heart*. 2. 4. 10. 16. 1 Cor. x. 15

35 Job ^a hath spoken without knowledge, and his words *were* without wisdom.

36 ^{*} My desire is *that* Job may be [†] tried unto the end, because of ^p his answers for wicked men.

37 For he addeth ^a rebellion unto his sin, [†] he clappeth *his hands* among us, and ^{*} multiplieth his words against God.

n xlii. 2. xv. 2. xxxv. 16. xxxviii. 2. xlii. 3.

† Or, *My father, let Job, &c.* o xxiii. 16. Ps. xvii. 3. xxvi. 2. Jam. v. 11. p 8, 9. xii. 6. xxi. 7. xxiv. 1. q 1 Sam. xv. 23. Is. i. 19. 20. r xxvii. 23. s viii. 2, 3. xi. 2, 3. xxxv. 2, 3. 16. xlii. 7.

rebelled against the correction, or submitted to it. This was the Lord's doing, not Elihu's; though he warned him, and advised him to retract his words, and humble himself before God. Let him, however, give the best reasons for his conduct, that he was able; for hitherto any wise man would determine Job's words to have been very erroneous. He desired therefore that his conduct might be fully investigated, nay, that his heavy trials might continue till he was humbled, and brought to retract his confident self-justification: for he had in fact made an excuse for wicked men, as if their conduct was not so ruinous and hateful as it really was. So that rebellion against Providence was added to his other sins: yea, he had concluded his protestation of innocence, with an air of insulting triumph over his opponents; and had multiplied his words against God himself. (Note, xxxi. 35—40.)—Job had given some ground for these charges: but Elihu evidently made the worst of his expressions, and criminated him much more than the Lord afterwards did. (Notes, xxxviii. 2. xl. 1—8. xlii. 1—9.)—Several of the clauses in these verses are to us very difficult, and consequently are differently interpreted. That which appeared the most satisfactory interpretation has been chosen. Bishop Patrick paraphrases the thirty-third verse thus: 'Hast thou addressed thyself to God in this manner? Answer me that question; for God will recompense it, if thou dost despise such good counsel; which perhaps thou wilt choose to do; but so would not I. Speak therefore what thy opinion is.'

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—15.

It is generally prudent to conciliate the affections of all, whose benefit we seek, or whose help we want, by acknowledging in them the good which they really possess; and when we address men, as endued with wisdom and piety, we cogently admonish them to act consistently with their character: nor should we withhold this tribute of respect from any, because we deem them in some respects mistaken.—An appeal may safely be made to the plainest person, whose understanding is enlightened, and whose heart is sanctified, by the Spirit of God, and who is well versed in the Scriptures, how far such and such sentiments, expressions, tempers, and actions, accord with the Christian character: and he will readily decide a case, when impartially stated, with more accuracy, than the most sagacious of those, who are wise in this world, and "lean to their own understanding." For he chooses to himself the oracles of God as his standard; and by experience, observation, and conference with his brethren, he has his

"senses exercised to discern good and evil," and to know, approve, and savour that which is good. (Notes, Phil. i. 9—11. Heb. v. 11—14.)—It is discordant in the ears of a spiritual man, to hear persons intent on justifying themselves; or reflecting on the dealings of God, as unjust or unkind; or supposing that they suffer without remedy, or transgression. He listens to their words with distress and astonishment, and is apt to suspect them of pride, and contempt of God. He thinks, that they imitate the example, and join themselves to the company, of evil doers, and he is ready to infer, that they consider religion itself as unprofitable. This jealousy for the honour of God, and deep acquaintance with the depravity of man, will indeed sometimes render pious persons too suspicious; and too severe in censuring such as vindicate themselves from unjust aspersions, in an unguarded manner: and thus they will fail of making due allowance for circumstances of peculiar temptation and difficulty. But the believer, when convinced that his reprover means well, and when conscious of having deserved censure, will, on calm reflection, submit to those rebukes which are too rigorous, rather than engage in minute exculpation.—All pious men have ever agreed, that it is delightful and profitable to serve God; they all abhor the thought of charging him with injustice; they are satisfied that his moral perfections are underived, absolute, and unchangeable, as well as his power and authority; they know that he readily could, and justly might, consign the bodies of all the millions of the human species to the dust, and their souls to destruction; and it appears to them madness to provoke him "in whom our breath is, and whose are all our ways." And while life and hope remain, they cannot deliberately allow, that a sinner can have cause to murmur, but are sure that he must have great cause to be thankful.

V. 16—37.

It is evident, that it must be immensely more dangerous and atrocious to arraign the conduct of God, than that of any earthly prince. Yet all our murmurs, when duly investigated, will be found to have a tendency to the blasphemous sentiment, that the Governor of the world hates right: they condemn him who is most just, and are therefore pregnant with rebellion. But indeed his impartiality and condescension are infinite; "he accepts not the persons of princes, nor regards the rich more than the poor." When he sees good to punish, destruction is inevitable; and frequently comes with sudden and dreadful surprise, upon the careless multitude, or the haughtiest potentate. "His eyes are upon the ways of men, and he seeth all

CHAP. XXXV.

Elihu further reproves Job's words in justifying himself; and shews, that the effects of man's conduct extend to man alone, and not to God, 1—8. He observes, that if God hear not the cry of the oppressed, it is because they do not address him aright, 9—13. He exhorts Job to patience and trust in God, 14—16.

ELIHU spake moreover, and said,

2 ^aThinkest thou this to be right, ^bthat thou saidst, ^bMy righteousness is more than God's?

3 For thou saidst, ^cWhat advantage will it be unto thee? ^dand, What profit shall I have, ^eif I be cleansed from my sin?

^a Matt. xii. 36, 37.
Luke xix. 22.
^b ix. 17. x. 7. xvi.
17. xix. 6, 7.
xxvii. 2. xxxiv.
5. xl. 8.

^c ix. 21, 22. x. 15.
xxi. 15. Ps.
lxxiii. 13. Mal.
iii. 14.

^e Or, by it more
than by my sin.

“their goings:” there is no secret cavern, or midnight-darkness, “where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves” or their crimes, from their omnipresent Judge; or where they may shelter themselves from his omnipotent indignation. But he will never give any man cause to appeal from his judgment, by laying upon him more than he deserves. He knows the works of all men, and sees far more evil in every one of us, than we suspect: therefore in his most terrible judgments his justice must be acknowledged; and even when “the wicked shall be turned into hell, and “all the nations that forget God,” the publishing of their crimes will demonstrate the righteousness of their dreadful doom. But the vengeance of the Almighty, either here or hereafter, will be most terrible against apostate professors of his holy religion; those who have deliberately rejected his authority, and his gospel; and such as have cloaked their ambitious designs under a hypocritical profession of piety. Men of these characters will perhaps be disappointed and exposed in this world, for a warning to others, and to prevent the effect of their crimes. It is however certain, that those who have the Lord for their adversary must eventually be wretched. But, if “he be “for us, who can be against us?” If he give quietness, who “can create trouble?” The slanderer's envenomed tongue, the persecutor's cruel rage, the tempter's malicious assaults, with pain, poverty, tortures, and impending death, in vain attempt to render those miserable whom God comforts, or to separate his people from his love. This “indeed is the heritage of the servants of the LORD;” but it is also proposed to the chief of sinners: and chastenings often concur with his word in warning them “to “flee from the wrath to come.” It is meet, that we should address ourselves unto God, when he afflicts us, with the language of humble submission: confessing our transgressions, and praying to be further enlightened in the knowledge of his truth, and in an acquaintance with our own sinfulness; and that he would incline and enable us to repent; and to forsake all our sins; that “where we have “done iniquity, we may do so no more.” When we are brought to this frame of spirit, we shall see it unreasonable to expect that matters should be according to our minds: we shall perceive, that whether we refuse or choose, God will chasten us as much and as long as he sees good; and probably this will be, till we kiss the rod and welcome the

4 I will ^fanswer thee, and ^fthy companions with thee.

5 ^gLook unto the heavens, and see; and behold ^gthe clouds *which* are higher than thou.

6 If thou sinnest, ^hwhat doest thou against him? or ^hif thy transgressions be multiplied, what doest thou unto him?

7 If thou be righteous, ⁱwhat givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thine hand?

8 Thy wickedness ^jmay hurt a man as thou art; and thy righteousness ^kmay profit the son of man.

^f Heb. *return to thee words.*
d xxxiv. 8. Prov.
xiii. 20.

^e xxii. 12. xxv. 5,
6. xxxvi. 26—33.
xxxvii. 1—5. 22,
23. 1 Kings viii.
27. Ps. viii. 3, 4
Is. xl. 22, 23. lv.
9.

^f xxxvi. 29. xxxvii.
16. Nah. i. 3.
^g Prov. viii. 36. ix.
12. Jer. vii. 19.

^h xxii. 2, 3. 1 Chr.
xxix. 14. Ps. xvi.
2. Rom. xi. 35.
ⁱ Josh. vii. 1—5.
24, 25. xxii. 20.
Ec. ix. 18. Jon.
i. 12.

^k xlii. 8. Gen. xii.
2. xviii. 24, &c.
xix. 29. Ps. cvi.
23. 30. Ez. xxii.
30. Acts xxvii.
24. Heb. xi. 7.

correction. But alas! how often are our tempers and conduct contrary to this reasonable state of mind!—When we have spoken all we know, men of understanding and wisdom will agree that we have uttered things, which sprang from ignorance or error, or savour of pride and ingratitude; nay, we shall often upon a review be conscious of it ourselves. As far as this emboldens wicked men in their crimes, or hardens them in their prejudices, it should be openly retracted; and all concerned should combine to convince the offender and bring him to repentance. This is an act of genuine friendship: but we should be careful not to do it with asperity, or to represent the words and actions of our brethren, as worse than they are. It is, however, desirable for us all to be tried completely; and even to have our afflictions continued, till they have done their work: for it is better to be severely reprov'd and chastened, than to be left to persevere in rebellion, to prosper in iniquity, to triumph in error, and to multiply words and transgressions against God.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXV. V. 1—3. As Job attempted no answer, Elihu proceeded still further to reprove his improper language. Job had laboured to prove, that there was no exact discrimination in this world between the righteous and the wicked; and he seemed to Elihu to assert that it would be no advantage to any one, (as it had been none to him,) to seek diligently to be cleansed from sin. This he thought equivalent to saying, “that his righteousness was more “than God's:” for he did his duty; but God did not fulfil his promises, nay, he punished him more severely than he deserved. Job had not spoken exactly these words, and certainly had no such meaning: but he had dropped some expressions capable of being thus understood; and it was proper they should be noticed, lest others should make a bad use of them. (Notes, ix. 22—24. x. 4—7. xxi. 7—16. xxvii. 2—6.)

If I be cleansed *from my sin* (3) מִכִּלְטִי: “by it more “than by my sin.” (Marg.) This appears to be the more exact rendering. ‘What profit shall I have by my righteousness more than by my sin?’

V. 4—8. In answer to Job, and to those, whether present or absent, who were disposed to side with him, Elihu called his attention to the visible heavens; the very clouds

l xxiv. 12. xxxiv. 28. Ex. ii. 23. iii. 7. 9. Neh. v. 1—5. Ps. xii. 5. xliii. 2. lv. 2, 3. lvi. 1, 2. Luke xviii. 3—7. m xl. 9. Ps. x. 15. n xxxvi. 13. 1 Chr. x. 13, 14. 2 Chr. xxviii. 22, 23. Is. p viii. 21. o Ec. xii. 1. Is. li. 13. 1 Pet. iv. 19. p xxxii. 22. xxxvi. 3. Is. liv. 5. q Ps. xliii. 8. lxxvii. 6. cxix. 62. cxlix. 5. Acts xvi. 25. r xxxii. 8. Gen. i. 26. ii. 7. Ps. xciv. 12. s Ps. xviii. 41. Prov. i. 28. John ix. 31. t Ps. lxxiii. 6—8. cxxiii. 3, 4. Is. xiv. 14—17.

9 By reason of the multitude of oppressions, ¹ they make *the oppressed* to cry; they cry out by reason of ^m the arm of the mighty.

10 But ⁿ none saith, ^o Where is God my Maker, ^q who giveth songs in the night;

11 Who ^r teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, and maketh us wiser than the fowls of heaven?

12 ^s There they cry, but none giveth answer, ^t because of the pride of evil men.

13 Surely ^u God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty ^v regard it.

14 Although ^w thou sayest thou shalt not see him, ^x yet judgment is before him; therefore ^y trust thou in him.

15 But now, ^z because *it is not so*, ^a he hath ^b visited in his anger; yet ^c he knoweth *it* not ^d in great extremity:

16 Therefore doth Job ^e open his mouth in vain; he multiplieth words without knowledge.

* That is, God. c Ps. lxxxix. 32. Rev. iii. 19. 5. xxx. 15, &c. Ps. lxxxviii. 11—16. Heb. xii. 11, 12. xxxiv. 35—37. xxxviii. 2. xlii. 3.

† That is, Job. d iv. e iii. 1. xxxiii. 2, 8—12. Luke i. 20.

of which were higher than he, out of his reach, and not in the least affected by his conduct: it must then be evident, that the infinitely glorious God could not be either a gainer or loser by any of his actions. (Note, xxii. 1—4.) The most numerous and atrocious crimes, which men could perpetrate, would not interrupt the divine felicity; nor could any human righteousness profit God, or confer an obligation upon him. His government was therefore administered upon the purest principles of equity and wisdom, for the display of his own glorious perfections, and for the greatest good of the universe. And therefore, as the Lord acted upon such fixed and immutable principles; it was absurd and impious, to suppose that he deviated from rectitude, in any particular instance, to punish those who did not deserve it; or that piety could eventually prove unprofitable to the pious man himself.

V. 9—13. Job had stated that the oppressed cry out, but are not delivered, and that the oppressors remain unpunished: (Note, xxiv. 2—12:) and Elihu, in shewing how the wickedness of some men made others to suffer, attempted to account for this. The afflicted cried out indeed by reason of the power of their oppressors: but they did not repent, or seek comfort from God, who can fill the hearts of his servants with joy, and their mouths with songs of praise, in the darkest night of distress. (Notes, Ps. xlii. 6—10. Hab. iii. 17—19. Acts xvi. 25—28. Rom. v. 3—5.)—The Creator had endued men with a capacity of knowing more than the beasts and fowls; having formed them capable of receiving the knowledge of his being and perfections, his works, and truths, and precepts: and thus of seeking help and comfort from him, under their troubles. But those who only *groaned* under distresses, without repentance, faith, or prayer, did no more than the brutes, which cry out when they are pained. Therefore they receive no answer from God, when suffering under the oppression of proud tyrants; for he would not regard the *vain* and rebellious complaints of ungodly men. (Notes, Judg. x. 13—16. 2 Sam. xxii. 37—42. Prov. i. 24—31. Is. lvii. 13. lviii. 2—12. lix. 1—8. John ix. 27—34.) And indeed Job's complaint, that the Lord would not hear his cry, (xix. 7,) as Elihu supposed, originated from a similar cause: for though he might not be an ungodly man, yet he had not duly humbled himself under his afflictions, and therefore he was disregarded.

V. 14—16. Job had frequently expressed himself, as not having any hope, that the Lord would appear for his

relief; but Elihu reminded him, that God set judgment before him, and always acted in wisdom, equity, and faithfulness: he would therefore certainly do him justice; and he would likewise shew him mercy, if he duly sought it; and he exhorted him to trust in him and wait his time. But as he had yielded to unbelief and impatience, the Lord had visited him in anger; and so long as he indulged the same rebellious spirit, he would not *know him*, or *take any favourable notice of him*, in his greatest extremity. Therefore he hitherto had spoken to no purpose; but had multiplied inconsiderate and sinful words, in disputing with his friends, when he ought to have been humbling himself before God.

He knoweth it not. (15) 'Job (*marg.*) knoweth not, or doth not acknowledge, his sin; or knoweth not how he ought to act, though exceedingly tried and afflicted.'—So many understand the clause.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is very useful to appeal to men's reason and conscience, concerning their conduct in those things, which have been evidently faulty: for many speak and do in haste, and when warmed in dispute, what they will not deliberately justify. Indeed, the expressions of men, when angry, are often worse than their meaning: and though it is unfair to condemn them for *inferences* which they disallow; yet it is proper to shew them, how their words may produce bad consequences; in order that they may be humbled for their rashness, and speak more cautiously another time.—The immensity of the works of God may lead us to some feeble apprehensions of his infinite Majesty; and the consideration of his underived and unchangeable glory and felicity should convince us, that all his commandments, judgments, and dispensations result from his unchangeable perfections. He forbids and punishes that which is evil in itself, and tends to misery: he commands and delights in what is good and tends to felicity, without any possible accession to his own infinite blessedness. This is the proper display of his own glory, and demands the tribute of our adoring praise. The Judge of all the earth cannot but do what is right, though we are often incapable of discerning the reasons of his conduct: but, as we have all multiplied transgressions against him, and as he cannot receive any thing from us, which he has not first given unto us, we can have no cause to complain of hard measure when afflicted: and as our Judge is now, as a Saviour, on

CHAP. XXXVI.

Elihu requires attention, while, with truth and knowledge, he shews the justice of God in all his judgments, the designs of his chastisements, and the profit of making a right use of them, 1—15. He reproves, warns, and counsels Job, 16—21. He reminds him that the power of God is uncontroulable; and that his works and dispensations should be magnified, but cannot be comprehended, 22—33.

ELIHU also proceeded, and said,
2 ^a Suffer me a little, and I will shew thee that ^b *I have yet to speak* ^c on God's behalf.
3 I will ^d fetch my knowledge from afar, and will ^e ascribe righteousness to my Maker.
4 For truly ^f my words *shall not be*

a xxi. 3. xxxiii. 31. —33. Heb. xiii. 22.
* Heb. there are yet words for God.
b xlii. 7, 8. xxxiii. 6. Ex. iv. 16. Jer. xv. 19. Ez. ii. 7. 2 Cor. v. 20.
c xxxviii. 12, 13. 20—24. xxxii. 8. Prov. ii. 4, 5. Matt. ii. 1, 2. xli. 42. Acts viii. 27, &c. Rom. x. 6—8. Jam. i. 5. 17. iii. 17.
d xxxii. 2. xxxiv. 5. 10—12. Deut. xxxii. 4. Ps. xi. 7. cxlv. 17. Jer. xii. 1. Dan. ix. 7. 14. Rom. iii. 25, 26. ix. 14. Rev. xv. 3.
e xlii. 4. 7. xxi. 27. 34. xxii. 6, &c. Prov. viii. 7. 8. 2 Cor. ii. 17.

a mercy-seat, we can have no reason to conclude, that it would be in vain for us to repent, to seek forgiveness, and to cleanse ourselves from our iniquities: and when impatience, pride, and unbelief suggest such conclusions, we associate ourselves for the time with the workers of iniquity, and expose ourselves to just reproofs.—Whilst a righteous man becomes a publick blessing, in proportion to his station in society, the exalted oppressor multiplies iniquities and miseries: and though the oppressed, through their own criminality, may fail of finding redress; or though God may leave them for a time under this trial for their good; yet he will certainly at length punish the haughty oppressor. But how few of the afflicted, who groan under their miseries, enquire after God and trust in his name! The most, even of the wretched, disregard their obligations and accountableness to him, and refuse to repent and humble themselves for their sins, and to seek forgiveness and comfort from him. But to humble believers he causes light to arise in the darkness; and he fills their mouths with songs of deliverance, in the midnight season of tribulation.—God our Creator having formed us after his own likeness, has made us far more capable of knowledge than the brute creation: but alas! sin has rendered us more stupid in many things than they; and, except we partake of renewing grace, we are prone to murmur under our sufferings, without enquiring after the cause or the remedy. These howlings of distress are not acceptable to God: they are vain, selfish, and consistent with the grossest impiety and enmity: and therefore we need not wonder, that impenitent sufferers are left, without succour, to endure the just punishment of their obstinate wickedness, even from the hands of oppressors more wicked than themselves.—If pious persons are betrayed into any degree of a similar spirit, and delay to humble themselves under the afflicting hand of God, or to seek all their help and comfort from him; they may expect that their trials will be continued, till they are reduced to a better temper. In all these things “the LORD is a God of judgment, and by his actions are weighed.” All his works are in wisdom and justice; and he shews mercy to those who humbly trust in him. But when his corrections excite obstinacy,

false: he that is ‘perfect’ in knowledge is with thee.

5 Behold, God is mighty, and ^b despiseth not *any*: he is ‘mighty in strength and’ ^c wisdom.

6 He ^k preserveth not the life of the wicked; but ^l giveth right to the ^m poor.

7 He ⁿ withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous: but ^o with kings are they on the throne; yea, ^p he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.

8 And ^q if they be bound in fetters, and be holden in ^r cords of affliction;

9 Then ^s he sheweth them their work

f xxxviii. 16. Luke i. 8. Acts xxiv. 22. 1 Cor. xiv. 20. Marg. Col. iv. 12. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.
g Ps. xlix. 3. Prov. xxii. 20, 21.
h x. 3. xxxi. 13. Ps. xxii. 24. cxxxviii. 6.
i ix. 4. 19. xii. 13 —16. xxvi. 12—14. xxxvii. 23. Ps. xcix. 4. cxlvii. 5. Jer. x. 12. 1 Cor. i. 24—28. + Heb. heart.
k xxi. 7—9. 30. Ps. lv. 23. Jer. xii. 1, 2. 2 Pet. ii. 9.
l xxix. 12—17. Ps. ix. 12. x. 14, 15. lxxii. 4. 12—14. Jxxxii. 1—4. Prov. xxii. 22, 23. Is. xi. 4.
m 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 18. xxxiv. 15. Zeph. iii. 17. 1 Pet. iii. 12.
n i. 3. xlii. 12. Gen. xxiii. 6. xli. 40. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Esth. x. 3. Ps. lxxviii. 70—72. cxlii. 7, 8. o 2 Sam. vii. 13—16. Ps. cxii. 7—10. 2 Thes. iii. 3. p xlii. 27. xix. 6. xxxiii. 18, 19. Ps. xviii. 5. cvii. 10. cxvi. 3. Lam. iii. 9. q Prov. v. 22. r x. 2. Deut. iv. 21, 22. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11—13. Ps. xciv. 12. cxix. 67. 71. Lam. iii. 39, 40. Luke xv. 17—19. 1 Cor. xi. 32.

impatience, and unbelief, he will infuse more anger into the bitter cup; he will withhold comfort, and appear to disregard the extremities, to which even his people are reduced. Then their rebellious murmurs only add to their guilt and vexation, and they multiply words without knowledge, in attempting to excuse themselves. Let us not then, under affliction, prolong our own misery, by keeping at a distance from the throne of grace, standing in our own vindication, expecting help from other quarters, or despairing of help from God: but let us call upon him in our troubles, and he will hear us, and we shall praise him.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXVI. V. 1—4. As Job still received Elihu's reproofs in humble silence, Elihu again demanded his attention: indeed, he supposed that he was entitled to it, as he was speaking in the cause of God, and to vindicate his righteousness, which had been *apparently* denied. He had some arguments to adduce, which had not occurred to the other speakers, and which were brought from afar, or originally derived from divine revelation: he promised that he would admit of no flattery, calumny, or sophistry into his discourse; and he was confident that his knowledge upon the subject, was so clear and complete, as to be worthy of their most serious regard.

V. 5—15. In this passage Elihu laid down his system of divine providence; in which he spake more accurately than the other disputants had done, without attempting to decide upon Job's character. Yet he seems to have leaned to the sentiments of Job's friends, that, in some way or other, *temporal* deliverance and prosperity, or the contrary, generally distinguished betwixt the righteous and the wicked.—He observed that God was “mighty in strength and wisdom:” yet, contrary to the common example of the wise and powerful in this world, he despised not the persons or causes of the meanest of his subjects; he overlooked none, and oppressed none; and he noticed the most ignorant, poor, and contemptible of the earth, and would surely do them justice; yea, they all partook of his common benefits; and the criminal likewise of his special mercies, when willing to seek for them.—Elihu further

^s Ps. v. 10. Is. lix. 12. Ez. xviii. 28—31. Rom. v. 20. 1 Tim. i. 15. and 'their transgressions, that they have exceeded.

^t 15. xxxiii. 16—23. Ps. xl. 6. Is. xlviii. 8. 17. 1. 5. Acts xvi. 14. 10 He 'openeth also their ear to discipline, and 'commandeth that they return from iniquity.

^u Prov. i. 22, 23. viii. 4, 5. ix. 4—6. Is. i. 16—20. lv. 6, 7. Jer. iv. 3, 4. vii. 3—7. Ez. xviii. 30, 31. Hos. xiv. 1. Matt. iii. 8. Acts iii. 19. xvii. 30. Jam. iv. 8. 11 * If they obey and serve *him*, they shall 'spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures:

^x xxii. 21. &c. Deut. iv. 30, 31. Is. i. 19. Jer. vii. 23. xxvi. 13. Rom. vi. 17. Heb. xi. 8. 12 But * if they obey not, they shall 'perish by the sword, and they shall 'die without knowledge.

^y xi. 13—19. xxi. 11—13. xxii. 23—25. xlii. 12. Ec. ix. 2, 3. Jam. v. 5. Rev. xviii. 7. 13 But the hypocrites in heart ^b heap up wrath: ^c they cry not when he ^d bindeth them.

^z Deut. xviii. 15, &c. xxix. 15—20. Is. i. 20. iii. 11. Rom. ii. 8, 9. 14 [†] They ^e die in youth, and their life is among the ^f unclean.

^{* Heb. pass away.} 15 He 'delivereth the 'poor in his affliction, and ^g openeth their ears in oppression.

^a iv. 21. John viii. 31—24. ^b Num. xxxii. 14. 2 Chr. xxviii. 13. 22. Rom. ii. 5. ^c xv. 4. xxvii. 8—10. xxxv. 9, 10. Matt. xxii. 12, 13.

^d 5. Ps. cvii. 10. [†] Heb. Their soul dieth. ^e xv. 32. xxi. 23—25. Gen. xxxviii. 7—10. Lev. x. 1, 2. Ps. lv. 23. [†] Or, sodomites. Gen. xix. 5, 24, 25. Deut. xxiii. 17. ^f 6. [†] Or, afflicted. ^g 10. 2 Chr. xii. 8. ^h xix. 8. xlii. 10—17. Ps. xviii. 19. xxxi. 8. xl. 1—3. cxviii. 5.

stated, that wicked men were not under that *peculiar protection*, which secured the righteous; and therefore their lives were more exposed, and generally terminated prematurely; and this indeed might often take place by the judgment of God, in doing right to the poor whom they had injured. But assuredly He continually noticed and took care of his people: sometimes he advanced them to temporal authority; they were at all times watched over, with as much care as the greatest monarchs, whose lives were of great importance to multitudes; and they would be sure at last to be established for ever, in the most exalted and glorious state. If in this world, they were imprisoned by oppressors, or in any other way afflicted and distressed, it was intended for their benefit: the Lord would then shew them whatever was sinful in their conduct; thus he would dispose them to receive instruction, and enforce their obligations to repent and turn from every sin, and follow after holiness. (*Notes, Heb. xii. 4—13.*) When they were brought more humbly and faithfully to submit and to obey, and worship him, he would restore and increase their comforts and prosperity, and they would spend their lives in peace and pleasure. But if any continued obstinate and impenitent, they might expect to be cut off by some sudden judgment, and to perish in their sins. Thus hypocrites, who cloked their secret crimes with a shew of piety, treasured up wrath: because, when bound with "the cords of affliction," they refused to humble themselves and cry for help unto God. They were therefore often cut off prematurely, or left to apostatize, and spend their lives among the most atrocious sinners, increasing their own condemnation: and at last they would be doomed to misery with the most abominable transgressors, such as were the *unclean inhabitants of Sodom*. (*Marg.*) But the poor in spirit, the humble and contrite, would certainly

place, where *there is* no straitness: and ⁱ that which should be set on thy table ⁱ should be ⁱ full of fatness.

17 But thou hast ^k fulfilled the judgment of the wicked; judgment and justice ^k take hold on thee.

18 ^l Because *there is* wrath, *beware* lest he take thee away with ^m his stroke, ⁿ then a great ransom cannot [†] deliver thee.

19 ^o Will he esteem thy riches? *no*, not gold, ^p nor all the forces of strength.

20 ^q Desire not the night, when people are ^r cut off in their place.

21 Take heed, ^s regard not iniquity: for ^t this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.

22 Behold, ^u God exalteth by his power; ^v who teacheth like him?

23 ^v Who hath enjoined him his way? ^x Ps. xciv. 10. Is. xlviii. 17. liv. 13. Jer. xxxi. 33. John vi. 45. y xxxiv. 13—33. Is. xl. 13, 14. Rom. xi. 34. 1 Cor. ii. 16. Eph. i. 11.

be delivered from their afflictions; and their oppressions would prove lessons of useful and durable instruction.—*Exceeded.* (9) Or, *strengthened themselves.*

V. 16—21. Elihu next applied his doctrine to the case of Job. He was persuaded, that God would, before that time, have delivered him out of trouble, and restored him to liberty, comfort, and plenty, if he had behaved properly under correction. But he had copied the language, and sanctioned the rebellions, of the wicked. It was not therefore necessary to determine what his former character had been: at present he certainly was suffering justly; and, as the wrath of God was kindled against him, instead of persevering to provoke the Lord by presumptuous murmurs, he ought to be very careful what he spake: for a single stroke of Omnipotence, suddenly inflicted in wrath, would take him away beyond the reach of any ransom: so that, if he had possessed all the riches and power in the world, it would not be accepted, nor avail, for the deliverance of his soul. He ought not therefore, so earnestly to desire (or *pant after*) the *night of death*, that he might rest from his sufferings: for in his present rebellious state of mind it was likely to come in wrath, if at all; and he should remember, that men by it were cut off, in that *place*, or *state*, in which they had lived and were found, and their sentence was then rendered irreversible. He ought therefore to take heed, that he allowed himself in no sin, and especially that he did not unjustly reflect upon God; for it had appeared from many of his expressions, that he actually chose iniquity rather than affliction.—No doubt Elihu in this conclusion was far too severe on Job; for, though he had impatiently and rashly wished for death, he had never at all insinuated that he preferred sin to suffering.

V. 22—33. Elihu here again renewed his attempt to convince Job of his presumption, by representing to him

^z viii. 3 xxxiv. 10. ^{or} who can say, 'Thou hast wrought iniquity?'

^a xii. 13. &c. xxvii. 5—14. Ps. xxviii. 5. xxxiv. 3. lxxvii. 18. lxxxvi. 8—10. xcii. 4, 5. civ. 24. cvii. 8. cxi. 2—4. cxxxix. 5, 6. lxi. 10—12. Jer. x. 12, 13. Dan. iv. 3. 37. Luke i. 46—55. Rev. xv. 3—5.

^b Deut. iv. 19. Ps. xix. 1—4. Acts xiv. 17. Rom. i. 19—21. ^c xxxvii. 5. Ps. cxlv. 3. cxlvii. 5. xi. 7—9. xxvi. 14. xxxvii. 23. 1 Kings viii. 27. Matt. xi. 27. John xvii. 25. 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

^d Ps. xc. 2. cii. 24—27. Heb. i. 12. 2 Pet. iii. 8. ^e v. 9, 10. xxxviii. 25. ^f Gen. ii. 5, 6. Ps. lxxv. 9—13. cxlvii. 8. Is. v. 6. Jer. xiv. 22. ^g 33. Ps. cxlviii. 8. ^h xxxvii. 11—13. Gen. vii. 11, 12. Prov. iii. 20.

²⁴ Remember that thou ^a magnify his work, ^b which men behold

²⁵ Every man may see it; man may behold *it* afar off.

²⁶ Behold, ^c God *is* great, and ^d we know *him* not; ^e neither can the number of his years be searched out.

²⁷ For ^f he maketh small the drops of water: they pour down rain according to ^g the vapour thereof;

²⁸ Which ^h the clouds do drop *and* distil upon man abundantly.

²⁹ Also can *any* understand ⁱ the spreadings of the clouds, *or* ^k the noise of his tabernacle?

³⁰ Behold, ^l he spreadeth his light upon it, ^m and covereth the ⁿ bottom of the sea.

³¹ For ^o by them judgeth he the people; ^p he giveth meat in abundance.

³² ^q With clouds he covereth the light; and commandeth it *not to shine* by *the cloud* that cometh betwixt.

³³ The ^r noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^s the cattle also concerning ^t the vapour.

³⁴ The ^u noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^v the cattle also concerning ^w the vapour.

³⁵ The ^x noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^y the cattle also concerning ^z the vapour.

³⁶ The ^{aa} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ab} the cattle also concerning ^{ac} the vapour.

³⁷ The ^{ad} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ae} the cattle also concerning ^{af} the vapour.

³⁸ The ^{ag} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ah} the cattle also concerning ^{ai} the vapour.

³⁹ The ^{aj} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ak} the cattle also concerning ^{al} the vapour.

⁴⁰ The ^{am} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{an} the cattle also concerning ^{ao} the vapour.

⁴¹ The ^{ap} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{aq} the cattle also concerning ^{ar} the vapour.

⁴² The ^{as} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{at} the cattle also concerning ^{au} the vapour.

⁴³ The ^{av} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{aw} the cattle also concerning ^{ax} the vapour.

⁴⁴ The ^{ay} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{az} the cattle also concerning ^{ba} the vapour.

⁴⁵ The ^{bb} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{bc} the cattle also concerning ^{bd} the vapour.

⁴⁶ The ^{be} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{bf} the cattle also concerning ^{bg} the vapour.

⁴⁷ The ^{bh} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{bi} the cattle also concerning ^{bj} the vapour.

⁴⁸ The ^{bk} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{bl} the cattle also concerning ^{bm} the vapour.

⁴⁹ The ^{bn} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{bo} the cattle also concerning ^{bp} the vapour.

⁵⁰ The ^{bq} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{br} the cattle also concerning ^{bs} the vapour.

⁵¹ The ^{bt} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{bu} the cattle also concerning ^{bv} the vapour.

⁵² The ^{bw} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{bx} the cattle also concerning ^{by} the vapour.

⁵³ The ^{bz} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ca} the cattle also concerning ^{cb} the vapour.

⁵⁴ The ^{cc} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{cd} the cattle also concerning ^{ce} the vapour.

⁵⁵ The ^{cd} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{cf} the cattle also concerning ^{cg} the vapour.

⁵⁶ The ^{ce} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ch} the cattle also concerning ^{ci} the vapour.

⁵⁷ The ^{cf} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{cj} the cattle also concerning ^{ck} the vapour.

⁵⁸ The ^{cg} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{cl} the cattle also concerning ^{cm} the vapour.

⁵⁹ The ^{ch} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{cn} the cattle also concerning ^{co} the vapour.

⁶⁰ The ^{ci} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{cp} the cattle also concerning ^{cq} the vapour.

⁶¹ The ^{cj} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{cr} the cattle also concerning ^{cs} the vapour.

⁶² The ^{ck} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ct} the cattle also concerning ^{cu} the vapour.

⁶³ The ^{cl} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{cv} the cattle also concerning ^{cw} the vapour.

⁶⁴ The ^{cm} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{cx} the cattle also concerning ^{cy} the vapour.

⁶⁵ The ^{cn} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{cz} the cattle also concerning ^{da} the vapour.

⁶⁶ The ^{co} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{db} the cattle also concerning ^{dc} the vapour.

⁶⁷ The ^{cp} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dd} the cattle also concerning ^{de} the vapour.

⁶⁸ The ^{cq} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{de} the cattle also concerning ^{df} the vapour.

⁶⁹ The ^{cr} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{df} the cattle also concerning ^{dg} the vapour.

⁷⁰ The ^{cs} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dg} the cattle also concerning ^{dh} the vapour.

⁷¹ The ^{ct} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dh} the cattle also concerning ^{di} the vapour.

⁷² The ^{cu} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{di} the cattle also concerning ^{dj} the vapour.

⁷³ The ^{cv} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dj} the cattle also concerning ^{dk} the vapour.

⁷⁴ The ^{cw} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dk} the cattle also concerning ^{dl} the vapour.

⁷⁵ The ^{cx} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dl} the cattle also concerning ^{dm} the vapour.

⁷⁶ The ^{cy} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dm} the cattle also concerning ^{dn} the vapour.

⁷⁷ The ^{cz} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dn} the cattle also concerning ^{do} the vapour.

⁷⁸ The ^{da} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{do} the cattle also concerning ^{dp} the vapour.

⁷⁹ The ^{db} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dp} the cattle also concerning ^{dq} the vapour.

⁸⁰ The ^{dc} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dq} the cattle also concerning ^{dr} the vapour.

⁸¹ The ^{dd} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dr} the cattle also concerning ^{ds} the vapour.

⁸² The ^{de} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ds} the cattle also concerning ^{dt} the vapour.

⁸³ The ^{df} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dt} the cattle also concerning ^{du} the vapour.

⁸⁴ The ^{dg} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{du} the cattle also concerning ^{dv} the vapour.

⁸⁵ The ^{dh} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dv} the cattle also concerning ^{dw} the vapour.

⁸⁶ The ^{di} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dw} the cattle also concerning ^{dx} the vapour.

⁸⁷ The ^{dj} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dx} the cattle also concerning ^{dy} the vapour.

⁸⁸ The ^{dk} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dy} the cattle also concerning ^{dz} the vapour.

⁸⁹ The ^{dl} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{dz} the cattle also concerning ^{ea} the vapour.

⁹⁰ The ^{dm} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ea} the cattle also concerning ^{eb} the vapour.

⁹¹ The ^{dn} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{eb} the cattle also concerning ^{ec} the vapour.

⁹² The ^{do} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ec} the cattle also concerning ^{ed} the vapour.

⁹³ The ^{dp} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ed} the cattle also concerning ^{ee} the vapour.

⁹⁴ The ^{dq} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ee} the cattle also concerning ^{ef} the vapour.

⁹⁵ The ^{dr} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ef} the cattle also concerning ^{eg} the vapour.

⁹⁶ The ^{ds} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{eg} the cattle also concerning ^{eh} the vapour.

⁹⁷ The ^{dt} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{eh} the cattle also concerning ^{ei} the vapour.

⁹⁸ The ^{du} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ei} the cattle also concerning ^{ej} the vapour.

⁹⁹ The ^{dv} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ej} the cattle also concerning ^{ek} the vapour.

¹⁰⁰ The ^{dw} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ek} the cattle also concerning ^{el} the vapour.

¹⁰¹ The ^{dx} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{el} the cattle also concerning ^{em} the vapour.

¹⁰² The ^{dy} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{em} the cattle also concerning ^{en} the vapour.

¹⁰³ The ^{dz} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{en} the cattle also concerning ^{eo} the vapour.

¹⁰⁴ The ^{ea} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{eo} the cattle also concerning ^{ep} the vapour.

¹⁰⁵ The ^{eb} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ep} the cattle also concerning ^{eq} the vapour.

¹⁰⁶ The ^{ec} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{eq} the cattle also concerning ^{er} the vapour.

¹⁰⁷ The ^{ed} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{er} the cattle also concerning ^{es} the vapour.

¹⁰⁸ The ^{ee} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{es} the cattle also concerning ^{et} the vapour.

¹⁰⁹ The ^{ef} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{et} the cattle also concerning ^{eu} the vapour.

¹¹⁰ The ^{eg} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{eu} the cattle also concerning ^{ev} the vapour.

¹¹¹ The ^{eh} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ev} the cattle also concerning ^{ew} the vapour.

¹¹² The ^{ei} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ew} the cattle also concerning ^{ex} the vapour.

¹¹³ The ^{ej} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ex} the cattle also concerning ^{ey} the vapour.

¹¹⁴ The ^{ek} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ey} the cattle also concerning ^{ez} the vapour.

¹¹⁵ The ^{el} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ez} the cattle also concerning ^{fa} the vapour.

¹¹⁶ The ^{em} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fa} the cattle also concerning ^{fb} the vapour.

¹¹⁷ The ^{en} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fb} the cattle also concerning ^{fc} the vapour.

¹¹⁸ The ^{eo} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fc} the cattle also concerning ^{fd} the vapour.

¹¹⁹ The ^{ep} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fd} the cattle also concerning ^{fe} the vapour.

¹²⁰ The ^{eq} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fe} the cattle also concerning ^{ff} the vapour.

¹²¹ The ^{er} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{ff} the cattle also concerning ^{fg} the vapour.

¹²² The ^{es} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fg} the cattle also concerning ^{fh} the vapour.

¹²³ The ^{et} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fh} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹²⁴ The ^{eu} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹²⁵ The ^{ev} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹²⁶ The ^{ew} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹²⁷ The ^{ex} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹²⁸ The ^{ey} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹²⁹ The ^{ez} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹³⁰ The ^{fa} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹³¹ The ^{fb} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹³² The ^{fc} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹³³ The ^{fd} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹³⁴ The ^{fe} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹³⁵ The ^{ff} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹³⁶ The ^{fg} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹³⁷ The ^{fh} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹³⁸ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹³⁹ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁴⁰ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁴¹ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁴² The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁴³ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁴⁴ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁴⁵ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁴⁶ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁴⁷ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁴⁸ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁴⁹ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁵⁰ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁵¹ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁵² The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁵³ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁵⁴ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁵⁵ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁵⁶ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁵⁷ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁵⁸ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁵⁹ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁶⁰ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁶¹ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁶² The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁶³ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁶⁴ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁶⁵ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁶⁶ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁶⁷ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

¹⁶⁸ The ^{fi} noise thereof sheweth concerning it, ^{fi} the cattle also concerning ^{fi} the vapour.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Elihu extols the power of God, shewn in thunder and lightning, snow, rain, whirlwinds, and frost, 1—13. His works in these things are inexplicable, 14—22. His perfections should impress men with lowly fear, 23, 24.

a iv. 14. xxi. 6. xxxviii. 1. Ex. xix. 16. Ps. lxxxix. 7. cxix. 120. Jer. v. 22. Dan. x. 7, 8. Hab. iii. 16.
 • Heb. *Hear in hearing.*
 b 5. xxxvi. 29. 33. xxxviii. 1. Ex. xix. 16—19. Ps. civ. 7.
 c Ps. lxxxvii. 13. xcvi. 4. Matt. xxiv. 27. Rev. xi. 19.
 † Heb. *light.*
 ‡ Heb. *wings.*
 d Ps. xxix. 3—9. lxxviii. 33.
 e Ex. xv. 7, 8. Deut. xxxiii. 26.

AT this also ^a my heart trembleth, and is moved out of his place.

2 * Hear attentively ^b the noise of his voice, and the sound *that* goeth out of his mouth.

3 ° He directeth it under the whole heaven, and his [†] lightning unto the [‡] ends of the earth.

4 After it ^d a voice roareth: he thundereth with ^e the voice of his ex-

tinue unhumbled under rebukes and chastenings, they prolong their own sufferings, and bring their characters into doubt, both with themselves and others. The impiety, even of the wicked, is greatly aggravated by their obstinacy under afflictions and terrors. Many of them thus provoke God to cut them off: and in this way hypocrites especially fill up the measure of their iniquities; for it is undeniable that judgments and mercies make less impression upon them, than upon the openly profane: and whether sinners die in youth, or live long to heap up wrath, their case is dreadful, and their eternal portion must be among the abominable and unclean.

V. 16—33.

It is lamentable, that men professing godliness should ever so yield to murmurs and despondency, as to seem to favour the cause, and justify the objections, of the wicked. Surely they ought to be plainly rebuked; and even warned not to deceive themselves, but to fear lest that wrath come upon them, which awaits “the workers of iniquity:” for how can it be determined that *they* are the servants of God, who are imitating the conduct of his enemies? It is therefore proper to remind any one, who murmurs against the Lord’s appointments, of the power of his wrath, the strictness of his justice, and the unchangeableness of his judgments. If he cut off the sinner by the stroke of his wrath, all the treasures and all the power on earth will be utterly unavailing. Nay, the great ransom of the Saviour’s blood will not in any respect profit the finally impenitent and unbelieving. The ransom indeed is of infinite sufficiency; but if rejected till the night of death comes, the door of mercy is then shut, and hope expires for ever. Yet men often desire death, and even rush upon it, to get rid of present uneasiness, while perfect strangers to this great atonement; as if in haste to be for ever removed from the sound and hope of salvation! And believers seldom vehemently wish for death, when the evidences of their acceptance are most bright, or their graces in most lively exercise. All then should remember, that men at death are cut off *in their place*, and their condition becomes eternally irreversible. (Note, Ec. xi. 3—6.) Instead therefore of shrinking from adversity, we should seek deliverance from the love and power of sin; and prefer the greatest suffering to the

cellency; and ^f he will not stay them when his voice is heard.

5 God ^g thundereth marvellously with his voice: ^h great things doeth he, ⁱ which we cannot comprehend.

6 For ^j he saith to the snow, Be thou on the earth; ^k likewise to the small rain, and to the ^l great rain of his strength.

7 ^m He sealeth up the hand of every man; ⁿ that all men may know his work.

8 Then ^o the beasts go into dens, and remain in their places.

9 Out of the ^p south cometh ^q the whirlwind, and cold out of the ^r north.

f xxxvi. 27—33. g 2 Sam. xxii. 14. 15.
 h v. 9. ix. 10. xi. 7. xxxvi. 14. xxxvi. 26. Is. xl. 21, 22. 28. Rev. xv. 3. xxxviii. 22. Ps. cxlvii. 16—18. cxlviii. 8.
 i Heb. *and to the shower of rain, and to the showers of rain of his strength.* xxxvi. 27.
 k Gen. vii. 10—12. Ezra x. 9. 13. Prov. xxviii. 3. Ez. xlii. 11. 13. Am. ix. 6. Matt. vii. 25—27. v. 12. ix. 7.
 l xxxvi. 24. Ps. xlvii. 8. lxxiv. 9. xcii. 4. cix. 27. cxii. 2. Ec. viii. 17. Is. v. 12. xxvi. 11.
 m Ps. civ. 22.
 n Heb. *chamber.* ix. 9. Ps. civ. 3. o xxxviii. 1. Is. xxi. 1. Zech. ix. 14.
 * Heb. *scattering winds.*

least iniquity. Yet alas! most men “choose iniquity rather than affliction:” “They ease their cares by sinful pleasures, they increase their wealth by sinful pursuits, escape their troubles by sinful projects, and evade sufferings by sinful compliances.” Henry. But this is a miserable choice, of which they will at length bitterly repent; for the favour of God alone can exalt or make us happy. He alone can teach us to behave wisely and live comfortably in every situation: he needs no counsellor, and allows of no accuser; but justly requires all to admire the discoveries of his glory which they can understand; to adore the depths they cannot comprehend; and to stand in awe of his unsearchable wisdom, power, and authority.—Every appearance in nature at once *displays*, and *conceals*, his infinite glories: much remains incomprehensible; but enough is seen to call forth our gratitude, animate our praises, or excite our consternation. The clouds and rain, with the thunders and lightnings, declare his goodness, and proclaim “the power of his wrath.” Each object bears a double aspect; and while the worker of iniquity ought to tremble, the true believer should rejoice. (Notes, Ps. xcvi. 1. xcix. 1—3.) “It is the glorious God that maketh “the thunder,” as well as that fertilizes the earth; and the children should hear with pleasure their father’s voice, even when nature seems convulsed, and he speaks in terror to his enemies. (Note, Ps. xxix. 3—11. P. O.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXVII. V. 1—13. In these verses Elihu continues his discourse. The nearer approach of the thunderstorm caused him inwardly to tremble, as if his heart was “moved out of its place.” He therefore called on Job and all the company to hearken, with attention and awe, to the thunder, as the majestick voice of God. Whatever account might be given of the *second causes*, which produced these tremendous effects; the great First Cause must be acknowledged in them, who thus alarmed the minds of careless sinners.—The giving of the law was attended by tremendous thunders and lightnings; and so was the Lord’s speaking to Job out of the whirlwind. (Notes, xxxviii. 1. Ex. xix. 16—20. Heb. xii. 18—21.)—By the divine mandate, the flashes of lightning darted from one

^p xxxviii. 29, 30
^{Ps} lxxviii. 47.
cxlvii. 16—18.
^q xxxvi. 27, 28.
^r xxxvi. 30, 32.
^{Is} xviii. 4. Matt.
xvii. 5.
^{* Heb.} the cloud
of his light.
^s Ps. lxxv. 9, 10.
civ. 24. Jer. xiv.
22. Joel ii. 23.
Am. iv. 7.
^t Ps. cxlviii. 8.
Jam. v. 17, 18.
Rev. xi. 6.
^u 6. xxxvi. 31.
xxxviii. 37, 38.
Ex. ix. 18—25.
1 Sam. xii. 18.
19. Ezra x. 9.
^{† Heb.} a rod.
^x xxxviii. 26, 27.
^y 2 Sam. xxi. 10.
14. 1 Kings xviii.
45. Joel ii. 23.
^z Ex. xiv. 13. Ps.
xlv. 10. Hab.
ii. 20.
^a xxvi. 6—14.
xxxvi. 24. Ps.
cxi. 2. cxlv. 5,
6, 10—12.
^b xxviii. 24—
27. xxxiv. 13.
xxxviii. 4, &c.
Ps. cxix. 90, 91.
Is. xl. 26.
^c 11. xxxvi. 30—
32. xxxviii. 24,
25.
^d xxvi. 8. xxxvi.
29. Ps. civ. 2, 3.
Is. xl. 22. Jer. x.
13.
^e xxxvi. 4. Ps.
civ. 24. cxlviii. 5.
Prov. iii. 19, 20.
Jer. x. 12.
^f vi. 17. xxxviii.
31. Ps. cxlvii. 18.
Luke xii. 55.

10 By the breath of God ^p frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened.

11 Also by watering ^a he wearieth the thick cloud: ^r he scattereth ^s his bright cloud:

12 And ^t it is turned round about by his counsels: ^u that they may do whatsoever he commandeth them upon the face of the world in the earth.

13 He causeth it to come, ^v whether for ^w correction, or ^x for his land, or ^y for mercy.

14 Hearken unto this, O Job: ^z stand still, and ^a consider the wondrous works of God.

15 ^b Dost thou know when God disposed them, and caused ^c the light of his cloud to shine?

16 Dost thou know ^d the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him which is ^e perfect in knowledge?

17 How thy garments ^f are warm, when ^g he quieteth the earth by the south wind?

18 Hast thou with him ^h spread out the sky, *which is strong*, and ⁱ as a molten looking-glass?

19 ^j Teach us what we shall say unto him; *for* ^k we cannot order *our speech* by reason of darkness.

20 ^l Shall it be told him that I speak? If a man speak, ^m surely he shall be swallowed up.

21 And now *men* ⁿ see not the bright light which *is* in the clouds: but the wind passeth, and cleanseth ^o them.

22 ^p Fair ^q weather cometh out of the north: ^r with God *is* terrible majesty.

23 *Touching* the Almighty, ^s we cannot find him out: *he is* ^t excellent in power, and ^u in judgment, and in plenty of justice: ^v he will not afflict.

24 Men do therefore ^w fear him: ^x he respecteth not any *that are* wise of heart.

^s Ps. xxxvi. 5—7. ^t xvi. 7—17. Ps. xxx. 5. Lam. iii. 32, 33. Heb. xii. 10. ^u Ps. cxxx. 4. Jer. xxxii. 29. xxxiii. 9. Hos. iii. 5. Luke xii. 4, 5. Rom. ii. 4. xi. 20—22. ^x v. 13. Ec. ix. 11. Is. v. 21. Matt. xi. 25, 26. Luke x. 21. 1 Cor. i. 26. iii. 19.

^g ix. 8, 9. Gen. i. 6—8. Ps. civ. 2. cxlviii. 4—6. cl. i. Prov. viii. 27. Is. xl. 12. xlv. 24.
^h Ex. xxxviii. 8. i. xii. 3. xiii. 3. 6. k xxvi. 14. xxxviii. 20, 21. xxxviii. 2. xlii. 3. Pa. lxxiii. 16, 17. 22. cxxxix. 6. Prov. xxx. 2—4. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 1 John iii. 2.
ⁱ Ps. cxxxix. 4. Matt. xii. 36, 37. m vi. 3. xi. 7, 8. n xxvi. 9. xxxvi. 32. xxxviii. 25. ^o Heb. Gold. ^p Prov. xxv. 23. ^q xl. 10. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Ps. xxix. 4. lxxvi. 5. lxxviii. 7, 8. lxxvi. 12. xciii. 1. civ. 1. cxlv. 5. Is. ii. 10, 19. Mic. v. 4. Nah. i. 3. Hab. iii. 3. &c. Heb. i. 3. xii. 29. Jude 25.
^r 19. xi. 7. xxvi. 14. xxxvi. 26. Prov. xxx. 3, 4. Ec. iii. 11. Luke x. 22. Rom. xi. 32. 1 Tim. vi. 16. ix. 4. 19. xii. 13. xxxvi. 5. Pa. lxxv. 6. lxxvi. 3. xciii. 1. xcix. 4. cxlvi. 6, 7. Matt. vi. 13.
^s Ps. xxxvi. 5—7. ^t xvi. 7—17. Ps. xxx. 5. Lam. iii. 32, 33. Heb. xii. 10. ^u Ps. cxxx. 4. Jer. xxxii. 29. xxxiii. 9. Hos. iii. 5. Luke xii. 4, 5. Rom. ii. 4. xi. 20—22. ^x v. 13. Ec. ix. 11. Is. v. 21. Matt. xi. 25, 26. Luke x. 21. 1 Cor. i. 26. iii. 19.

part of the sky to the other; along with the crashing roar of the thunder, which, not reaching the ear so soon as the lightning did the eye, seemed to follow it. This voice of God surpassed all other sounds, in majesty and solemnity: nor could *any one stay, or prevent*, the effects of it when he pleased thus to speak in terror. In this he wrought marvellously, and all his works were great and incomprehensible. Whether he commanded the snow, the gentler rains, or the more impetuous showers sweeping all before them, he acted in a manner which man could not explain. By tempestuous weather he put a stop to the works of men, as if their hands were sealed up: and this gave them leisure to consider “his works;” while the beasts retired and lay inactive in their dens. When the wind blew from the south, terrible whirlwinds were excited; and when it shifted to the north, cold weather ensued: but who could understand the manner, in which these changes were wrought? Indeed, the wind might be called the “breath of God;” and by it, when he pleased, the *inexplicable* frost was produced, and the rivers were contracted, or formed into a solid substance. The thick clouds were *wearied* and *worn out*, by watering the earth: and often by the shining of the sun on them, they appeared bright, and the beauteous rainbow was formed. But all these were turned about by the counsels of God, and executed his commands in every part of the earth; whether by drought, or excess of rain, he corrected a guilty nation, or by moderate rain he shewed mercy to a favoured land.

V. 14—20. Elihu next called on Job to consider and explain all these wonderful appearances; and if he could not, to confess his presumption, in arraigning the more mysterious dispensations of the divine government. Did he

know when God made all these arrangements? Or could he understand how light and fire were produced from the watery cloud, or the splendid rainbow from the dark cloud? Could he explain in what manner the clouds were balanced to move about, continue in the air, or descend in showers? or how the air grew warm, and his garments too heating, when the gentle south wind blew? Had he assisted in spreading the expanse of heaven, which was immoveably strong, and in which, as in a *mirrour*, the reflection of the divine glory might be perceived?—Mirrours were in those days formed of brass, cut into a proper form and highly polished. (*Note, Ex. xxxviii. 8.*)—If Job could explain these matters, and teach those present how to speak of God, it would be very acceptable: for they were conscious, that they could not order their discourses on such subjects with clearness or certainty; because of their own ignorance, and the darkness that rested upon the manner, in which the works of God were performed. Indeed, Elihu must acknowledge, that all he had spoken was beneath the subject, and unworthy of the Lord’s acceptance, or of being mentioned to him at all: for he found his thoughts and powers swallowed up, and lost in this bottomless abyss.

V. 21—24. Whilst Elihu was speaking, he observed that the wind had scattered the clouds, and the lightnings were ceased, and that the north wind had brought on fair weather, bright and resplendent as *gold*; for that is the meaning of the original word. (*Marg.—Zech. iv. 12. marg.*) In these and all the works of God his glorious and terrible majesty were displayed. How presumptuous then must it be, to contend with him; when his ordinary works were too dazzling for man to look upon!—It is evident, that to-

CHAP. XXXVIII.

The Lord, out of the whirlwind, challenges Job to answer him, 1—3. By enumerating several of his mighty works in creation and providence, he con-

wards the close of his discourse, Elihu spake as one in great confusion. Some conjecture, that what is rendered, "Fair weather cometh out of the north," referred to some *glorious appearance in the north*, which intimated the Lord's immediate presence, as about to speak. Elihu therefore hastened to conclude; briefly declaring, that the almighty God was unsearchable and incomprehensible; that he infinitely excelled all creatures, in power, justice, and judgment; and that he would oppress none, nor afflict any without cause. Men ought therefore to stand in awe of him, and fear to offend him, or to murmur against his appointments: for he disregarded all the supposed wisdom of those, who deemed themselves authorized or qualified to scrutinize and find fault with his conduct. (*Notes*, xxxiii. 12, 13. *Is.* xl. 12—17. *Dan.* iv. 34—37. *Rom.* ix. 19—21. xi. 33—36.) Elihu evidently thought, that Job had been *thus* irreverent and presumptuous; and when the Lord himself spake, he brought exactly the same charge against him. (*Notes*, xxxviii. xl. 1—5.)—In what other ancient book, can be found so exalted and just sentiments and reasonings, on the perfections and works of God, as every where occur in the sacred volume?

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

The attentive mind will perceive affecting displays of the power, wisdom, goodness, and majesty of God, in the operations of nature; and the terrors excited by some of them, should remind us of that tremendous scene which will usher in "the day of judgment, and perdition of ungodly men." If the thunder-storm caused the heart of pious Elihu to tremble and start;—if Moses was exceedingly alarmed before mount Sinai;—if even faith and love to God cannot utterly preserve men from dismay, in these inferior circumstances of terror;—what will be the horror and despair of the wicked at that tremendous season? Oh, that men would attentively hearken unto the voice of God, who in various ways "warns them to flee from the wrath to come;" and from his mercy-seat, with a voice of less terror, but of more glorious excellency, invites them to accept of his salvation and be happy!—All irrational creatures obey the voice and subserve the will of the great Creator: surely then we, whom he hath endued with reason, should be shamed into obedience and submission! We behold the marvellous works of God, and partake of his bounty, in the revolution of the seasons, and the change of the weather: for heat and cold, rain, snow, or dry weather, have their several beneficial effects. But who can fully comprehend the whole mechanism of *Nature*, or rather of *these operations of God*? How incompetent then must we be to explain the mysteries of his incomprehensible and eternal existence, of his decrees, or of his universal government! But as they, who know nothing of natural philosophy, receive the full benefit of the revolving seasons; while those who are most informed, cannot evade the inclemency of the weather, or prevent storms, or secure themselves against their effects: so the simplest believer

vinces Job of ignorance, 4—30; and of weakness, 31—41.

THEN the LORD answered Job ^a out of the whirlwind, and said,

a xxxviii. 1, 2 9.
14. Ex. xix. 16
—19. Deut. iv
17, 12. v. 22—24.
1 Kings xix. 11.
2 Kings ii. 1. 11.
Ez. i. 4. Nah. i.
3.

may receive the benefit and comfort of divine mysteries, and the Lord's protection; while the proudest and most learned objector cannot annul his counsels, alter his dispensations, or escape his vengeance. Our wisdom then consists, in accommodating ourselves to the situation allotted us; and in deriving benefit, as we can, from those appointments which we cannot alter; in accepting of proffered mercy in the Lord's way; in submitting to his correction and his righteousness; and in leaving all difficulties to another world.—When Providence takes us off from secular employments, we should occupy ourselves more entirely in meditating on the works of God, in the study of his word, and in the exercises of devotion: else, in what do we surpass the beasts, who retire and remain in their dens?—The weather is altogether of God's appointment: it is generally ordered in mercy as well as in wisdom, for the common good; and if at any time it be really afflictive, it is sent for correction, and to call us to repentance and prayer. But the bad opinion which men entertain of the divine management, is evident in their incessant murmurs in this particular; though the result of the whole system, through the year, generally demonstrates the folly and ingratitude, as well as the rebellion, of their complaints. Believers should carefully avoid such peevishness: there are no *bad days* as the Lord makes them; but we make ourselves many by our sins.

V. 14—24.

In all our discourses of the works of God, we either are conscious of our own ignorance, or we soon expose it. "We cannot order our speech by reason of darkness," or teach one another satisfactorily in these sublime subjects: we may well be ashamed of our best attempts to magnify the glorious excellences and works of God: indeed, we have nothing to boast of on any account; but must still confess, not only that we are unprofitable servants, but that we are wretched sinners. In short, "with God is terrible majesty." We cannot search him out, or comprehend his designs: but if our meditations lead us to more admiring adoring views of his greatness, holiness, justice, wisdom, and goodness;—if they terminate in a deeper sense of our own ignorance, vileness, and sinfulness;—if they warn us to reverence and submit to him, and to cease from our own wisdom;—the effect will be honourable to him, useful to us, and edifying to our brethren. And, whatever scenes we witness, whatever changes we experience, we may stay our minds on him, who will "give strength to his people, and bless" them with his unspeakable peace.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXVIII. V. 1. Both Job and his opponents had appealed to the Lord, and earnestly desired that he would decide the controversy. Job had silenced, but he had not convinced, his friends: Elihu had silenced Job, but had not brought him to plead guilty; and his character was yet undecided. The debate would therefore have ter-

^b xii. 3. xx. 4, 5. xxiv. 25. xxvi. 8. xxvii. 11. xxxiv. 35. xxxv. 16. xlii. 3. 1 Tim. i. 7.

2 Who is this that ^b darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

^c xl. 7. Ex. xii. 11. 1 Kings xviii. 46. Jer. i. 17. 1 Pet. i. 13.

3 Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and ^{*} answer thou me.

^d xiii. 15. 22. xxiii. 3—7. xxxi. 35—37.

4 Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou [†] hast understanding.

^e Prov. viii. 29. 30. xxx. 4.

5 Who hath [‡] laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or ^h who hath stretched the line upon it?

^f Gen. i. 1. Ps. cii. 25. civ. 5. Heb. i. 2. 10.

[†] Heb. knowest understanding.

^g xi. 9. xxviii. 25. Prov. viii. 27. Is. xl. 12. 22.

6 Whereupon are the [‡] foundations

^h Ps. xix. 4. lxxviii. 55. Is. xxxiv. 11. Zech. ii. 1, 2. 2 Cor. x. 16. i xxvi. 7.

ⁱ Sam. ii. 8. Ps. xxiv. 2. xciii. 1. civ. 5. Zech. xii. 1. 2 Pet. iii. 5. [‡] Heb. sockets.

Ex. xxvi. 18—25.

Heb. made to sink.

k Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

l Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

m i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

n Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

o 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

p 29.

q Gen. i. 2.

r Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

s Heb. made to sink.

t Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

u Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

v i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

w Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

x 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

y 29.

z Gen. i. 2.

aa Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

ab Heb. made to sink.

ac Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

ad Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

ae i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

af Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

ag 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

ah 29.

ai Gen. i. 2.

aj Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

ak Heb. made to sink.

al Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

am Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

an i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

ao Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

ap 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

aq 29.

ar Gen. i. 2.

as Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

at Heb. made to sink.

au Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

av Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

aw i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

ax Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

ay 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

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bd Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

be Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

bf i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

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bh 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

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bl Heb. made to sink.

bm Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

bn Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

bo i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

bp Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

bq 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

br 29.

bs Gen. i. 2.

bt Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

bu Heb. made to sink.

bv Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

bw Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

bx i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

by Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

bz 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

ca 29.

cb Gen. i. 2.

cc Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

cd Heb. made to sink.

ce Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

cf Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

cg i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

ch Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

ci 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

ck 29.

cl Gen. i. 2.

cm Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

cn Heb. made to sink.

co Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

cp Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

cq i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

cr Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

cs 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

ct 29.

cu Gen. i. 2.

cv Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

cw Heb. made to sink.

cx Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

cy Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

cz i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

da Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

db 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

dc 29.

dd Gen. i. 2.

de Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

df Heb. made to sink.

dg Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

dh Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

di i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

dj Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

dk 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

dl 29.

dm Gen. i. 2.

dn Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

do Heb. made to sink.

dp Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

dq Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

dr i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

ds Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

dt 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

du 29.

dv Gen. i. 2.

dw Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

dx Heb. made to sink.

dy Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

dz Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

ea i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

eb Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

ec 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

ed 29.

ee Gen. i. 2.

ef Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

eg Heb. made to sink.

eh Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

ei Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

ej i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

ek Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

el 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

em 29.

en Gen. i. 2.

eo Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

ep Heb. made to sink.

eq Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

er Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

es i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

et Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

eu 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

ev 29.

ew Gen. i. 2.

ex Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

ey Heb. made to sink.

ez Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

fa Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

fb i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

fc Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

fd 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

fe 29.

fg Gen. i. 2.

fh Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

fi Heb. made to sink.

fk Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

fl Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

fm i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

fn Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

fo 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

fp 29.

fq Gen. i. 2.

fr Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

fs Heb. made to sink.

ft Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

fu Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

fv i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

fw Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

fx 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

fy 29.

fz Gen. i. 2.

ga Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

gb Heb. made to sink.

gc Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

gd Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

ge i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

gf Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

gg 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

gh 29.

gi Gen. i. 2.

gj Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

gk Heb. made to sink.

gl Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

gm Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

gn i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

go Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

gp 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

gq 29.

gr Gen. i. 2.

gs Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

gt Heb. made to sink.

gu Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

gv Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

gw i. 6. ii. 1. Ps. civ. 4. Rev. v. 11.

gx Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zech. iv. 7.

gy 10. Gen. i. 9. Ps. xxxiii. 7. Prov. viii. 29.

gz 29.

ha Gen. i. 2.

hb Or, established my decree upon it. xxvi. 10. Gen. i. 9, 10. ix. 15. Ps. civ. 9. Jer v. 22.

hc Heb. made to sink.

hd Ps. cxviii. 25. cxliv. 12. Is. xxviii. 16. Epl. ii. 20, 21.

he Rev. ii. 28. xxii. 16.

r Ps. lxxv. 6, 7. xcin. 3, 4. Prov. viii. 29. Mark iv. 39—41. s l. 12. ii. 6. Ps. lxxvi. 10. lxxxix. 9. Is. xxvii. 8. Luke viii. 32. 33. R-v. xx. 2, 3 7, 8. * Heb. the pride of thy waves. t Gen. i. 5. Ps. lxxiv. 16. cxxxvi. 7, 8. cxlviii. 3. † —5. ‡ 4. 21. viii. 9. xv. 7. x Luke i. 78. 2 Pet. i. 19. y Ps. xix. 4—6. cxxxix. 9—12. † Heb. wings. xxxvii. 3. marg. z xxiv. 13—17. Ex. xiv. 27. Ps. civ. 21, 22, 35. a Ps. civ. 2, 6. b v. 14. xviii. 5. 18. Ex. x. 21—23. 2 Kings vi. 15. Prov. iv. 19. Is. viii. 21, 22. Jer. xiii. 16. Acts xiii. 10, 11. c Ps. x. 15. xxxvii. 17. Ez. xxx. 22. d Ps. lxxvii. 19. Prov. viii. 24. Jer. li. 36. e xxvi. 5, 6. f Ps. ix. 13. cvii. 18. cxvi. 3. g iii. 5. xii. 22. Ps. xxiii. 4. cvii. 10. 14. Am. v. 8. Matt. iv. 16. h Ps. lxxiv. 17. lxxxix. 11, 12. Is. xl. 28. Jer. xxxi. 37. Rev. xx. 9.

11 And said, 'Hitherto shalt thou come, 'but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.

12 ¶ Hast thou 'commanded the morning 'since thy days; and caused the day-spring to know his place;

13 That it might 'take hold of the ends of the earth, that 'the wicked might be shaken out of it?

14 It is turned as clay to the seal; and they stand 'as a garment.

15 And 'from the wicked their light is withholden, and 'the high arm shall be broken.

16 ¶ Hast thou entered into 'the springs of the sea? or hast thou 'walked in the search of the depth?

17 Have 'the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of 'the shadow of death?

18 Hast thou perceived 'the breadth of the earth? declare if thou knowest it all.

19 ¶ Where is 'the way where light dwelleth? and as for 'darkness, where is the place thereof?

20 That thou shouldest take it 'to the bound thereof, and that thou shouldest know the paths to the house thereof?

21 Knowest thou it, 'because thou wast then born? or because the number of thy days is great?

22 ¶ Hast thou entered into 'the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,

23 'Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?

24 By what way is 'the light parted, which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?

25 Who hath 'divided a water-course for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lightning of thunder;

26 To cause it to rain on the earth,

'as a little babe in the hands of God.' The vast hollows of the earth are its appointed place, in which it is confined, as with bolts and bars: and though it is vehemently tossed by tempestuous winds, and the tides roll its billows to the shore, as if it were about to cover the earth again; yet, at the Lord's command the storm subsides, and the tide rolls back; and he deals with this most furious element, as easily as with an infant: and this, not so much by the barrier of the shores, as by virtue of that *inexplicable* property, which we call *gravitation*.—Thus he stays the proud or swelling waves of the sea, and assigns them their bounds which they cannot pass. (Notes, Gen. i. 9, 10. vii. 10—12. Ps. xciii. 3, 4. civ. 6—9. Prov. viii. 26. 30. Jer. v. 20—25. Matt. viii. 23—27.) But had Job any hand in contriving or effecting this? Or could he comprehend how it was done?

V. 12—15. It was evident, that the things hitherto mentioned had existed before Job was born; by which he might be led to reflect upon the eternity of God, and contrast it with the few days of his own past life. But had he, during that short time, given orders for the succession of night and day? At the appointed hour, the morning is ushered in, and the light gradually overspreads the horizon, and drives away the wicked from their deeds of darkness. Immediately the earth assumes a new form, as the wax from under the seal; and appears in fresh beauty, as arrayed in splendid garments. Thus the wicked are disappointed of their expected success, and are detected and crushed, notwithstanding their lawless pride and violence. But did Job command this beneficial and welcome change? Did it depend on his care and management? Nay, could he explain in what manner the sun, at so immense a distance, enlightened the earth? Or could he supply the want, should his beams be withheld; or command them to come when he pleased?

V. 16—18. The vast ocean covers immense treasures, and wonderful productions of the Creator. But had Job surveyed these repositories, or taken an inventory of their contents? Had he visited all the deep and dark caverns of the earth? Or was he fully acquainted with the nature and consequences of death, and with all which takes place in the invisible world? Nay, had he traversed the whole of the earth, so as to be able to shew its dimensions, and describe all the lands, climates, and creatures which it contains?

V. 19—21. Could Job fully explain the nature, and declare the origin, of light and darkness; what they are, and whence they come? Could he trace the streams of them back to the fountain, so as to visit their residence, and bring them forth to accomplish his own purposes? Or shew whither the light retired during the night; and point out the abode of darkness after the approach of the sun? Was he born before the present order was established? and had long observation made him acquainted with these matters, which to all else were incomprehensible? (Notes, Gen. i. 14—19. Deut. iv. 19. Ps. xix. 1—6. civ. 19—24. Is. xlv. 7.)—Though modern experiments have enabled men to form some theories concerning light and colours; yet how very little do the most scientific men yet know about them, of *what* they are, and *how* they are!

V. 22—30. To convince Job of his ignorance, and of the unsearchable wisdom and knowledge of God, some other perplexing questions were proposed to him. The snow and hail seem to be brought forth out of a treasury. But had Job ever entered thither? Did he understand the manner of their production? or were they at his command? With them the Lord troubles and fights against his enemies, when he sees good: but could Job employ them in his own cause, after the same manner? Could he explain the way in which the "morning light is divided, and the

q Ps. civ. 10—14. where no man is; ^a on the wilderness,
civ. 35. cxlvii. wherein *there is* no man;
8, 9. Is. xxxv.

27 To satisfy the desolate and waste
ground; and to cause the bud of the
tender herb to spring forth?

r 8. v. 9, 10. 1 Sam. 28. Hath the rain a father? or who
xii. 17, 18. Ps. hath begotten the drops of ^a dew?

29 ^a Out of whose womb came the
ice? and the hoary frost of heaven,
who hath gendered it?

30 The waters are hid as *with* a
stone, and ^u the face of the deep is
frozen.

31 Canst thou bind the sweet in-
fluences of [†] Pleiades, or loose the bands
of [†] Orion?

32 Canst thou bring forth ^a Mazza-
roth in his season? or canst thou
guide Arcturus with his sons?

33 Knowest thou ^x the ordinances of
heaven? ^y canst thou set the dominion
thereof in the earth?

34 ^z Canst thou lift up thy voice to

the clouds, that abundance of waters
may cover thee?

35 ^a Canst thou send lightnings, that
they may go, and say unto thee, ^{*} Here
we are?

36 ^b Who hath put wisdom in the
inward parts? or ^c who hath given un-
derstanding to the heart?

37 Who can ^d number the clouds in
wisdom? or ^e who can [†] stay the bot-
tles of heaven,

38 When the dust [†] groweth into
hardness, and the clods cleave fast to-
gether?

39 ^f Wilt thou hunt the prey for the
lion? or fill the ^g appetite of the young
lions,

40 When ^g they couch in *their* dens,
and abide in the covert to lie in wait?

41 ^h Who provideth for the raven
his food? when his young ones cry
unto God, they wander for lack of
meat.

a Ex. ix. 23—25.
29. Lev. x. 2.
Num xi. 1 xvi.
35. 2 Kings i. 10.
14. Rev. xi. 5, 6.
* Heb. Behold us.
1 Sam. xxii. 12.
Is. vi. 8 marg.
b xxxii. 8. Ps. li.
6. Prov. ii. 6.
Ec. ii. 26. Jam.
i. 5. 17.
c Ex. xxxi. 3.
xxxvi. 1, 2. Is.
xxviii. 26.
d Gen. xv. 5. Ps.
cxlvii. 4.
e Gen. viii. 1. ix.
15.
† Heb. cause to
lie down.
† Or, is turned into
mire. Heb. is
poured.
f iv. 10, 11. Ps.
xxxiv. 10. civ.
21. cxlv. 15, 16.
g Heb. life.

g Gen. xlix. 9.
Num. xxiii. 24.
xxiv. 9.

h Ps. civ. 27, 28.
cxlvii. 9. Matt.
vi. 26. Luke xii.
24

“east” (or *from the east*), “scattered over the whole
“earth?” Could he suppose, that any but God directed
the clouds, as a water-course to convey the waters, above
the firmament, to their appointed places, often attended
by thunder and lightning; so that even the unculti-
vated parts of the earth were watered, and made to pro-
duce food and supply drink, for the beasts which inhabit
them? Could any account be given of the formation of
the rain, into larger or smaller drops? Was any one in-
strumental in the production of the dew, the ice, or the
hoar-frost? Were not all these entirely the work of God,
and inexplicable to man? Thus the course of rivers was
arrested, the fluidity of the water changed, and covered as
with a pavement of stone. (Notes, v. 8—10. xxxvi. 22—
33. xxxvii. 1—13. Gen. i. 9. vii. 10—23. Ex. ix. 18. Ps.
xxxiii. 7, 8. lxxv. 9—13. civ. 10—15. cxlvii. 6—8. 15—18.
Jer. xiv. 19—22.)—These are indeed most stupendous dis-
plays of the divine power, and only unnoticed because
common.

V. 31—41. The different seasons of the year are marked
out, by the relative situation of the fixed stars to the earth,
and to the sun. But could Job prevent the effects of those
constellations, which presided either over the genial spring,
or the dreary winter? (Note, ix. 9—13.) Could he even
explain how these effects are produced? If he felt his
ignorance and weakness in this matter, let him learn to
keep his proper place, and to leave the government of the
world to its Creator.—Could he in a dry season command
the clouds to water the earth from their abundance? Would
they, or the lightnings, obey his orders, and execute his
purpose? Was he the author even of his own scanty
measure of wisdom and knowledge? Could he explain what
thought was? Could he keep a register of the clouds and
their contents, and of the commerce which they carried on?
Could he seal up those “bottles of heaven,”

and prevent more rain from falling, “when the dust was
“melted into a mass, and the clods were joined together?”
—Would he undertake to provide food for the lions? was
not even this far beyond his power? Nay, he could not
provide for the young ravens; when deserted or expelled
from the nest, they by their natural call seem to cry unto
God for food. (Notes, Ps. civ. 10, 11. 19—23. 27—30.
Matt. vi. 25—32.) In short, whatever Job considered,
above or beneath, within or around him, he must perceive
the infinite wisdom, knowledge, power, and goodness of
God; and feel his own incapacity to discourse on such
subjects, as he had presumptuously ventured on.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

The condescension of the God of glory, in making him-
self known to sinful man for his humiliation, instead of
executing vengeance upon him for his rebellion, demands
our highest admiration, and our warmest gratitude: and
the most tremendous method, by which he abases a sinner
in the dust, should be acknowledged as the effect of his
mercy; for it tends to comfort, and joy, and salvation.—
When the wisest of men presume to intrude into those
“secret things which belong to God,” and to be “wise
“above what is written,” they are sure to “darken coun-
“sel by words without knowledge,” and perhaps unde-
signedly to serve the cause of impiety, or scepticism:
so that numbers, who have been vain of their acute,
learned, and accurate reasonings on mysterious subjects,
and who have been admired for their sagacity and judg-
ment, will meet with such a rebuke from the Lord, as Job
did, or rather one far more severe. We should then be
very careful, in all our investigations, not to exceed our as-
signed limits; not to go out of our depth; nor to leave the
friendly shore of the word of God, to launch into the im-

CHAP. XXXIX.

God shews his own power, and man's weakness and ignorance, by instancing from among animals, the wild goats and hinds, 1—4; the wild ass, 5—8; the unicorn, 9—12; the peacock and ostrich, 13—18; the war-horse, 19—25; the hawk and eagle, 26—30.

^a 1 Sam. xxiv. 2.
^b Ps. civ. 18.

KNOWEST thou the time when ^a the wild goats of the rock bring forth? or

canst thou mark ^b when the hinds do calve? ^b Ps. xxix. 9. Jer. xiv. 5.

2 Canst thou number ^c the months ^c Jer. ii. 24 that they fulfil? or knowest thou the time when they bring forth?

3 They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast out their sorrows.

mense ocean of *infinities*. Conscious of our ignorance, guilt, and weakness, it becomes us to speak with trembling humility and reverence, when the perfections, decrees, or operations of God are our subject: for “such knowledge “is too high for us, we cannot attain unto it.” (Note, Ps. cxxxix. 4—6.)—But indeed none of us are suitably impressed with awe of the infinite majesty of God: our appeals to him generally savour of presumption, and we should not be able to answer before him, as we are apt rashly to think we could.—Though he sometimes deigns to reason with his creatures, and to demonstrate his equity in his dealings with them; yet he more generally silences the arrogant objector, by a display of his infinite power, authority, and majesty, as more becoming the Sovereign of the world. Indeed, all nature proclaims his glory: no creature fully comprehends his works; but contemplation of them, with adoring and exulting praises, forms the delight of each intelligent being, in exact proportion to the extent of his powers, and the degree of his holiness. Thus, when the creation was finished, and appeared in all its beauty, “the morning-stars sang together, and all the “sons of God shouted for joy.” Yet they discover still brighter glories in the mysteries of redeeming love, into which especially “they desire to look” with ceaseless admiration: (Notes, Eph. iii. 9—12. 1 Pet. i. 10—12:) and, in proportion as the new creating-Spirit renders us like them in knowledge and holiness; we shall become capable of participating their exalted joys, and find pleasures of which we now have scarcely a conception.—But, in other things, the boasted knowledge of mankind is in fact a very small matter: the best informed perceive most of their own ignorance in every thing: none can fully understand the most common *phænomena* of nature; and after all the discoveries of modern times, they remain, in some respects, as inexplicable as ever.—Indeed, we are of yesterday; our days are passing away as a shadow: and a humble willingness to be taught of God, and to credit his “sure testimony,” as contained in the sacred oracles; with a diligent attention to our proper interest and duty, as fallen creatures under a dispensation of mercy, are infinitely preferable to all the learning of the schools. Not that learning should be depreciated; provided it be accompanied with humility, kept in its proper place, directed to its proper objects, and not allowed to interfere within the province of revelation and faith. Yet even in natural things man's scanty measure of knowledge avails him but little; for he still finds himself unable to effect those alterations, which might give him ease, or conduce to his comfort.—But, whatever the Lord doeth must be right; because he is infinite in wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness. As the world was created, so it is governed by him, exactly as it should be. The contemplation of his wise

and surprising contrivance, in the economy of nature, should silence all our objections to his providential dispensations, and teach us to desire, that he would choose and manage all for us as he pleases. His power, which formed and bounds the mighty ocean, and which is displayed wherever we turn our eyes, should remind the sinner of “the power of his wrath;” convince him how vain it will be to oppose his authority; and warn him without delay to seek pardon and reconciliation: and it should teach the believer to rejoice in his Friend and Protector; who can say to the proudest persecutors, to the severest trials, or to the hosts of hell, “Hitherto shall ye come, and no further: and here shall your proud rage be stayed.”

V. 12—41.

The innumerable creatures, varied almost infinitely, which God has formed, may teach us that the reasons of his conduct may be numerous, when we can discern none. The revolutions of day and night, and of the seasons of the year, with all the profusion of bounty, with which they are crowned, and of which his enemies richly partake, should encourage us to expect large blessings from his covenant-love in Jesus Christ, and to be followers of him in love to our enemies. And, as he feeds the lions, and the ravens which cry unto him, let us learn to ask and expect our daily bread from him. The constancy and exactness, with which natural effects are produced, should remind us of the faithfulness of the Lord's promises, and the immutability of his counsel; and excite us to be constant and exact in our course of daily worship and obedience. The consideration of his all-sufficiency and eternity should teach us to choose his favour, as our portion and blessedness for ever: and every view which we take of his manifested perfections, is suited to convince us of his right to our love and obedience, of the evil of sinning against him, and of our need of his mercy and salvation. The humiliating recollection of our comparative insignificance should check our pride and presumption, and lay us low in reverential fear and self-abasement.—It would be in vain for us to command the clouds to rain, or to attempt to stay these “bottles of heaven;” but if we call upon the Lord in our necessities or fears, he will regulate all these things for our good. In fine, the more we contemplate these discoveries of our God, the more we are confounded with their vastness and variety. All his ways are in wisdom: every thing will concur to ruin his obstinate enemies; but all things work together for good to them that love him.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXIX. V. 1—4. In this chapter some animals are selected, the nature or situation of which is pe-

4 Their young ones are in good liking, they grow up with corn; they go forth, and return not unto them.

5 ¶ Who hath sent out ^d the wild ass free? or ^e who hath loosed the bands of the wild ass?

6 Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the ^{*}barren land his dwellings.

7 He ^fscorneth the multitude of the city, neither regardeth he the crying of the [†]driver.

8 ¶ The range of the mountains is his pasture, and he searcheth after every green thing.

9 ¶ Will ^h the unicorn be willing to serve thee, ⁱ or abide by thy crib?

10 Canst thou ^kbind the unicorn with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee?

11 Wilt thou ^ltrust him, because his strength is great? or ^m wilt thou leave thy labour to him?

12 Wilt thou believe him that ⁿ he

vi. 5. xi. 12.
xxiv. 5. Gen.
xvi. 12. Ps. civ.
11. Is. xxxii. 14.
Jer. ii. 24. xiv.
6. Dan. v. 21.
Hos. viii. 9.
Gen. xlix. 14.
* Heb. salt places.
Deut. xxix. 23.
Ps. cvii. 34.
Marg. Jer. xvii.
6. Ez. xlvi. 11.
† 18. iii. 18. Is.
xxx. 4.
† Heb. exactor.
Ex. v. 13—16.
18. Is. lviii. 3.
xi. 15. 20—22.
Gen. i. 29, 30.
Ps. civ. 27, 28.
cxlv. 15, 16.
Num. xxxiii. 22.
Deut. xxxiii. 17.
Ps. xxii. 21. xcii.
10.
Is. i. 3.
k 5. 7. i. 14. xli.
5. Ps. cxxix. 3.
Hos. x. 10, 11.
Mic. i. 13.
l Ps. xx. 7 xxxiii.
16, 17 cxlvii.
10. Is. xxx. 16.
xxx. 1—3.
m Gen. i. 26, 28.
ix. 2. xlii. 26.
Ps. cxliv. 14.
Prov. xiv. 4. Is.
xxx. 6. xlvii. 1.
n Neh. xiii. 15.
Am. ii. 13.

will bring home thy seed, and ^ogather it into thy barn?

13 ¶ Gavest thou the goodly wings unto the ^ppeacocks? or ^qwings and feathers unto the ^rostrich?

14 Which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust,

15 And forgetteth that the foot may crush them, or that the wild beast may break them.

16 She is ^shardened against her young ones, ^tas though *they were not* her's: ^uher labour is in vain without fear;

17 Because God hath ^vdeprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding.

18 What time she lifteth up herself on high, ^wshe scorneth the horse and his rider.

19 ¶ Hast thou given ^xthe horse strength? hast thou ^yclothed his neck with ^zthunder?

20 Canst thou make him afraid as a

Prov. iii. 10.
Hag. ii. 19.
Matt. iii. 2. xiii. 30.
p 1 Kings x. 22.
2 Chr. ix. 21.
q Or, the feathers of the stork and ostrich. Lev. xi. 19. Ps. civ. 17. Jer. viii. 7 Zech. v. 9.
r Lam. iv. 3.
s Deut. xxviii. 56, 57. 1 Kings iii. 26, 27. 2 Kings vi. 28, 29. Lam. ii. 20. Rom. i. 31.
t Ec. x. 15. Hab. ii. 13.
u xvii. 4. xxxv. 11. Deut. ii. 30. 2 Chr. xxxii. 31. Is. xix. 11—14. Ivii. 17 Jam. i. 17.
x 7. 22. v. 22. xli. 29. 2 Kings xix. 21.
y Ex. xv. 1. 21. Ps. cxlvii. 10.
z Ps. xciii. 1. civ. 1.
a 25. Mark iii. 17.

cularly illustrative of the power, wisdom, and manifold works of God: and the questions proposed concerning them, were suited to convince Job how little he knew or could do. The several species of the wild goats, and hinds, are continued from age to age; but not by the care of man. He does not know how long they go with young, or at what time they will bring forth; nor if he did, could he in any way tend on them or assist them, as he can the domestick animals. Though they bring forth their young with difficulty and pain, yet they need no human help: they soon forget their sorrows; and their young being active and vigorous, are in a short time able to shift for themselves, by entering into the corn-fields, as well as the pastures and meadows, notwithstanding the precautions of the owner.

V. 5—8. Some animals are evidently created for labour; others scorn the yoke: the tame ass is formed for a patient drudge; but the wild ass cannot be thus managed and employed. (Notes, xi. 7—12. Gen. i. 26, 27. ix. 1, 2. xvi. 12.) He has liberty as it were by charter: the barren wilderness is his residence, and its scanty productions his subsistence: yet it would be vain to attempt enticing him into populous cities, for the sake of a more plentiful support; or rendering him obedient to a driver's voice. But who gave him this liberty? Did not the Lord? And would Job suppose that he had not wise reasons for so doing? And as no human power can alter the nature of this animal, or render him serviceable to man; so it is equally impossible to alter the appointments of God, whether we are satisfied with them or not.

V. 9—12. The *rhinoceros* (which is generally supposed to be here intended,) is possessed of immense strength; (Marg. Ref. h. Note, Num. xxiii. 22;) and might perform proportionable labour, if he could be made to bear the yoke

as the passive ox does. Yet Job was not so absurd as to expect this from him; nor would he depend on his assistance to plough his land, or gather in his harvest: knowing that it would be vain and dangerous, to attempt any thing of this kind with so powerful and fierce a creature. But was it not far more perilous to quarrel with the allotments of the Almighty?

V. 13—18. The Creator has divided his gifts among his creatures as he saw good; and in this, and in every other thing, his will and wisdom should be implicitly submitted to. To the peacock he has given most beautiful plumage; but it is not remarkable for any thing else.—The ostrich has wings and feathers; but it is vastly larger than other birds, and unable to mount aloft on its wings. (Marg.) It is likewise remarkable for its stupid insensibility in various respects. The female bird prepares no nest for her eggs; but lays them upon the earth, to be warmed by the heat of the sun, and that of the sand or dust, without any further attention. She has no instinctive remembrance that they are liable to be trodden on and destroyed by man or beast: she is as regardless of her eggs and young, as if they did not belong to her; and is destitute of care and fear about them. For God has not imparted to her that instinctive wisdom, which he has to other creatures in this particular. But when she is alarmed for her own safety, she uses her wings to assist her in running, and in this manner exceeds in swiftness the fleetest animals which have no wings; and when pursued by those who attempt to take her, she seems to despise both the horse and his rider.

V. 19—25. This description of the horse has been universally admired, as inimitably sublime. It especially relates to those horses, which are used in war; and in which the eastern countries have always excelled.—God

^b xli. 20, 21. Jer. viii. 16. ^{*} Heb. *terrors*. grass-hopper? ^b the glory of his nostrils ^{*} is terrible.

⁺ Or, His feet dig. 21 [†] He paweth in the valley, [°] and rejoiceth in *his* strength: [°] he goeth on to meet the [†] armed men.

^c 1 Sam. xvii. 4—10. 42. Ps. xix. 5. Jer. ix. 23. ^d Prov. xxi. 31. Jer. viii. 6. 22 He [°] mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword.

^f xli. 26—29 23 [†] The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield.

^g xxxvii. 20. Hab. i. 8, 9. ^h ix. 16. xxix. 24. Luke xxiv. 41. 24 [°] He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage: ^h neither believeth he that *it* is the sound of the trumpet.

ⁱ Ps. lxx. 3. Ez. xxvi. 2. xxxvi. 2. 25 He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar

off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting.

26 ¶ Doth ^k the hawk fly by thy wisdom, ^{and} ^l stretch her wings toward the south? ^k Lev. xi. 16. Deut. xiv. 15. 1 Cant. ii. 12. Jer. viii. 7.

27 Doth ^m the eagle mount up [°] at thy command, and ⁿ make her nest on high? ^m Ex. xix. 4. Lev. xi. 13. Ps. ciii. 5. Prov. xxiii. 5. Is. xl. 31. Hos. viii. 1. [°] Heb. *by thy mouth*.

28 She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon [°] the crag of the rock, and the strong place. ⁿ Jer. xlix. 16. Ob. 4. ^o 1 Sam. xiv. 4.

29 From thence ^p she seeketh the prey, ^{and} her eyes behold afar off. ^p ix. 26.

30 Her young ones also suck up blood: and ^q where the slain *are*, there is she. ^q Ez. xxxix. 17—19. Matt. xxiv. 28. Luke xvii. 37.

alone has given the war-horse his strength and courage: (Note, Ps. cxlvii. 10, 11:) the flowing mane, which clothes his neck, adds to the fierceness of his appearance, and seems to indicate his triumph. (Note, Ps. xciii. 1, 2.) When going to the battle, he cannot be made afraid, or driven back, like the puny grass-hopper: the snorting of his nostrils, by which he bids defiance to his enemies, is dreadful. He paws with his feet, as if he would tear up the earth in his impatience to engage: he glories and exults in his strength, and in going out to meet the armed men: in his eagerness to start, and his fierceness and rage for the fight, he, as it were, devours the intervening space. He can scarcely wait for the signal for the battle, or stand still, because of his impatience; and he deems the dreadful alarm of the trumpet a joyful sound: he has an instinctive sense of the battle, at a distance; and is all on fire to rush amongst the captains, who with terrific shouts are marching to the assault.—Yet is this fierce intrepid animal easily subjected to man, made to fear the touch of the whip, or spur, obey the motion of the bridle, or even the voice of the rider, and almost that of a child! So wonderfully has God formed and fitted him for the service of man! (Note, Gen. ix. 1, 2.)

V. 26—30. The hawk is remarkable for the force with which it flies, and the skill with which it takes its prey; but did Job communicate to it those capacities by his wisdom?—The species of hawk here meant is supposed to have removed southward at stated periods, for the sake of a warmer climate.—In like manner, the eagle, which is remarkable for soaring higher than any other bird, and for building her nest in the most inaccessible situations, utterly disregards man's command. From her towering heights she seeks her prey; and by her most piercing sight sees it at a great distance, and darts down upon it in a moment. Thus her young are trained up to suck the blood of the prey; and she resorts where the dead bodies of man or beast abound. (Note, Matt. xxiv. 26—28.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—18.

The infinite power, wisdom, and goodness of God are legible in all the variety of his creatures: "He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing,"

and watches over them all with constant attention. Such as have no help from man, are taken care of, as well as those which have; and in like manner his people will surely be provided for and protected, either *by*, or *without*, the instrumentality of their fellow-creatures. Every species of animals reminds us of our ignorance and impotence: they continue as God has created them, and we can neither understand whence their different propensities arise, nor yet alter them: we often can derive no benefit from them; nay, some of them seem a nuisance to us, nor can we know for what purpose they were created. Yet we should acknowledge the wisdom of God, and submit to his will: we ought to be thankful for the benefit derived from some, and to be patient under the inconveniences occasioned by others: and we may learn from them, to confide in his kind providence, and to aim to answer the end of our creation.—Liberty is most valuable; yet the savage licentious freedom of the half-starved wild ass is not enviable. It is more desirable to be subject to wholesome laws, to labour, to be useful, and to live in plenty; than to set authority at defiance, and to live an indolent, unserviceable, and penurious life. In like manner, strength and power are valuable only when well employed: and the patient ox is preferable to the untameable rhinoceros: for one talent improved is far better than many misemployed.—It is very absurd for rational creatures to be vain of personal beauty, strength, courage, agility, or external decorations; when they are eclipsed in them all by the various species of brutes. God has better endowments to confer on those whom he loves: and if he do not impart wisdom and grace, all the rest will prove a snare and a curse.—It is lamentable to observe, that many human beings are more stupid, and hardened against their young, than the very ostrich, the disgrace of the animal tribes. They willingly forget their wants, dangers, and interests: and in order to be at liberty for dissipated pleasures, consign them even when helpless infants to the care of hirelings, and refuse them the very nutriment, which God has created for them! They afterwards take no care of their welfare, either in this world or in the next, any more than if they did not belong to them: and thus their unavoidable labour and pain become vain, and to bad purpose, for want of subsequent attention, and precaution about them; and by

CHAP. XL.

God calls on Job to answer, 1, 2. Job humbles himself, and will proceed no further, 3—5. God requires him to shew by acts of power, that he is able to save himself, 6—14. The power of the Lord is shewn in behemoth, 15—24.

MOREOVER, ^a the LORD answered Job, and said,

2 ^b Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty ^c instruct *him*? ^d he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

3 ¶ Then Job answered the LORD, and said,

a 6. xxxviii. 1.
b ix. 3. xxxiii. 13.
Ec. vi. 10. 1s.
xiv. 9—11. 1. 8.
1 Cor. x. 22.
c 1s. xl. 14. 1 Cor.
ii. 16.
d iii. 11, 12. 20.
23. vii. 12. 19—
21. ix. 17, 18.
32—35. x. 3—7.
14—17. xiii. 21
—27. xiv. 16, 17.
xvi. 11—21. xix.
6—11. xxvii. 2.
xxx. 21—23. Ez.
xxviii. 2. 25.
Matt. xx. 11—
15. Rom. ix. 19
—23. xi. 34—36.

4 ^e Behold, I am vile; ^f what shall I answer thee? ^g I will lay my hand upon my mouth.

5 Once have I spoken; ^a but I will not answer: yea, ^b twice; ^c but I will proceed no further.

6 ¶ Then answered the LORD unto Job ¹ out of the whirlwind, and said,

7 ^m Gird up thy loins now like a man: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

8 ⁿ Wilt thou also ^o disannul my judgment? ^p wilt thou condemn me, that thou mayest be righteous?

1 xxxviii. 1. Ps. 1. 3, 4. Heb. xii. 18—20. 2 Pet. iii. 10—12. m xiii. 22. xxiii. 3, 4.
xxxviii. 3. n Ps. li. 4. Rom. iii. 4. o 1s. xiv. 27. xxviii. 18. Gal. iii. 15. 17.
Heb. vii. 18. p x. 3. xxvii. 2—6. xxxii. 2. xxxiv. 5, 6. xxxv. 2, 3.

e xlii. 6. Gen.
xxiii. 27. xxxii.
10. 2 Sam. xxiv.
10. 1 Kings xix.
4. Ezra ix. 6. 15.
Neh. ix. 33. Ps.
li. 4, 5. 1s. vi. 5.
liii. 6. lxiv. 6.
Dan. ix. 5, 7. Luke
v. 8. xv. 18, 19.
xxviii. 13. 1 Tim.
i. 15.
f ix. 31—35. xvi.
21. xxiii. 4—7.
xxxii. 37.
g xxi. 5. xxix. 9.
Judg. xviii. 19.
Ps. xxxix. 9.
Prov. xxx. 32.
Mic. vii. 16.
Hab. ii. 20.
Zech. ii. 13.
h xxxiv. 31, 32.
Rom. iii. 19.
i xxxiii. 14. 2 Kings
vi. 10. Ps. lxi.
11.
k Jer. xxxi. 18,
19.

reason of the bad examples which they set, and the pernicious instructions which they give them. Surely "God," in judgment, "hath deprived" such parents "of wisdom," "and hath not imparted to them understanding." But we may cease to wonder at this, when we consider how stupidly insensible most men are to the interests of their own souls, which they neglect more fatally than the ostrich does her young. By their contemptuous defiance or forgetfulness of God, or their vain attempts to hide or excuse their sins, they plainly shew that he has *judicially* deprived them of understanding.

V. 19—30.

Man, by nature, is prone to imitate the animals in their worst qualities. Like the wild ass he scorns the yoke of God; and like the wild bull in the net, he rages against his corrections. Even his courage is generally unreasonable, instinctive, and furious, like that of a horse. His feet are swift to shed blood, or to venture his own life, when ambition, avarice, or revenge inspires him. In this case he "mocketh at fear" in his fierceness and rage; and not only rushes upon the weapons of death, but upon the divine vengeance, without hesitation. Yet would he be afraid as the grass-hopper, if called to prefer his plain duty towards God, his family, and society, to the caprice of fashion, and the *diabolical* honour of revenge, in the midst of the ridicule and reproach of ungodly men! How would he then act, if called to venture or lay down his life, in the despised cause of truth and righteousness? Moreover, men naturally glory in their own strength and prowess, and rejoice in ostentatiously displaying them; and are more disposed to seek renown by rendering themselves terrible, than by becoming useful.—The qualities of the horse, when united with his docility and promptitude to labour, are admirable; but when found in a rational creature, and separated from more useful dispositions, they become dreadful and detestable.—Even the eagles, which teach their young to suck up the blood, do not prey upon their own species; they leave that cruelty to man. Yet from each of these animals we might learn useful lessons: they almost all instruct us to attend to our own safety, and that of our offspring; and to secure ourselves, in some effectual refuge, from the dangers to which we are exposed. But God forbid, that we should be like the eagle

only in soaring aloft and in keenness of sight, while we still look down to the earth for our prey, by ambition and worldly sagacity; or by using our religious knowledge, and our credit among Christians, to cloke ambition, covetousness, and worldly lusts! But, reverencing the divine Majesty, and abasing ourselves before him in deep repentance, may we by faith and love mount upwards as on eagles' wings, till we obtain "those things which are" "above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

NOTES.

CHAP. XL. V. 1, 2. It is probable, that the voice from the whirlwind ceased for a short space, that Job might speak, if he could make any reply; but, as he continued silent, God *answered* his very thoughts, and in few words shewed him what he intended by his multiplied questions. Job had complained of the Lord's dispensations, as if he meant to "contend with him;" (Notes, xxiii. 3—7. xxxi. 35—37 :) but could Job give him any instructions how to govern the world? Did he think it wise to contend with omnipotence? or, having arraigned the dispensations of his Maker, would he also presume to answer what had been spoken?—Or, "Does he who contends with the Almighty, "draw back?" *E. Smith.*—By a trivial change of the vowel points, this rendering may be admitted.

V. 3—5. At length Job ventured to speak; but not with that confidence which he had previously thought of. His friends had attempted to prove too much, and had only emboldened him in self-vindication: Elihu had reproved him with sharpness, and he had submitted to it. But the voice of God, and the declaration of his glorious perfections, and manifold works of wisdom and power, effectually convinced him of his rashness and irreverence, in speaking of God as he would have spoken of his equal. In this comparison, he perceived and acknowledged, that he was "vile;" a poor, mean, foolish, sinful creature, who ought not to have uttered one word reflecting upon the divine conduct. He was astonished at his own presumption, and could find nothing to plead in excuse: he would therefore be silent, in submission to the will and righteousness of God; having already spoken too often, and in a very unbecoming manner. (Notes, ix. 14—21. x. 3. xvi. 17—22. xlii. 1—6.)

V. 6—8. In order that Job might be still more deeply

^q ix. 4. xxiii. 6. xxxiii. 12. 13. Ex. xv. 6. Ps. lxxxix. 10. 13. Is. xlv. 9. 1 Cor. x. 22. 9 ^a Hast thou an arm like God? or canst thou thunder with a voice like him?

^r xxxvii. 4. 5. Ps. xxxix. 3—9. ^s xxxix. 19. Ps. xciii. 1. civ. 1. 2. Is. lix. 17. 10 ^a Deck thyself now *with* ^t majesty and excellency; and array thyself with ^u glory and beauty.

^t 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Ps. xxi. 5. xiv. 3. 4. Matt. vi. 13. 2 Pet. i. 16. 17. Jude 24, 25. 11 ^a Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath: and ^v behold every one *that is* proud, and abase him.

^u Ex. xxviii. 2. Ps. l. 2. xc. 16. 17. cxlix. 4. Is. i. 2. *Marg.* 1 Cor. xv. 54. 12 Look on every one *that is* proud, and bring him low; and ^w tread down the wicked ^x in their place.

^x xx. 23. xxvii. 22. Deut. xxxii. 22. Ps. lxxviii. 49. 50. cxliv. 6. Rom. ii. 8, 9. 13 ^b Hide them in the dust together; and ^y bind their faces in secret.

^y Ex. ix. 16. 17. xv. 6—12. xviii. 11. Is. ii. 11, 12. 17. x. 12—19. Ez. xxviii. 2—9. Dan. iv. 37. v. 20—23. Ob. 3, 4. Mal. iv. 1. Luke xviii. 14. Acts xii. 22, 23. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6. 14 Then will I also confess unto thee, ^z that thine own right hand can save thee.

^z Ps. lx. 12. Is. x. 6. Zech. x. 5. Mal. iv. 3. Rom. xvi. 20. *Marg.* a xxxvi. 20. Ec. xi. 3. Acts i. 25. b xiv. 13. Ps. xlix. 14. Is. ii. 10. c xxxvi. 13. Esth. vii. 8. John xi. 44. d Ps. xlv. 3. 6. Is. xl. 29. Rom. v. 6. Eph. ii. 4—9.

humbled, the Lord again addressed him in the same majestic and awful manner as before, requiring his attention and his answer: and he more expressly reproved him for insisting upon his own righteousness, in such a manner as to seem to his friends, and even to Elihu, to charge God himself with injustice. Did he then require that the divine decrees respecting him should be reversed, because they had been too severe? Or, that the Lord should be deemed unjust in his judgments, rather than that he himself should be suspected of hypocrisy? Indeed, wicked men often murmured against Providence in this blasphemous manner; but would Job copy their example, and charge God foolishly? (*Notes*, ii. 10. xxxiv. 5—9. 31—37. xxxv. 1—3. 14—16. xxxvi. 22—33.) Would he allow his tongue such liberty, while vindicating himself from unjust accusations, or complaining of his sufferings, and the wrongs which were done him? Yet this had been the tendency of many expressions, which he had used in the heat of dispute, and in the bitterness of his soul. (*Note*, vi. 26.)

V. 9—14. The Lord would not at all deign to argue the question of *right* with his servant; but insisted on *that* being taken for granted. “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” (*Notes*, Gen. xviii. 23—26. Jer. xii. 1—4.) He purposed therefore to induce Job’s unreserved submission, by making him sensible, that he was acting most absurdly and presumptuously, in attempting to decide on the conduct of the infinitely glorious God. (*Notes*, x. 3. xxvii. 2—6.) Let him then consider whom he was offending: let him compare his puny arm with omnipotence, or his feeble voice with the tremendous thunder; and then let him enquire, whether he was able to make his cause good against such an Adversary? (*Note*, 1 Cor. x. 18—22.) But, ere he ventured any further, let him make trial of his strength against the most potent of his fellow men. Let him collect all his forces, assume all royal authority and majesty, and appear upon a glorious throne, arrayed with every magnificent decoration, and all the insignia of royalty: let him then declare his fiery indignation against every one of the proud tyrants and oppressors of the earth, and issue out his orders, that they should all be abased

15 ¶ Behold now ^{*} behemoth, ^{*} which I made with thee; ^{*} he eateth grass as an ox. ^{*} Or, the elephant, as some think. e Gen. i. 24—26. f 20. xxxix. 8. P. civ. 14.

16 Lo now, his strength *is* in his loins, and his force *is* in the navel of his belly.

17 He [†] moveth his tail like a cedar: [†] Or, setteth up. [‡] the sinews of his stones are wrapped [§] together. xli. 23.

18 His ^h bones *are* as strong pieces of brass; his bones *are* like bars of iron. h vii. 12. Is. xlviii. 4. Mic. iv. 18.

19 He *is* ⁱ the chief of the ways of God: ^k he that made him can make his sword to approach *unto him*. i xxvi. 13, 14. Ps. civ. 24. k Ps. vii. 12. Is. xxvii. 1. xxxiv. 6. Luke ii. 35.

20 Surely ^l the mountains bring him forth food, ^m where all the beasts of the field play. l 15. Ps. cxlvii. 8, 9. m Ps. civ. 26.

and trodden down, wherever they lived; that their faces should be covered as condemned criminals, and that they should either be put to death, or confined in dark and noisome dungeons. (*Note*, Esth. vii. 8.) And when, with a look or a word, he had effected this work, (as the Lord did in his own time and manner;) then it should be allowed that he had power sufficient to be his own deliverer and protector, though still unable to contend with the Almighty.

V. 15—24. There have been various opinions concerning *behemoth*: but probably the most ancient is the most true; namely, that the elephant is intended. The word is often used for quadrupeds in general; and more frequently for cattle, or animals which feed on vegetables, as distinguished from the carnivorous animals. This, however, is not exclusively the case: but probably it cannot be clearly shewn ever to mean any other than *land animals*, of which the elephant is the largest and most remarkable. It is also unlikely that the elephant should be totally omitted in this enumeration; and the several particulars best accord with it.—The Lord reminded Job, that he had made behemoth “with him;” both were his creatures, and behemoth is often found near the habitations of men.—This immense animal “eateth grass as an ox;” for if he devoured flesh as a lion, he could scarcely be either resisted or satisfied. The strength of his loins and the sinews of his body are equal to his bulk; and it is known that the elephant often carries on his back a large wooden tower, with several men in it. His *trunk*, (for the original word may mean either extremity of the body,) is very large, strong, and flexible, and by it he bears all down before him, as by the moving of a cedar. The “sinews of his *thighs*,” (as some suppose the word to mean,) are so interwoven, as to contribute very much to his vast strength; and his bones are so hard and firm, that they are like iron or brass. He is “the chief of all the works of God;” that is, *of this kind*. Now it is evident, that the elephant surpasses all other quadrupeds in size, strength, sagacity, and longevity; and yet is equally remarkable for his gentleness, when not provoked. He is content to feed upon the herbage of the mountains; and the other beasts play around him without dread of

21 He lieth under the shady trees,
in the covert of " the reed and
fens.

22 The shady trees cover him with
their shadow; ° the willows of the
brook compass him about.

23 Behold, * he drinketh up a river, * Heb. oppresseth.
and p hasteth not: he trusteth that p Ps. lxxvii. 2.
he can draw up q Jordan into his q Ps. lv. 8. 12.
mouth. xxviii. 16.
Gen. xiii. 10.
Josh. iii. 15.

24 † He taketh it with his eyes; his
nose pierceth through snares.

† Or, Will any
take him in his
sight, or bore his
nose with a gin?
xli. 1, 2.

harm. He lies down to rest, not in a den as carnivorous animals generally do, but under the shade of the trees, or among the reeds and rushes, as fearless of any assailant. When he drinks, he seems as if he would empty a river; and makes no haste, not being in the least fear. He appears to be confident, that he could drink up Jordan at once: he greedily looks to the water when he is thirsty, and will not be kept from it by any impediments or snares; but removes them all by his trunk, which is situated above his nose.—Probably, it was not become customary at that time to take, tame, and employ elephants in war or in journeying, as has since been done. But, though man did not know how to deal with behemoth, the Creator had him entirely in his power, and could destroy him at his will. This thought was suited to remind Job not to contend against his omnipotent Sovereign.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

It behoves us to speak with great reverence and caution concerning the ways and works of God: for it will appear at length, that many of our expressions sprang from such corrupt principles, and led to such desperate conclusions, that we could not on reflection do otherwise than unreservedly condemn them. Yet all our words must be given an account of at the day of judgment, and be produced as evidences of the frame of our hearts: and, probably, it will then appear, that the presumptuous cavils and objections of philosophick speculators, sprang from deeper enmity against God, and were more provoking to him, than the scandalous profligacy of the profane and licentious. Indeed, when we murmur under correction, do we not contend with God, and dictate to him how he ought to deal with us? But can we seriously think, that creatures so weak and rebellious have any right to be consulted, or are qualified to instruct, or authorized to reprove, the Almighty? We should therefore now "judge ourselves" on this account, "that we may not be judged of the Lord."—Every increasing discovery of the glorious perfections of God will proportionably humble us in the dust before him. One clear and distinct view of his holy majesty would appal the stoutest rebel upon earth; or even drive him to despair, if not tempered with discoveries of his mercy. How then will the wicked bear the blaze of his glory at the approaching day of wrath and judgment?—Even believers have but faint apprehensions of his glory: and if they saw it more clearly, their self-complacency, in disputing with each other, would be turned into self-abhorrence; their mouths would be stopped, or only opened to say, "Behold, I am vile!" The subjects of their controversies, their management of them, and their whole characters, would appear in another light; and they would impose silence upon themselves, not knowing what to answer, and aware of having already spoken far more than they can justify.—But when we see this glory of our

God "in the face of Jesus Christ," we are humbled without being terrified; and our deepest reverence and self-abasement consist with filial confidence and love. When we clearly perceive how vile we are, we are ashamed and grieved for many of those words and actions, which before we vindicated; and when we truly repent, we retract what has been improperly spoken, and sincerely purpose and attempt a change in our conduct and conversation.—The progressive renewal of a believer proceeds in the same way of conviction, humiliation, and watchfulness against remaining sin, as his first conversion did. If we have been much humbled before God, we need still deeper humiliation; if convinced of many evils in our conduct, we need convincing of many more; and every progressive step in this way makes us more and more sensible, that we, in no case, have either right or reason to complain. Even when we protest against ill-treatment from men, or vindicate ourselves from injurious charges, we are apt to reflect upon God; and to be so tenacious of our own right or reputation, as to neglect a proper regard to his honour, and we frequently seem as if we would "disannul his judgment, and condemn him, that we may be righteous."

V. 9—24.

The proud, stout, and profane words of sinners, might almost induce us to conclude, that they suppose themselves to have "an arm like God," and "can thunder with a voice like his!" yet they are exposed without the least defence to his almighty vengeance. Nor can words express their madness, in persisting in rebellion, and neglecting his invitations to be reconciled.—Alas! what is all the majesty, excellency, glory, or beauty, with which sinful worms can deck themselves? How impotent their rage! How vain their ostentation. The Lord alone can, and he certainly will, abase every one that is proud; either in true repentance, or as condemned criminals in destruction. And those who proudly trust, that their own right hand, their own contrivances, efforts, or merits, can save them, will be numbered among these enemies and rivals of God.—Our consideration of the power, and our dread of the rage, of the beasts of the field, might teach us the folly of resisting the will, or provoking the indignation, of the Lord. Every haughty rebel should be reminded, that he who made him can "make his sword to approach unto him;" and not only to destroy his temporal life, but to fill his soul with unutterable anguish. Against him all power is vain; none can break through his snares, or out-brave his vengeance; though they drink down iniquity like water, and still covet and thirst for more, and make no haste to "flee from the wrath to come."—But, on the other hand, we may note, that it is well when the powerful are gentle and equitable; and love to see their inferiors secure, at liberty, and in comfort around them; and when, content with the provisions appointed for them, they do not injure, oppress, or defraud any one.—The all-bountiful Creator can Supply

CHAP. XLI.

The power of God shewn in the huge and terrible
leviathan, 1—34.

* That is, a whale,
or, a whirlpool.
iii. 8. marg. Ps.
lxxiv. 14. civ. 26.
Is. xxvii. 1.
† Heb. *drownest*.

CANST thou draw out *leviathan
with an hook? or his tongue with a
cord *which* thou †lettest down?

a Is. xxx. 28.
xxxvii. 29. Ez.
xxix. 4, 5.

2 Canst thou ^aput an hook into his
nose? or bore his jaw through with a
thorn?

b Ps. lv. 21. Prov.
xv. 1. xviii. 23.
xxv. 15. Is. xxx.
10.

3 Will he make many supplications
unto thee? ^bwill he speak soft *words*
unto thee?

c 1 Kings xx. 31
—34.
d Gen. i. 28. ii. 19.
Ps. viii. 5, 6.
e Ex. xxi. 6. Deut.
xv. 17.

4 Will he make a covenant with
thee? ^dwilt thou take him for ^ea ser-
vant for ever?

f Judg. xvi. 25—
30.
g xxviii. 11.

5 Wilt thou ^fplay with him as *with*
a bird? or wilt thou ^gbind him for thy
maidens?

h Judg. xiv. 11.

6 Shall ^hthy companions make a

banquet of him? shall they part him
among the merchants?

7 Canst thou fill his skin with barbed
irons? or his head with ⁱfish-spears? ⁱ 26—29.

^k 8 Lay thine hand upon him, re- ^k 1 Kings xx. 11
member the battle, do no more. ² Kings x. 4.
Luke xiv. 31,
32.

9 Behold, the hope of him is in vain:
^lshall not *one* be cast down even at the ^l Deut. xxviii. 34.
sight of him? ¹ Sam. iii. 11.
Is. xxviii. 19.
Luke xxi. 11.

10 None is so fierce that ^mdare stir
him up: ⁿwho then is able to stand
before me? ^m Gen. xlix. 9.
Num. xxiv. 9.
Ps. ii. 11, 12.
Ez. viii. 17, 18.
n ix. 4. xl. 9. Jer.
xii. 5. 1 Cor. x.
22.

11 ^oWho hath prevented me, that I
should repay *him*? ^p*whatsoever* is un-
der the whole heaven is mine. ^o xxii. 2, 3. xxxv.
7. Ps. xxi. 3.
Rom. xi. 35.

12 ¶ I will not conceal his parts, nor
his power, nor his ^qcomely proportion. ^p Ex. xix. 5. Deut.
x. 14. 1 Chr. xxix.
11—14. Ps. xxiv.
1. l. 12. cxv. 16.
1 Cor. x. 26. 28.
q Gen. i. 25.

13 Who can discover the face of
his garment? *or* who can come *to him* ^r 2 Kings xix. 28.
[†]with his ^rdouble bridle? [†] Or, *within*.
Ps. xxxii. 9.
Jam. iii. 3.

our wants, however large; and he will do it, if we be
content with what nature requires, and be not desirous of
meat or drink for our lusts, but “seek first his kingdom
“and righteousness.” (Notes, Matt. vi. 25—34.)—Happy
are they, who trust in him, and leave him to manage all
their concerns, who orders all things in heaven and earth,
in perfect wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness.

NOTES.

CHAP. XLI. V. 1—11. It has been much disputed
what we are here to understand by Leviathan. Many in-
terpret it of the *crocodile*: but the crocodile is an inha-
bitant of rivers, and leviathan of the sea. (Notes, Ps.
lxxiv. 13—17. civ. 25, 26. Is. xxvii. 1.) Others suppose
the *whale* to be meant: yet naturalists find many difficulties,
in applying the particulars of the description to that crea-
ture. But there are several species of whales which are
known, and probably others in different parts of the ocean,
with which we have but little acquaintance: and there is
some reason to think that the deep contains enormous crea-
tures, comprehended under that general name, which are
even larger than any which have yet been taken. (Note,
xxvi. 5—13.) As “*behemoth*” seems to denote the largest
of the quadrupeds; so, it is probable, “*leviathan*” means
the largest of the inhabitants of the ocean. Moses espe-
cially mentions the creation of great whales; (Gen. i. 21;)
and it is not likely that this animal, so particularly noted
in the brief account of the creation, should be overlooked,
when the Creator so copiously enumerated his works for
the display of his own glory in them.—The Lord, in order
more deeply to convince Job of his presumption in con-
tending with him, demanded of him, whether he was able
to subdue leviathan. Could he draw him out of the sea
with a line and a hook, which might fasten through his
tongue, nose, or jaws, after the various methods of taking
other fishes? Could he bring this prodigious animal to
yield, and become his supplicant, to speak him fair and
court his favour? Could he engage him in a covenant to

be his servant, and to labour for him? Or could he tame
and confine him for the amusement of his family? Would
he and his acquaintance make a feast upon his flesh? Or,
if it were unfit for that use, would he divide the oil and
bones among the merchants?—Perhaps in the days of Job,
it was not thought possible to take whales as they now do:
but some of the species might have been cast on the shore,
and divided for the use of different persons. It however
served equally for Job’s humiliation, if *he supposed it im-
possible* to take them, as if it really had been so.—He was
therefore directed to consider, whether he was able to
wound leviathan in his body or head, with barbed irons,
or fish-spears, and thus to take him? He was challenged
to lay his hand on him if he dared: but should he attempt
it, and escape with his life, he would remember his peril-
ous situation so well, that he would not make another at-
tempt. All hope of taking him would be vain: the very
sight of him would daunt any man. None would dare to
stir him up when asleep, or basking on the surface of the
ocean; and who would dare to meet him when enraged?
How could Job then expect to prevail on his almighty
Creator to alter his plan of government to please him, or
to use his power to serve his interests, or humour his way-
ward inclinations? For where was that man, who had
first given to the Lord and made him his debtor, that he
should have a right to demand payment; when all things
in the whole universe were the work and property of God?
(Notes, xxxv. 4—8. 1 Chr. xxix. 10—19. Rom. xi. 33—
36.)

V. 12—34. The remainder of this chapter contains a
particular and most sublime description of leviathan.—
The Lord declared, that he did not mean, by confining
this prodigious animal in the vast ocean, to conceal from
man “his parts, and power, and comely proportion:” for,
though we call such creatures monsters, and deem them
uncomely, the Creator sees them to be formed in a suit-
able and becoming proportion of one part to another.—
At first sight leviathan appears exceedingly formidable:

^s xxxviii. 10. Ec. xii. 4.
^t Ps. lvii. 4. lviii. 6. Prov. xxx. 14. Dan. vii. 7.
^{* Heb. strong pieces of shields.}
^u Jer. ix. 23.
^x Rev. v. 2, 3, 5.

14 Who can open ^s the doors of his face? ^t his teeth *are* terrible round about.

15 *His* ^{*} scales *are* his ^u pride, shut up together *as with* ^x a close seal.

16 One is so near to another, that no air can come between them.

17 They are joined one to another, they stick together, that they cannot be sundered.

18 By his neesings a light doth shine, and his eyes *are* like ^y the eyelids of the morning.

^z Ps. xviii. 8. 19 ^z Out of his mouth go burning lamps, *and* sparks of fire leap out.

20 Out of his nostrils goeth smoke, ^a as out of a seething pot or caldron.

^b Ps. xviii. 8. 12. Is. xxx. 33. Hab. iii. 5. 21 His breath ^b kindleth coals, and a flame goeth out of his mouth.

^c xxxix. 19. xl. 16. 22 ^c In his neck remaineth strength, and sorrow ^t is turned into joy before him.

^d Heb. fallings. 23 The ^t flakes of his flesh ^d are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved.

^e Is. xlviii. 4. Jer. v. 3. Zech. vii. 12. 24 His heart is as firm as a stone; yea, ^e as hard as a piece of the nether mill-stone.

and who can draw near to him, to examine particularly his whole skin, which serves as his garment; or to strip it off from him? Who would undertake to bridle him like a horse for his use? or to look into his mouth; when a sight of his teeth would make any man dread immediate destruction? The scales, or strong pieces of shields, (*marg.*) with which he is covered, as with an impenetrable coat of mail, are his confidence: by them he is secured, as if a seal fastened one part to another; so that no air can penetrate between them, no separation can be effected. When he “neeses,” or spouts the water into the air, his breath sparkles like fire, and his eyes appear like the morning-light; so that burning lamps and sparks, and smoke appear to be emitted from his mouth, as from under a furnace; and a flame seems to attend his breath, as if it would set coals on fire. His head is joined to his body with the most surprising strength: and it is as if sorrow, or fainting, marched before him, exulting in the havock which he makes of other creatures; or, however assaulted, his confidence in his own strength turns all his sorrows into joy. His muscles are immoveably firm; and his heart as incapable of fear or compassion, as if it were a mill-stone. When he appears above water, he causes such commotion and agitation in the waves, that the stoutest mariners are terrified, as in a furious storm; and betake themselves to confessions and prayers, expecting immediate death. (*Notes, Ps. cvii. 23—30. Jon. i. 4—6. 11—16.*) No weapons of war are of any avail: he is undaunted by them; they make no impression on him, or resistance to

25 When he raiseth up himself, the mighty are afraid; ^f by reason of breakings they purify themselves.

^g xxxix. 21—24. 26 ^g The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold: the spear, the dart, nor the ^h habergeon.

^h xxxix. 7. Hab. i. 10. 27 He esteemeth iron as straw, *and* brass as rotten wood.

28 The arrow cannot make him flee: ^h sling-stones are turned with him into stubble.

29 Darts are counted as stubble: ⁱ he laugheth at the shaking of a spear.

ⁱ 2 Chr. xxvi. 14. 30 ⁱ Sharp stones *are* under him: he spreadeth sharp pointed things upon the mire.

^j Heb. Sharp pieces of pointed sherd. 31 He maketh ^k the deep to boil like ^k 20. a pot: he maketh the sea like a pot of ointment.

32 He maketh a path to shine after him; *one* would think the deep *to be* hoary.

^l xl. 19. 33 ^l Upon earth there is not his like, who ^{*} is made without fear.

^m xxvi. 12. Ex. v. 2. Ps. lxxiv. 13, 14. Is. xxvii. 1. Ez. xxix. 3. Rev. xii. 1—3. xiii. 2. xx. 2, 3. 34 He beholdeth all high things: ^m he is a king over all the children of pride.

him; but he despises and derides them all. Indeed, he reclines his enormous weight upon the sharp-pointed stones at the bottom of the sea, with as much ease as if he lay on the soft mire. His motion in the deep makes the waters to move, as ointment in a pot over a vehement fire. His path may be tracked by this violent commotion, and by the white foam which he leaves upon the waters. In the whole earth there is no creature equal to him, being formed destitute of fear. He beholds every other animal, or the stately ships, and aspiring man, with contempt and disregard; he feels himself capable of ruling over the stoutest and proudest animals; and he has more strength and courage, than the children of pride, who exalt themselves against their Maker.—It is undeniable, that some particulars in this description, do not accord to any species of whale, which is at present known; for none of them are covered with scales, or have an impenetrable skin: but it agrees still less with any other creature that we know; and especially it is wholly unsuited to the crocodile.—The ancient fathers generally understood the passage as an emblematick, or typical, description of Satan, that “king over all the children of pride.” (*Note, Is. xxvii. 1.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Man was formed to be the lord of all other creatures here below; but his superiority consists principally in the powers of his rational nature, which, if duly improved, would teach him to submit to his Creator and to serve him: if therefore he *irrationally* forgets his place and duty, he should

CHAP. XLII.

Job, in deep humility, submits to God, 1—6. God decides in Job's favour; and requires his three friends

to present burnt-offerings for their sins, and submissively to engage Job to pray for them, 7, 8. They obey, and God accepts Job, 9. His prosperity is restored and doubled, 10—12. His children, 13—15. His age and death, 16, 17.

THEN Job answered the LORD, and said,

2 I know that ^athou canst *do* every *thing*, and *that* ^bno thought ^{*}can be withholden from thee.

be reminded of his inferiority in other respects, even to many of the animals. Indeed, some of these are so powerful and formidable, that we are by no means able to cope with them: how mad then must the presumptuous transgressor be, who defies the power and wrath of the Almighty!—If language so sublime was proper in describing the terrible force of “leviathan;” what words can express the power of God's indignation, who “is a consuming fire!” He indeed beholdeth all high things in order to abase them; he resists, and will crush, all those who proudly exalt themselves against him; and “who may stand in his sight “when he is angry?” But he more delights in shewing his glory from the mercy-seat; and in encouraging sinners to take refuge “under the shadow of his wings,” and to prostrate themselves before him. If his anger be thus turned away from us, his omnipotence will be our protection; and then we need fear no enemy, though we shall have those, which are far more formidable than leviathan. Satan, the king and father of all the children of pride, with his legions of evil spirits, is not confined to the ocean; nor can he be fenced out or resisted by our puny arm. Our wisdom, strength, and resolution, are unavailing in this unequal contest; and far more useless than sword or spear against leviathan: all opposition or hope of overcoming or escaping, if left to ourselves, would be in vain; his heart is stoned against compassion, and he has been the cruel murderer of men, both body and soul, from the beginning: (Note, John viii. 41—47:) he rejoices in causing destruction; and he looks on all the proud and lofty of the earth as his own. But “the poor in spirit,” who humbly trust in the Lord's mercy, are safe: relying on their almighty Assistant, they may defy and resist this tremendous foe, and be made more than conquerors over him. They should however remember, that they are saved wholly by grace; “for who hath prevented the “LORD, that he should repay him?” And if they are mercifully rescued from the deserved wrath of God, and from the malice of Satan, they have no right to complain of any affliction or distress; or to boast of any wisdom, strength, or endowment of their own. Submission, dependence, and grateful obedience are *their* part; it behoves them to revere the divine Majesty; to be abased under a consciousness of their own vileness; to occupy their allotted place contentedly and obediently; to cease from their own wisdom, and to give all the glory to their gracious God and Saviour.—When any man becomes proud

3 ^cWho is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; ^dthings too wonderful for me, which I knew not.

4 ^eHear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: ^fI will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me.

5 I have ^gheard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now ^hmine eye seeth thee.

6 Wherefore ⁱI abhor *myself*, and ^krepent in dust and ashes.

Is. lviii. 5. Dan. ix. 3. Jon. iii. 6—10. Matt. xi. 21. Luke x. 13.

of his personal strength and courage, let him be reminded of leviathan: when he is vain of his sagacity, ingenuity, or mental endowments, let him consider how much Satan excels him in them all. Let us all consider the holiness of our God, that we may be ashamed of our remaining unholiness: and, remembering from whom every good gift comes, and for what end it was given, let us walk uprightly and humbly with the Lord; for “before honour “is humility.”

NOTES.

CHAP. XLII. V. 1—6. (Note, xl. 3—5.) Job, borne down as it were with a torrent of light and conviction, at length answered; not in his own vindication, but with unreserved submission. He was fully assured, that the Lord could do every thing; and therefore it was madness to contend with him, and folly to despair of help from him. He knew that none of his impatient thoughts could be concealed from God: or rather he meant, that the Lord could not be prevented from accomplishing every thing which he intended. (Marg.—Notes, Prov. xix. 21. Is. xlvi. 10, 11. Dan. iv. 34—37. Eph. i. 9—12.) He had allowed these truths before *peevishly*, (Note, xxiii. 13—17;) but he now acknowledged them with humble acquiescence, and not without hope of relief.—In reproof of his presumption, God had said, “Who is this, that darkeneth counsel by “words without knowledge?” (Notes, xxxviii. 1, 2.) And Job here, in indignant astonishment at his own presumption, repeats the sentiment, and pleads guilty to the charge; as if he had said, ‘Who indeed am I, a poor sinful worm, that I should venture to darken such deep subjects, by my ignorant and impatient discourses!’ He confessed that he had spoken things beyond his knowledge, and too wonderful, or mysterious, for him to comprehend; and in a manner which merited the severest punishment.—God had likewise commanded Job to prepare his answer while he proposed some questions to him, and blamed him for presuming to instruct the Almighty; (Notes, xxxviii. 3. xl. 1, 2. 6—8;) but Job now humbly besought the Lord, that he would condescend to answer the questions which he desired to propose, solve those difficulties with which he was perplexed, declare his truth unto him, and become his Instructor. He had indeed obtained some distant knowledge of God from education, instruction, and conference with his friends; and he had thought himself competent to discourse on such subjects; but the scene, which

7 ¶ And it was so, that after the LORD had spoken these words unto Job, the LORD said to ¹Eliphaz the Temanite, ^mMy wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ⁿye have not spoken of me *the thing that is right*, as my servant Job *hath*.

8 Therefore take unto you now ^oseven bullocks and seven rams, and ^pgo to my servant Job, and ^qoffer up for yourselves a burnt-offering, and ^rmy servant Job shall pray for you; for ^shim I will accept: ^tlest I deal with you *after your folly*, in that ye have not spoken of me *the thing which is right*, like my servant Job.

9 So Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, went, and ^udid according as the LORD commanded them: the LORD also accepted ^vJob.

10 And the LORD ^wturned the captivity of Job, ^xwhen he prayed for his friends: also ^ythe LORD ^zgave Job twice as much as he had before.

11 Then came there unto him ^aall his brethren, and all his sisters; and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and ^bthey bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the

xxxiv. 31, 32. Is. lx. 14. Matt vii. 24. John ii. 5. Acts ix. 6. x. 33. Heb. xi. 8. [†] Heb. the face of Job. 8. xxii. 27. Ec. ix. 7. ^u v. 18—20. Deut. xxx. 3. Ps. xiv. 7. liii. 6. cxxvi. 1. 4. ^x Ex. xvii. 3, 4. Num. xii. 2, 13. xiv. 1—4. 10. 13—20. xvi. 21, 22. 46—48. Deut. ix. 20. Luke xxiii. 34. Acts vii. 50, 60. ^y viii. 6, 7. xxii. 24, 25. Deut. viii. 18. 1 Sam. ii. 7. 2 Chr. xxv. 9. Prov. xxii. 4. Hag. ii. 8. [†] Heb. added all that had been to Job unto the double. Is. xl. 2. lxi. 7. ^z xix. 13, 14. Prov. xvi. 7. ^a ii. 11. iv. 4. xvi. 5. Gen. xxxvii. 35. Is. xxxv. 3, 4. John xi. 19. Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26. Heb. xii. 12. xiii. 3.

he had now witnessed, had made such discoveries to him of the divine glory, and had so affected his heart; that, compared with this *intuitive* knowledge, all that he ever knew before seemed to be like hearing a report of some absent person, or transaction. He was now far more sensible than ever of his own guilt and pollution: so that he “abhorred himself,” as an abominable sinner in heart and life; but especially for his presumption and impiety, in *murmuring against God*. (Notes, Ez. xvi. 60—63. xxxvi. 31, 32.) Of this and of all his sins he sincerely repented, and willingly took shame to himself for them: and, while he abased his body in “dust and ashes,” as a humble penitent; he desired to lie as low in self-condemnation, and in the frame of his spirit before God, casting himself wholly on his mercy, and submitting unreservedly to his will.—No doubt Job before this, had had spiritual and experimental knowledge of God in some measure; but nothing equal to what he received on this occasion. (Notes, i. 1. 8. 20—22. Is. vi. 5. Luke v. 1—11, latter part.)—‘This passage is totally unintelligible, as it stands in the Bible. Verses three and four seem to have crept in from the beginning of JEHOVAH’s address to Job.’ E. Smith. Accordingly this writer omits a great part of them. They are however found in the Hebrew, and in other versions, manuscripts, &c. Deciding in this peremptory manner on the word of God, is irreverent and dangerous in the extreme.

V. 7—9. While the Lord was speaking to Job with sharp rebukes, his friends perhaps thought him altogether wrong, and themselves blameless and commendable: and it is not unlikely, that some readers have been ready to conclude, while we have gone through the preceding chapters, that the discourses of Job have been too favourably, and those of his friends too unfavourably, explained. But this chapter was all along considered as the clue of the whole narration; without which it would have been presumptuous to decide positively, and without hesitation. It is however evident, that the general doctrine of Job was more honourable to God, and consistent with the truth, than that of his friends. They had misrepresented the dispensations of Providence, as if this world had been the state of retribution; and had greatly lost sight of the future state; they had considered extraordinary afflictions

as a demonstration of wickedness, and as the effect of vindictive anger, rather than as trials and chastenings: and on this ground alone they had condemned a most eminent servant of God of hypocrisy, and atrocious iniquity, and treated him with severity and disdain; while he was enduring the severest sufferings, and struggling with violent temptations. (Notes, iv. 1—11. v. 3—5. 25—27. viii. 1—7. 20—22. ix. 22—24. xi. 1—4. 13—20. xv. 1—13. xviii. 2—4. xx. 1—9. xxii. 5—14. 21—30.) On the contrary, though Job had irreverently and impatiently vindicated himself; yet on the whole his sentiments were true, and his arguments conclusive.—When therefore the Lord had brought Job to deep repentance, and a proper frame of mind, he answered his confidence, and decidedly took his part. His friends, instead of a recompence for their service, as perhaps they expected, were informed that God was very angry with them, and would not forgive them; except they brought costly sacrifices as a confession of their guilt, and of their dependence on his mercy; and unless by proper concessions they induced Job to become their intercessor, and to pray for them, while they offered their burnt-offerings. Four times in two verses God called Job his *servant*, as if he gloried in him, in the midst of his poverty and distress, and when he was treated as a hypocrite. Him alone the Lord would accept, and his friends for his sake and in answer to his prayers; (Notes, Gen. xii. 1—3. Ez. xiv. 13—21;) otherwise he would severely chastise them, and put them to shame, according to their folly, in misrepresenting his dispensations, and condemning his servant.—The prosperity of those who were more guilty, and the afflictions of Job, who received this testimony of his superior piety, constituted a refutation of their whole doctrine.—Job, being himself humbled and pardoned, heartily and readily forgave them, and prayed for them; and they submitted to this humiliating expedient or making their peace with God. Thus a cordial reconciliation took place. Job’s character was cleared and honoured: and, if he were not an intended type of the Saviour, the whole history is suited to bring his sufferings and the event of them to our remembrance. (Note, Jam. v. 9—11.)

V. 10—17. While Job murmured, disputed, persisted in his own vindication, and spoke contemptuously of his friends; his afflictions continued, and the suspicions which

evil that the LORD had brought upon him : ^b every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an ear-ring of gold.

^c 12 So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning : for ^d he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.

^e 13 He had also ^e seven sons and three daughters.

14 And he called the name of the

first Jemima ; and the name of the second, Kezia ; and the name of the third, Keren-happuch.

15 And in all the land were ^f no women found so fair as the daughters of Job : and their father ^g gave them inheritance among their brethren.

16 After this lived Job ^h an hundred and forty years, ⁱ and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.

17 So Job died, being old and ^k full of days.

his friends entertained of him were strengthened : but as soon as he submitted to God, repented and abhorred himself, and forgave and prayed for his false accusers ; the tide began to turn in his favour, and his character was re-established, and rendered more illustrious than ever. (*Ps.* xxxvii. 5—7.) Some think that the Chaldeans and Sabeans were wonderfully disposed to restore to him his substance. His afflictions, however, by which he had been held as in bondage or captivity, were terminated ; his reputation and honour were restored ; the permission given to Satan being recalled, (*Notes*, i. 12. ii. 6,) his health also was re-established, his spirits were calmed, and his comforts renewed. All his relations and neighbours, who before had treated him with disdain, on account of his poverty and supposed hypocrisy, now came around him : being either afraid of disregarding one who was a favourite of heaven, or desiring the benefit of his prayers and instructions, or through love and esteem. They condoled with him and comforted him ; and according to the custom of those times, every one of them made him a present of a piece of money, stamped with the figure of a lamb, (as the original word is supposed to imply,) and an ornament of gold for the ear, or face. He seems likewise to have been again acknowledged, and submitted to, as ruler, and in process of time his substance was in every thing exactly doubled. But, as a testimony that his children were not extinct, or lost to him by death, he had only the former number replaced to him ; which, with those who had been removed to another world, doubled them likewise. After this he lived in prosperity and honour, no less than one hundred and forty years ; probably above two hundred years in all : and, instead of being written childless, as he once feared, he saw his posterity to the fourth generation ; and at length died in peace, satisfied with living here, and ripe for a better world. Thus in every particular his integrity was evidenced by those very testimonies, which his friends had improperly demanded. His longevity is strong proof, that he lived at a very early period. (*Note*, v. 25—27.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

The Lord will assuredly bring those whom he loves to adore him, in humble submission and self-abasement. Their corrections will continue, till they cease from murmuring, boasting, and censuring : but when they repent and kiss the rod, their deliverance draws nigh.—Clear dis-

coveries of the glorious power and wisdom of God, even in the inanimate or irrational works of the creation, tend to humble our pride, and to induce us to subscribe to his rebukes, and to the charges which his word brings against us ; to fear his wrath above all things, and to expect every blessing from his favour. As none of *his* thoughts can fail of accomplishment, so none of *ours* can escape his notice, but must all be accounted for at the day of judgment.—Calm reflection will often convince us “ that we were hiding counsel by words without knowledge,” at the very time, when we thought, that we were fully declaring the truth in a clear and convincing manner : and grace in lively exercise will always influence us to confess without hesitation our sins, when we discover them ; and, without being much concerned to justify what was right, to take shame to ourselves for the things which have been faulty in our conduct.—Even the true believer, in discoursing of heavenly things, is very liable to go out of his depth ; and by uttering what he does not understand, and speculating on things too wonderful for him, he often exposes himself to rebukes for his rashness and irreverence. What then will be the case of the infidel, the sceptick, and the disputer of this world ? They will be speechless, and despair ; whilst all the world shall behold and acknowledge the wisdom, justice, and goodness of those laws, truths, and decrees, which they arraigned and blasphemed as unjust, oppressive, and unreasonable. Instead of citing the eternal God to the bar of a rebellious worm, and calling upon him to answer our rash objections ; it behoves us humbly to crave his instructions, and to be satisfied with the explanations, which he vouchsafes to give of those difficulties which intercept our path. For many hear of him, from parents and teachers, and learn to discourse of his works and ways, who have no heart-affecting, influential views of his perfections. After all they have heard, he is to them an *unknown God* ; for they do not so know him, as to reverence, love, trust, and submit to him. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxviii. 9. *John* viii. 54—59. xvi. 1—3. xvii. 1—3. 25, 26. *Acts* xvii. 22—31. *Rom.* i. 21—23. 28—32.) Nay, believers, who have some experimental acquaintance with God, may even in this world, receive such clear discoveries of his glory, and experience so much of his power and love ; that all which they knew before, shall seem as a mere report, compared with their present views. How then will it be, when we shall “ see him as he is,” and “ know him as we are known.”—All true knowledge of God proportionably humbles and abases

us, and causes us "to abhor ourselves, and repent in dust and ashes;" but false doctrines and mere speculative knowledge puff men up, and feed their self-importance. By this criterion let us judge ourselves, and our knowledge in religion: let us take care not to be put off with empty notions; or to be satisfied with our present measure of humiliation and experience: for when we are the most abased as sinners before God, we are in the readiest way of being exalted by him. Did such self-abasing language suit the lips of Job, that most eminent saint and servant of God, at the moment when every grace was in its fullest exercise, and can any language be too humiliating for us? If we start and scruple to say that we "abhor ourselves;" or if we find that we cannot do it with sincerity, does it not demonstrate, that we have never perceived so much of the divine glory, as Job had, and therefore are not made so sensible of our own guilt and pollution? For it would be very arrogant for any of us to suppose ourselves better, by nature and practice, or more eminent in faith, patience, or piety, than this most approved and applauded character.

V. 7—17.

When the Lord has duly humbled and graciously pardoned his servants, he will clear their reputations, silence their slanderers, answer their confidence, and exceed their largest expectations; and he will also teach them, after his example, to forgive, love, and pray for those who have injured them. In this frame of spirit they will be prepared to bear honour in an unassuming manner, and then he will confer it. He generally *first* rebukes those whom he most loves: (*Notes*, v. 17. *Heb.* xii. 4—11. *Rev.* iii. 18, 19:) but let not such, as for a time escape, be too confident, for their turn will soon come.—Even pious men may kindle the wrath of God against themselves, by not speaking humbly and honourably of him: but as all his controversies with us begin by our sin; so every reconciliation must be effected, in that way which he has revealed, and in the use of those means which he has prescribed. They, who refuse to come in this way, shall be dealt with "after their folly;" but no true believer or real penitent will finally persist in such a refusal.—It is indeed very painful to be confuted, rebuked, and constrained to confess our mistakes and offences, and to beg the assistance and good offices of those, whom we have despised, condemned, and injured. Yet the true penitent will submit to all this and far more, when the will of God is known: his self-abasement will be proportioned to his former self-confidence; and whenever we approach God in his ordinances, such mutual concessions, restitutions, and forgivenesses should *first* be attended to. (*Note*, *Matt.* v. 23, 24.) Nothing cements the affections of believers, who have jarred or disputed, so much as praying with and for each other: when they enjoy communion with their common Saviour, they feel a more lively disposition to delight in 'the communion of the saints;' and to forget all which for a season interrupted it; and "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."—We should be careful not to judge any thing before the time; we know not how

the Lord may clear up one man's character, or expose another's; and therefore we should be candid towards others, and jealous of ourselves. Neither are we competent to decide who is the most happy man; for the end crowns the day. (*Note*, *Ec.* vii. 8.) When a man is oppressed, censured, and tempted, he appears very different, from what he does when delivered and comforted: and he that is at ease, can scarcely conceive what effect sharp trials would have upon him.—Satan's prevalence is limited in duration, as well as in degree: and when he is rebuked, the gloom of those whom he has tempted will be dispelled, and way made for their returning consolations. (*Notes*, i. 9—12.) "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him:" (*Note*, *Prov.* xvi. 7:) he is graciously pleased with the very imperfect services of the humble believer; and when he has stood the trial, he shall come forth as gold purified from the furnace.—True religion mortifies that avarice which covets the wealth of other men, and that pride which induces many to scorn the needful, well meant, and proper assistance which is offered to them. (*Note*, *Phil.* iv. 10—13.)—Whether the Lord gives us health, long life, affluence, friends, and flourishing families, or not; we shall eventually be happy, if we patiently suffer according to his will: and those things, which once we thought were altogether against us, shall at length appear to have been wisely chosen for our greater and more enduring good. (*Note*, *James* i. 12.)—We know not for what good purposes our lives may be prolonged; and therefore should not be impatient for death, even when greatly afflicted. And whether our children and friends go before, or follow us, into the eternal world, they will not be lost to us, if the Lord has made them partakers of his grace: this, above all things we should seek, for an inheritance for them and for ourselves; being infinitely more valuable than all the wealth, honour, and personal accomplishments in the world.—But though Job's trials and their happy event are replete with instruction and consolation, to the suffering and tempted believer; yet we shall be still more edified and encouraged by looking unto Jesus. His abasements, temptations, and sufferings were vastly greater than those of Job; he endured them with perfect patience; and they issued far more gloriously. For us he was tempted, and suffered, and triumphed, and is glorified: for us, when we were enemies, he offered himself a Sacrifice, and now for us he pleads before the throne. In him believers are pardoned and accepted: "He sees his seed, and prolongs his days, and the pleasure of the LORD prospers in his hands;" but there is no salvation in any other. (*Note*, *Is.* liii. 9—12.) To him we must come, in him we must confide, to him we must submit, and from him receive all that we can want: but we can give him nothing, except the honour of our whole salvation, and ourselves to be, by his grace, his redeemed and devoted servants. May we then experience his grace, share his victories, tread in his steps, and copy his patience; and we shall find in the "event, that the Lord is pitiful, and of tender mercy."—But "we have need of patience, that after having done the will of God, we may receive the promise." (*Heb.* x. 36.)

THE BOOK

OF

P S A L M S.

THE Hebrew name of this book in the original is (תהלים) *Praises*: because the praises of God form its grand scope and object, to which all other subjects contained in it are, in one way or another, rendered subservient.—The word *Psalms* is taken from the Greek, and denotes that these sacred hymns were, when sung, accompanied with the psaltery, harp, or lute: and indeed, from the time of David, psalmody, with various kinds of instrumental musick, formed a considerable part of the daily worship at the sanctuary. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* ix. 33. xv. 16—22. xvi. 4—6. 37—43. xxv.)—The whole collection is often called, ‘The Psalms of David.’ He indeed was undoubtedly the writer of the greatest part of them: his name is prefixed to above seventy Psalms; and he certainly wrote some, and probably many, of those which are not expressly ascribed to him. Concerning others, it remains doubtful who composed them; but one, the ninetieth, is entitled, “The Prayer of Moses, the Man of God;” and there is internal proof that some were written long after the time of David, and even during, or subsequent to, the Babylonish captivity. David however, as the first who especially employed his poetical talents, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in composing sacred poems, and who established or regulated the psalmody at the Sanctuary, was warranted to call himself “the sweet Psalmist of Israel:” and to add, “the Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.” (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 1—4.)—Josephus informs us, that the Levites were enjoined to preserve at the temple, all such hymns as might be composed in honour of God: and it is thought by some learned men, that the book of Psalms which we now have was selected from a much larger number, as divinely inspired, and therefore admissible into the canon of Scripture; while many others were rejected, as not entitled to this honourable distinction. However this may be, the entire book has certainly been considered as a part of “the oracles of God” in every age, by an invariable testimony. St. Paul quotes the *second Psalm* expressly as a prophecy of Christ; (*Acts* xiii. 33;) which implies that the Psalms were then arranged after the same order, in general, as they now are. Nearly fifty of the Psalms are quoted, or referred to, in the New Testament. Our Lord, proposing a question to the Scribes concerning the Messiah, introduces a passage from the hundred and tenth Psalm, in this manner: “David himself said *by the Holy Ghost* ;” and “David *in Spirit* calleth him Lord:” and when instructing his disciples, after his resurrection, he says: “All things must be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me.” (*Notes*, *Matt.* xxii. 41—46. *Mark* xii. 35—37. *Luke* xxiv. 44—49.) In like manner, the apostle Paul, quoting a passage from the ninety-fifth Psalm, which he ascribes to David, uses this language; “Wherefore as *the Holy Ghost saith*, To-day, if ye will hear his voice.” (*Notes*, *Heb.* iii. 7—13. iv. 3—11.) The assembled Christian church also applies the second Psalm to Christ, in these words: “Lord, thou art God, . . . who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said.” (*Note*, *Acts* iv. 23—28. In so decided a manner is the divine inspiration of the Old Testament attested by Christ and his apostles.—The Jewish writers indeed are unwilling to bestow on David the title of prophet, and ascribe to him only a subordinate kind of inspiration, according to the several distinctions which they have devised in this respect: but St. Peter expressly calls him a prophet; (*Acts* ii. 30;) and the number and clearness of the predictions which he delivered, and which were evidently fulfilled after many ages, most fully prove him entitled to that character. Indeed, the several particulars respecting the descent, kingdom, and priesthood of Christ, the contempt and persecutions which he endured, and the intenseness and variety of his sufferings, the manner of his death, his resurrection, ascension, and glory, with the success of his gospel, and the calling of the Gentiles, are so circumstantially foretold in one or other of the Psalms, that a history of these events might in great measure be compiled from them; and in some cases, with a minuteness to which historians seldom descend.—The words which our Lord used on the cross, in two instances, were taken from the Psalms; and the insulting language of his persecutors was the very same as David, above a thousand years before, had put into their mouths. (*Notes*, *Ps.* xxii. 1. 7, 8. xxxi. 5. *Matt.* xxvii. 39—46. *Luke* xxiii. 46.)—Many Psalms indeed are, directly and throughout, prophecies of Christ; various passages in others must be interpreted of him: and David was so eminent a type of the Saviour, that his very name, in some instances in the prophecies, is given to this his most illustrious descendant. (*Ez.* xxxvii. 24, 25. *Notes*, *Is.* lv. 1—5. *Ez.* xxxiv. 23—31. *Hos.* iii. 4, 5.) But besides this, that union, which subsists between the Redeemer and his people, and the conformity thence resulting, are of such a nature, that it is impossible the same things should not apply in many respects to both, though a discrimination must needs be observed in others. This may lead us to an obvious decision of the controversy, which has often been agitated; whether all the Psalms should be applied to Christ, or not. No doubt every pious mind will allow, that each of them either immediately points to him in his Person,

character, and offices; or may be so applied as to lead the believer's thoughts to Him, who is the centre of all acceptable religion: and probably there are few persons, who suppose that all the Psalms speak of Christ in exactly the same manner; but rather according to the nature of the subject. It cannot indeed be doubted, that the Psalms in general are devotional and experimental, the language of the pious heart under its various exercises; whether mourning for sin, thirsting after God, or rejoicing in him; whether burdened with affliction, struggling with temptation, or triumphing in the hope or enjoyment of deliverance; whether admiring the divine perfections, thanking God for his mercies, meditating on his truths, or delighting in his service. They are in great measure a divinely appointed standard of genuine experience, by which we may judge whether, or how far, our own desires, aims, fears, hopes, joys, and sorrows, are spiritual; and how far they are carnal, or verge to enthusiasm or delusion. The value of the Psalms in this particular is inestimable; and the more cordially we can enter into the views and appropriate the language of the Psalmist, the higher is our progress in genuine religion. 'The Psalms are an epitome of the Bible, adapted to the purposes of devotion. They treat occasionally of the creation and formation of the world, the dispensations of Providence, and the economy of Grace; the transactions of the patriarchs; the Exodus of the children of Israel, their journey through the wilderness, and settlement in Canaan; their law, priesthood, and ritual; the exploits of their great men, wrought through faith; their sins and captivities; their repentances and restorations; the sufferings and victories of David; the peaceful and happy reign of Solomon; the advent of Messiah, with its effects and consequences; his incarnation, birth, life, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, kingdom, and priesthood; the effusion of the Spirit; the conversion of the nations; the rejection of the Jews; the establishment, increase, and perpetuity of the Christian church; the end of the world; the general judgment; the condemnation of the wicked, and the final triumph of the righteous with their Lord and King. These are the subjects here presented to our meditation. . . . They are . . . adorned with the figures and set off with the graces of poetry; and poetry itself is designed yet further to be recommended by the charms of musick, thus consecrated to the service of God; that so delight may prepare the way for improvement, and pleasure become the handmaid of wisdom, while every turbulent passion is calmed by sacred melody, and the evil spirit is still dispossessed by the Harp of the son of Jesse.' *Bp. Horne's Preface to his Commentary on the Psalms, third edit. 8vo. Oxford, 1781, pp. i, ii.*—'They present religion to us in its most engaging dress; communicating truths, which philosophy could never investigate, in a style which poetry can never equal; while history is made the vehicle of prophecy, and Creation lends all its charms to paint the glories of Redemption.' *Ibid. p. lxiv.*—'Besides their incomparable fitness to express our sentiments, they are at the same time memorials of, and appeals to, former mercies and deliverances; they are acknowledgments of prophecies accomplished.' *Ibid. p. xxviii.*—In commenting therefore upon this book, we should continually keep the Saviour in our mind: and while we consider who he was, and what he did; how and why he suffered, and how he rose and reigns; we should also endeavour to learn what his true disciples are, what they ought to be, and what they actually do aspire after. The literal meaning, as far as the Psalmist is concerned, should be adverted to, where it can be ascertained; the particulars noted, in which Christ is predicted or typified; and the use that is to be made of every part of each Psalm to encourage the faith and hope, to direct the temper and conduct, to enliven the devotions, and to assist the self-examination of the reader, should be plainly shewn.—We are also here continually reminded of what we must have to struggle against, from within and from without, and how we may succeed in this conflict: and solemn warnings, and denunciations of vengeance against oppressors and persecutors, and the despisers and opposers of Christ and his gospel, are every where interspersed. This indeed has been considered as an objection to the use of the Psalms, in publick or private devotion; and a prejudice has arisen in some pious minds against several parts of them, as if contrary to the Christian spirit: but, doubtless, the *right spirit* has always been the same; and these parts must be considered, either as direct prophecies, or as divinely inspired declarations of the certain doom awaiting all the opposers of Christ, and his cause or people; and not as expressions of private resentment, or malevolence against injurious individuals. In short, there is nothing in true religion, doctrinal, experimental, and practical, but will present itself to our attention, while we meditate upon the Psalms: scarcely any part of the book, which, when properly understood and accommodated, will not be found to suit the case of private Christians, and which may not be usefully employed in publick worship: hardly an occasion of praise and thanksgiving can be conceived, to which some portion of them, faithfully rendered in poetical versions, may not be applied with peculiar energy and propriety; and indeed the Christian's use of them in the closet, and the minister's in the pulpit, will generally increase, with their growing experience of the power of true religion in their own hearts. From this eulogium on this part of Scripture, let the reader be excited to meditate on it carefully for himself: but let him not expect too much from the expositor. Brevity must be consulted; a writer's inclination may exceed his ability; and at last, the teaching Spirit of God, sought in fervent prayer, leading the pious soul into the genuine exercise of faith, hope, love, and gratitude, will do more to enable a man to enter into the Psalmist's views, than any human explication. If the author is enabled to suggest a few profitable hints upon each Psalm, he shall have cause to be very thankful.

Various divisions of this book have been made, apparently without much reason. The present order seems to have been very ancient, though by no means coincident with the date of the several Psalms, which indeed have seldom much connexion with each other.—Various other particulars respecting the title, the date, and the occasion of each Psalm, will be noted as we proceed.—'The version of the Psalms, in our Bible, which was made by the translators employed by James the First, is posterior to that printed in our prayer books, which was executed in 1539. This last as very excellent, and familiarized by custom, was retained in the Liturgy; though, as translated chiefly from the Septuagint, it does not so exactly correspond with the original, as does that in our Bibles.' *Grey's Key.* Indeed the Prayer-book translation is in no respect comparable to the Bible translation.

PSALM I.

The character and happiness of the righteous, 1—3.
The misery and ruin of ungodly men, 4—6.

BLESSED is the man that ^b walketh not in ^c the counsel of the ^{*} ungodly, nor ^d standeth in ^e the way of sinners, nor ^f sitteth in the seat of the ^g scornful.

2 But ^b his delight is in the law of the LORD: and in his law doth he ^c meditate ^d day and night.

3 And he shall be like ^a a tree planted by the rivers of water, that ^m bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also ⁿ shall not ^o wither; and ^p whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

4 The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* ^p like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

5 Therefore the ungodly ^q shall not stand in the judgment, nor ^r sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

6 For the LORD ^s knoweth the way of the righteous: but ^t the way of the ungodly shall perish.

NOTES.

PSALM I. V. 1—3. This psalm is generally considered as a preface to the book, and supposed to have been prefixed to it by Ezra. (Notes, Ezra vii. 6—10. Neh. viii. 1, 2.) It establishes the important distinction between the righteous and the wicked; and assures us of the *felicities* of the former, and the misery of the latter.—All men shun misery, and aim to be happy: but few understand that misery springs from sin, and that happiness can be enjoyed only in the favour of God. This the Scriptures declare; and by this light the believer seeks and finds, what he would otherwise seek in vain. In such portions of the word of God, we ought not to look for the way in which sinners are made righteous; or for the origin of that difference which subsists among men, who are all of one nature: for they only inform us of the character of such as are accepted by God, and are in the way to heaven. (Notes, xv. 1. xxiv. 3—6. Rom. ii. 7—11.—P. O. Ps. xv.)—The translation in our prayer-book renders this in the past tense; and though the original might very well bear that meaning, yet the context and the whole tenour of Scripture shew, that this cannot be the exclusive sense; for that would imply, that they alone are blessed, who never have walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seat of the scornful: whereas penitent believers, whatever their previous character has been, are partakers of the blessings, which is evidenced by their subsequent conduct; and none but they answer this description. (Notes, xxxii. 1, 2. cvi. 3—6. cxix. 1—5. Matt. v. 1—12. Luke xi. 27, 28. Rom. iv. 6—8.)—“The ungodly” are those, however moral or virtuous, who profanely despise spiritual blessings, and live without any due regard to God and religion, as all unconverted men do.—“The counsel of the ungodly” signifies, the maxims and principles of worldly men, who form their plans and calculate advantages or disadvantages, according to their several pursuits, without bringing eternal things, and the favour or displeasure of God, into the account: and “walking in this counsel,” signifies an habitual conduct formed on such principles, and regulated according to such rules. “Sinners,” in this climax, seems to mean, those who add to their ungodliness gross immoralities, and such crimes as natural conscience and the opinion of

the world protest against. (Notes, Luke vii. 37—39. John ix. 24—34. Rom. v. 6—10.) And to “stand in the way of sinners,” implies, the habit of vices gradually overcoming the sense of shame and remorse of conscience; till a quiet, rarely interrupted by convictions, is superinduced. Yet these occasional convictions are the source of uneasiness; and this prepares the sinner for “sitting down in the seat of the scornful.”—“The scornful” no doubt are those, who encourage themselves and each other in ungodliness and wickedness by infidel and atheistical tenets; and who have recourse to corrupt principles, to bear them out in corrupt practices; and so are given up to a blinded and deluded mind, as a punishment of their conduct in following the impulse of a wicked heart. And to “sit in the seat of the scornful,” is to become teachers and apostles of infidelity, and impiously to ridicule, with all the genius, wit, and sense, which they possess, the doctrines, precepts, and worshippers of God. (Notes, Prov. i. 21—23. iii. 34. xiv. 6. Is. xxviii. 14, 15. 2 Pet. iii. 1—4.)—Thus “the simple ones love simplicity, and fools hate knowledge, and scorers delight in their scorning.”—But the happy persons here described, have been preserved, or recovered, from these dreadful evils. They have, by divine grace, separated from all ungodly companions, and lost their relish for the vain pleasures of the world; they have learned to delight in the word of God, and to meditate continually upon it. This engages their affections, and occupies that time, and those thoughts, which others waste in vanity or sloth: thus they become like a tree planted in a well watered soil, which seasonably brings forth fruit, and abides verdant and flourishing; and whilst they are rendered steadfast and joyful in hope, and fruitful in holiness, they are made useful to others, and eventually prosper in the best desires and purposes of their heart. (Notes, Josh. i. 8. Jer. xvii. 5—8.)—*The seat of the scornful.* (1) ‘The seat of pestilences.’ Sept. See Acts xxiv. 5. Gr.

V. 4—6. The Psalmist, having briefly stated the character and felicity of the righteous, contrasts with these the worthlessness and misery of the ungodly, however distinguished; comprising all, who are not accepted worshippers of God. These are not only like unfruitful or withered trees, but despicable and useless as the chaff; they are readily driven from one delusion to another; and shall soon be torn away from all their worldly prosperity, and

PSALM II.

THE THRONE OF CHRIST ESTABLISHED, IN CONTEMPT OF ALL OPPOSERS, 1—6. CHRIST DECLARES THE FATHER’S DECREE CONCERNING HIS KINGDOM, 7—9. KINGS AND RULERS ARE WARNED TO SUBMIT TO HIM, 10—12.

WHY ^ado the heathen ^{*}rage, and ^bthe people [†]imagine a vain thing?

^a xviii. 43. xlvii. 6. lxxxviii. 4—8. Is. viii. 9, 10. Luke xviii. 32. Acts iv. 25—27.

^b Or, *tumultuous-assembly*. Luke xxii. 1, 2. Acts v. 22, 23. Acts xvi. 22. xvii. 5, 6. xix. 28—32.

^c Matt. xxi. 38. John xi. 49, 50. Acts v. 39. Rev. xvii. 14.

^d Heb. meditate.

cast into hopeless misery. However their success may now be envied, or their character mistaken, the judgment of God will infallibly separate them from the congregation of the righteous. (Notes, Job xx. 4—29. xxvii. 7—23. Is. xxix. 5, 6. Hos. xiii. 3, 4. Mal. iii. 13—18. Matt. iii. 11, 12.) For the Lord hath appointed, and he approves, the way in which the righteous walk; he knows all its snares, dangers, and difficulties, and will watch over all who walk in it: but he leaves the wicked to the consequences of that way which they choose; and it leads directly to the pit of destruction. (Notes, xxxvii. 18, 19. Prov. iv. 18, 19. Nah. i. 7, 8. 2 Tim. ii. 19.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The tendency of corrupt nature is from bad to worse. Men first forget and neglect God and his worship, and act from worldly maxims and principles; then they often venture on gross and scandalous crimes; and at length they frequently settle in infidelity, or an impious contempt of religion, and become the avowed and determined enemies of its doctrines and precepts. None know, when they first shake off the impressions of a religious education, or venture to neglect known duty, how far they may be left to proceed: when inward and outward restraints are surmounted, they may rush downward into impiety and iniquity, with accelerated velocity, as the stone falls to the earth. We ought to be thankful, if we have been preserved from these dreadful enormities, and have not been left to “sit down” finally “in the seat of the scornful.” And young persons should be warned not to venture aside into a path which leads to consequences so fatal: for numbers are left to wander from God, to be hardened in sin, and finally to perish. But blessed be God for the covenant of grace, and Jesus the Mediator of it: by his perfect obedience even unto death, he is become “the end of the law” “for righteousness to every one that believeth.” Whenever the sinner becomes sensible of his guilt and misery, he may return by Christ, the living Way, and join the company of the righteous. In the exercise of repentance and faith, he separates from the society of the ungodly, in which he can no longer delight. He cannot now act according to their maxims, or conform to their fashions, join in their pleasures, or relish their profane scoffs and jests. Perceiving the vanity of the world and the odiousness of sin, he begins to delight in the word of God, which shews him the preciousness of Christ, and the beauty of holiness. Reading and meditating daily on the sacred Scriptures with faith and prayer, he becomes “in Christ a new creature;” he has now new desires, pleasures, hopes, fears, sorrows, companions, and employments; his thoughts, words, and actions are changed; he enters upon a new state and bears a new character. (Notes, Deut. vi. 6—9.

2 ^cThe kings of the earth set themselves, and ^dthe rulers take counsel together, ^eagainst the LORD, and ^fagainst his anointed, saying,

3 ^gLet us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.

^c 10. xlviii. 4. cx. 5. Matt. ii. 16. Luke xiii. 31. xxiii. 11, 12. Acts xii. 1—6. Rev. xvii. 12—14.

^d Matt. xxvi. 3. 59. xxvii. 1. Acts iv. 5—8.

^e Ex. xvi. 7. Prov. xxi. 30. John xv. 23. Acts ix. 4.

^f xlv. 7. lxxxix. 20. Is. lxi. 1. John i. 41. iii. 34. Acts x. 38. Heb. i. 9.

^g Luke xix. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.

^h Jer. v.

cxix. 97—100. 2 Tim. iii. 14—17.) “Behold all things “are become new!” and the word of God is the support, comfort, and rule of his new and heavenly life. This man’s religion does not consist in notions or forms; in due season he will bring forth the substantial fruits of righteousness: for he is planted and takes root in a good soil; and, through the word, derives from Christ those communications of divine grace, which gradually transform his soul into the Redeemer’s image. Nor will his profession end in apostasy: for his Saviour lives, and he shall live also; and though he may be tried and often disappointed, yet he shall find at last, that he had all profitable success in each of his undertakings.—How different the character, prospect, and end of the ungodly! Their doom will be as dreadful, as their characters are worthless; for, being “vessels of wrath fitted for destruction,” they will be driven from the presence of the Lord into unquenchable fire. They may indeed here impose upon their fellow-creatures, as well as deceive themselves; but the Judge will perfectly and finally separate them from the righteous, and will send them away into everlasting punishment, while he receives his people into life eternal. (Notes, Matt. xxv. 31—46.) If then we would be happy, we must choose the way which the Lord knows and approves, though it be unfashionable and despised; we must come out and be separate from the wicked; we must learn to redeem our time for the study of the scriptures and attendance on the ordinances of God; we must examine whether we can and do delight in these sacred exercises, and in any measure become fruitful in holiness. And if we meet with troubles by the way, we should keep the end in view: for surely we can never envy those, however prosperous or admired, who throng that broad road which leads to destruction. (Note, Matt. vii. 13, 14.)

NOTES.

PSALM II. V. 1—3. The occasion of this psalm might be taken from David’s advancement to the throne, and his expectation of triumphing over the opposition made to his authority, both by disaffected Israelites and the surrounding nations: (Notes, 2 Sam. ii. 4. 9. v.) but it is throughout an evident prophecy of Christ, and repeatedly quoted as such in the New Testament; where it is ascribed to David, though his name is not prefixed to it. (Acts iv. 25—28. xiii. 33.) The Jews and Gentiles, the rulers, and the people, set themselves to oppose Christ, when he was condemned by the Jewish council, and crucified by the Roman authority, amidst the insults of surrounding multitudes. (Notes, Matt. xxvii. 1, 2. 11—18. 27—44.) After his resurrection the same opposition was made to the establishment of his religion; and in every age in one form or another, his kingdom has generally been opposed by the

h xi. 4. lxxviii. 33.
cxv. 3. ls. xl. 22.
lvii. 15. lxxvi. 1.
xxxvii. 13. liii
5. lix. 8. 2 Kings

4 ^h He that sitteth in the heavens
shall laugh: the Lord shall have them
in derision.

xix. 21. Prov. i.
26.
k 1. 16—22. Is. xi.
4. lxvi. 6. Matt.
xxii 7. xxiii. 33
—36. Luke xix. 1
97. 43. 44. Rev.

6^m Yet have I[†] set my King upon
my holy hill of Zion.

7 ¶ I will declare ^s the decree: The
LORD hath said unto me, ⁿ Thou *art*
my Son; ^o this day have I begotten
thee.

8 ^p Ask of me, ^q and I shall give *thee*
the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and

the uttermost parts of the earth *for* r xxi. 8, 9. lxxxiv.
thy possession. 23. cx. 5, 6. 1s.
xxx. 14. lx. 12
Jer. xix. 11 Dan.

9 'Thou shalt ' break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

10 ^s Be wise now therefore, ' O ye kings: " be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 * Serve the LORD with fear, and
 7 rejoice with trembling.

12 ^a Kiss ^a the Son, lest he be angry,
and ^b ye perish *from* the way, ^c when
his wrath is kindled but a little.

^d Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

17. xiv. 9—11. d xl. cxvii. 3—5. Prov. xvi. 20. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. xxx. 18. Jer. xvii. 7. Rom. ix. 33. x. 11. Eph. i. 12. 1 Pet. i. 21. ii. 6.

rulers of this world. But the event has uniformly proved, that this attempt, however sagaciously planned, or vigorously conducted, was "a vain thing," an ineffectual and ruinous contest against omnipotence; which originated from a rooted enmity to the authority and commandments of God, and the restraints which they impose on the self-will and corrupt passions of mankind.

V. 4—6. The almighty Sovereign, being fully aware of the intentions of his combined enemies, and able to disconcert them in a moment, disdained their impotent rage; as men deride and laugh at those, who would but cannot hurt them: yet at the same time their enmity excited his indignant wrath; and by his powerful word he determined to confound and destroy them. He would also establish (or *anoint*, marg.) his King upon his throne and in his authority over his holy church; of which the temple and its worship, and the kingdom of the house of David, upon mount Zion, were types.—Accordingly, when the priests and rulers prevailed on Pilate to crucify their anointed King, they eventually forwarded his exaltation; and their persecution of his disciples drove numbers into remote regions, and thus greatly promoted the promulgation of the gospel. (*Notes*, Gen. iii. 14, 15. John xi. 47—53. Acts viii. 4.)—After a time, the Roman legions, the executioners of divine vengeance, surrounded Jerusalem; and at length destroyed the city and temple, and subverted both their civil and ecclesiastical state, with the most dreadful miseries and destruction of the devoted Jews; the wretched remains of whom to this day, scattered throughout the nations, unwillingly attest the fulfilment of this ancient prophecy. The Roman empire too, having set itself against the cause of Christ, began directly to decline, and at length sunk in the unequal contest. (*Note*, Zech. xiv. 1—3.) The emperor Julian also, an apostate from Christianity, having undertaken to rebuild the temple and restore the Jews, was strangely baffled, and soon came to an untimely end; while the kingdom of Christ continues to this present time, in contempt and defiance of all the machinations of earth and hell.—The Septuagint render the sixth verse, as the words of David or of Christ: ‘But I have been constituted King by him,’ &c.

V. 7—9. The King himself is here introduced, proclaiming the eternal purpose of the Father respecting his

mediatorial authority, which was to be the recompence of his propitiatory sufferings. At his resurrection from the dead, he was declared to be the Son of God. (*Rom. i. 4.*) His Sonship in this place seems mentioned as coeval with the decree, which is grounded upon it:—"Thou art my 'Son,' 'and therefore I make the decree of which, in 'due time, this declaration shall be published.' Christ is here recognized as the begotten of the Father, and as partaker of the divine nature and perfections as really, as any son is of the nature of him who begat him. (*Note, John i. 18.*) When he had accomplished his work on earth, he was authorized to ask and receive the heathen for his inheritance. For his mediatorial authority extends throughout the earth, for the benefit of his church; and all who are not made his willing subjects, will be as easily and entirely destroyed by his power, as a potter's vessel is broken by the stroke of an iron rod. (*Marg. Ref. r.*)—The divine appointment of David to be king of Israel, the special favour shewn him, the victories that he obtained, and the dominion which he exercised over the surrounding nations, were very faint shadows of the intended events.

V. 10—12. It would be vain to oppose the unalterable decree of God, that his Son should reign over the whole earth. It was therefore the wisdom of kings and rulers to submit; to fear the wrath, and reverence the majesty of JEHOVAH, and become his servants; to rejoice in their superior rank and prosperity with trembling, lest these should subject them to more aggravated vengeance; to do homage to Christ as their superior Lord, from whom they have their authority; to adore him as their God; and to welcome him as their Saviour, by the kiss of reverence, submission, love, and adoration. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* x. 1. 1 *Kings* xix. 18. *Hos.* xiii. 1, 2.) Otherwise they must perish in their rebellion, far from the way of life: for even those, who provoked this almighty King, by rejecting his authority, though without any circumstances of peculiar aggravation, would experience the terrible effects of his wrath: but all who put their trust in him, as their Saviour, would share the blessings of his righteous and merciful government. (*Marg. Ref.* d. *Note*, cxlvi. 3, 4.)—The evident fulfilment of the unequivocal predictions in this psalm, by a series of events exactly answerable to them, during the lapse of many ages, is in reality a full

PSALM III.

David, amidst numerous insulting foes, firmly relies on the divine protection, 1—6. He prays for deliverance, and ascribes salvation to the Lord, 7, 8

A Psalm of David, ^awhen he fled from Absalom his son.

LORD, ^bhow are they increased that trouble me! ^cmany *are* they that rise up against me.

2 Many *there be* which say of my soul, *There is* ^dno help for him in God. ^eSelah.

3 But thou, O LORD, *art* ^fa Shield ^gfor me; ^hmy Glory, and ⁱthe Lifter up of mine head.

4 ^jI cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of ^khis holy hill. Selah.

^d xxii. 7, 8. xlii. 3. 10. lxxi. 11. 2 Sam. xvi. 8. Matt. xxvii. 42, 43. ^e 4. 8. iv. 2. 4. Hab. iii. 3. 9. 13. ^f xviii. 2. xxvii. 7. lxxxiv. 11. cxix. 11. 4. Gen. xv. 1. Deut. xxxiii. 29. ^g Or, about. ^h iv. 2. lxii. 7. Is. xiv. 25. lx. 19. Luke ii. 32. Rev. xxi. 11. 23. ⁱ xxvii. 6. cx. 7. Gen. xl. 13. 2 Kings xxv. 27. ^j i. xxii. 2—5. xxxiv. 6. 1. 15. lxvi. 17—19. lxxxvi. 3, 4. xci. 15. cxvi. 1—4. cxxx. 1, 2. cxxxviii. 3. cxlii. 1—3. Is. lxv. 24. Jer. xxix. 12, 13. Matt. vii. 7. Jam. v. 13. ^k ii. 6. xliii. 3. xcix. 9. cxxxii. 13, 14.

demonstration, that both the prophecy and the accomplishment were from God, and that our holy religion is of divine original and authority. The Jews themselves attest, that this psalm was extant many ages before the birth of Jesus; and many of them allow, that it principally relates to the promised Messiah, whom they are yet vainly expecting! How can any one then be so absurdly sceptical, as to imagine that human sagacity, or mere conjecture, could have suggested explicit predictions, which should at length be verified in the most exact and circumstantial manner, by events no otherwise to be accounted for, than on scriptural principles, and by allowing them to have been effected by the power of God himself!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As this apostate world is in fact the kingdom of Satan, unconverted men of every rank, party, or character, may be excited by him, to concur in opposing the cause of God, and the kingdom of Christ. But the kings and the rulers of the earth have generally been especially instigated, by the slanders and misrepresentations of false teachers, and other interested persons, as well as by their own prejudices and passions, to combine in this opposition. They do not brook submission to a superior; the humbling truths and spiritual precepts of Christ run counter to their ambitious projects and worldly lusts; and they are apt to suppose that his authority is inconsistent with their dignity, or their felicity. Thus they are often excited to employ all their power and policy “against the LORD and against his Anointed;” whilst they deceive themselves with the idea, that they are only opposing some obstinate sectaries, who refuse submission to their edicts. (Notes, John xvi. 1—3. Acts ix. 3—6. xxvi. 9—11.) But these are vain imaginations, which the Lord disdains and abhors; and can effect nothing but the confusion and ruin of those who indulge them. For Jesus, the eternal Son of God, is established, and shall reign upon his holy throne, as the Saviour of his people, and the Avenger of his enemies. The decree of the Father has in part taken effect: the kingdom of the Mediator is fixed on the ruins of Jewish and heathen opposers; and it shall at length universally prevail, whilst every enemy shall be dashed in pieces by his iron rod. (Note, Rev. ii. 24—28.) He was indeed crucified in apparent weakness; but he arose in power, and has asked and received his kingdom over all things, for the benefit of his church. Let then kings and rulers, as well as their subjects, lay down their arms, submit to his authority, trust in him as their Saviour, and worship him as their Lord and God; and let them use all their influence, as his

servants, to promote his cause, and advance his kingdom. Indeed we should “rejoice with trembling” in all outward distinctions and possessions, lest the abuse of them should enhance our condemnation; and even in our attempts to serve the Lord, we sinners have need to fear and tremble, lest we come short of his acceptance: but if we have submitted to the Saviour, and come to the Father in his name and merits, we may rejoice in him with reverence, but without consternation. For “he casteth out none who come to him,” however sinful they may have been; but they shall all be blessed for ever: whilst all who oppose, despise, neglect, or abuse his gospel, and will not have him for their Saviour and their King, will incur his indignation; the effects of which, even when “kindled but a little,” will be too dreadful for words to express, or imagination to conceive.

NOTES

PSALM III. Title. These titles are found in the Hebrew, though it is said, that several of them are wanting in some manuscripts. They seem however, in general, to belong to the Psalms to which they are prefixed, and to be of the same authority with them. In this and other instances, they are useful in fixing the interpretation: but often their meaning is to us doubtful or difficult.

V. 1, 2. David abruptly, but in lively faith, addresses himself to the Lord, as amazed to hear of the numbers who followed the unnatural rebellion of Absalom; and especially that many whom he had favoured and trusted, had joined that party. (Notes, 2 Sam. xv. 12—15. 30.) He also was astonished at the insolence and impiety of his enemies, and that they should interpret his troubles as evidences that God had rejected him, and either could not or would not help him. (Notes, xlii. 1—3. 9, 10. lxxi. 10, 11. 2 Sam. xvi. 5—14.)—The meaning of the word “Selah,” which occurs three times in this psalm, and frequently in others, and also in the prophecy of Habakkuk, is not fully ascertained by expositors. Some entirely omit it: but this may be thought taking an unwarrantable liberty with Scripture. Others suppose it to be merely a musical term, and the Septuagint seem to have thus understood it. (Διαψαλμα, a change of song, or melody.) In general, however, it appears to have been used, as a call on him who read or sang, to pause and reflect; as something peculiarly important or surprising had been mentioned. ‘Selah here signifies a lifting up of the voice, to cause us to consider the sentence, as a thing of great importance.’ Marginal Notes to Barker’s Bible.

V. 3—5. Instead of despairing of help and salvation

1 ^{iv} 8. Lev. xxvi. 5 ¹ I laid me down and slept; I
⁶ Job xi. 18, 19. ²⁴ ^m the LORD sustained
ⁱⁱⁱ Prov. iii. 24. ⁶ ⁿ me.
^{iv} Acts xii. 6.

2 ⁶ ⁿ I will not be afraid of ^o ten thou-
^{xxvii. 1—3. xlv.} sands of people, that have ^p set them-
^{2. 7. cxviii. 10—} selves against me round about.
^{12. 2 Kings vi.} ^{15—17. Rom.}

3 ⁷ ^a Arise, O LORD; save me, O my
^o God: for ^r thou hast smitten all mine
^p enemies upon the cheek-bone; thou
^q hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.

4 ⁸ ^a Salvation *belongeth* unto the
^{xxvii. 31.} LORD: ^b thy blessing is upon thy peo-
^o ple. Selah.

PSALM IV.

David calls on God to hear him, 1. He reproves,
^t Eph. i. 3. Heb. vi. 14. 1 Pet. iii. 9.

warns, and counsels his enemies, 2—5. He shews
his comfort and confidence in God, 6—8.

To the ^{*} chief Musician on ^a Neginoth,
A Psalm of David.

HEAR me when I call, ^b O God of
my righteousness: ^c thou hast enlarged
me *when I was* in distress, ^d have mercy
upon me, and hear my prayer.

2 O ^d ye sons of men, ^e how long
will ye turn ^f my glory into shame?
how long will ye ^g love vanity, and
seek after ^h leasing? Selah.

3 But know that ⁱ the LORD hath set

* Or, overseer.
xxii. xlii. xlv.
titles. 1 Chr.
xxv. 1—6
a vi. lxxvii. lxxvi.
titles. Hab. iii.
19. marg.
b xi. 7. xxiv. 5.
xli. 12. Is. xlv.
24. Jer. xxxiii. 6.
1 Cor. i. 30.
2 Cor. v. 20, 21.
c xlviii. 18, 19.
xxxii. 8. xl. 1—
5. cxvi. 6. 16.
1 Sam. xvii. 37.
xix. 11, 12.
xxiii. 26—28.
Job xxxvi. 16.
2 Cor. i. 8. 10.
d Or, be gracious
unto me. lvi. 1.
lviii. 1. lxxxvii. 3
—5. cxix. 75—
77. 132. cxliii. 2.
Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7.
e lvii. 4. lviii. 1.
Ec. viii. 11. ix. 3.
f lxxxii. 2. Ex. x.
Jer. ii.
11. Hos. iv. 7. 1 Cor. i. 31.
g ii. 1. 1 Sam. xii. 21. Is. lix. 4. Jer. ii. 5. Jon. ii.
8. h v. 6. lviii. 3. lxiii. 11. Jer. ix. 3. Eph. iv. 25. i Ex. xxxiii. 16. Eph.
ii. 10. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. 2 Tim. ii. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 9.

from God, the afflicted Psalmist considered him as “a
“Shield” around him, yea, as his *Glory*. (Notes, iv. 2.
lxxxiv. 11, 12. 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3.) He had often called on
God in trouble and danger, and had been heard: and hav-
ing now, as in many former instances, committed himself
to the divine protection by faith and prayer, he was enabled
to sleep with as much composure, as if he had been in
perfect peace; and accordingly he was supported, and
protected from all injury. (Note, iv. 6—8.)

V. 6—8. (Notes, xxvii. 1—3. 2 Sam. xviii. 5.) The
Lord had helped David, and disabled his enemies, when
persecuted by Saul and his *ungodly* adherents; and he was
confident, that he would thus appear for him in his present
distress: for salvation, temporal and spiritual, came from
God alone; and he never failed to bless his faithful people.
(Notes, lxxi. 16—18. cxv. 9—13. cxviii. 1—12.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most excellent and eminent persons must expect
opposition and ill usage; and they should prepare for in-
gratitude and contempt, as the recompence of their labours
for the good of others. The number and power of their
adversaries may become very formidable; and they may
be astonished to find among them, such as they have most
depended on; nay, their very confidence in God will
often be derided, as delusion or presumption. Yet he is a
“Shield” to all those that trust in him: they count their
relation to him their “glory,” in preference to all dignities
or achievements; and in all dangers they continue to hope
that he will yet lift up their head above all their enemies.
Indeed, all true Christians should avow their confidence in
God, and their expectation from him, in seasons of deep
distress; and be open and avowed, as well as fervent, in
their prayers unto him, upon his mercy-seat in his holy
temple. Thus they will enjoy safety and inward peace, in
the midst of enemies and the alarms of war: for the Lord
will hear and sustain them; and what are ten thousands of
armed foes encamped against those whom the Omnipotent
protecteth? (Notes, 2 Chr. xxxii. 8. Rom. viii. 28—31.)—
Past experience should encourage the hope of future an-
swers to our prayers; we may even rejoice in being the
objects of the enmity of ungodly men; and should desire
that they may be deprived of their power to do mischief,

but not that any further harm may befall them. Every
temporal deliverance should be received as an earnest of
eternal salvation; the honour of which must be ascribed
to the Lord, who confers that blessing on his people.—
But we shall cease to wonder at the troubles of the king of
Israel, and almost to *think* of our own light afflictions, if
we duly look unto Jesus, and contrast his glory and his
grace, with the contempt and cruelty with which he was
treated. Having yielded himself to death, he sanctified
the grave, and became the first-fruits of the resurrection;
his head was then lifted up above his enemies; and thus
he has opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. His
enemies therefore will surely be disappointed and perish;
but his people may go down to the grave, as to their beds,
in hope and comfort: for the same God watches over them
in both, and they will at length awake to everlasting hap-
piness.

NOTES.

PSALM IV. *Title.* The “chief musician,” or *overseer*,
or *president*, seems to have been the person appointed in
the Psalmody of the sanctuary, to set the tune and lead the
singers and musicians. (Notes, 1 Chr. vi. 33—38. xv. 22.
xxv. 1—8.) “Neginoth” may either mean the instru-
ments with which the psalm was to be sung; or the tune
to which it was set. Perhaps this psalm was composed on
the same occasion as the foregoing. (iii. *title*.)

V. 1. *Of my righteousness.*] By this expression, the
Psalmist acknowledged God to be in all respects the Author
and Source of his righteousness, as accepted and sanctified;
and he appealed to him to do *justice* between him and his
unrighteous adversaries. (Marg. Ref. h.)

V. 2. *My glory.*] David might have considered his
throne as a special honour to him, seeing he was called to
it by the immediate choice of God, and as a type of the
Messiah: but the Lord himself, and his relation to him,
were indeed “his Glory.” (Note, iii. 3—5.) His enemies
derided him for this, and wanted to make him ashamed of
it, or turned it into a reproach to him: while the vain
grounds of confidence, in which they delighted, were *de-*
ceiving them; and while they invented *lies* to make him
odious.—“Ye love vanity: ye seek a lie.”

V. 3—5. The piety of David evinced, that he was the

R 3

c m. 4. 2 Hearken ^aunto the voice of my
d x. 16. xxiv. 7. cry, ^dmy King, and my God: for ^eunto
8. xlv. 4. xlvii. thee will I pray.
6. 7. lxxiv. 12.
xcix. 1—4. cxlv.
i. Is. xxxiii. 22.

e lxxv. 2. 3 ^fMy voice shalt thou hear in the
xxii. 2. lv. 17. morning, O LORD; in the morning will
lix. 16. lxxxviii. I direct *my prayer* unto thee, and will
13. cxix. 147. look up.
cxxx. 6. Is.
xxvi. 9. Mark i.
35.

g l. 21. 1 Chr. 4 For thou *art* not a ^gGod that hath
xxix. 17. Hab. pleasure in wickedness; neither shall
i. 13. Mal. ii. 17. ^hevil dwell with thee.
h xciv. 20. ci. 7.
cxl. 13. John
xiv. 23. Heb. xii.
14 2 Pet. iii. 13.
Rev. xxi. 23. 27.

i xiv. 1. xcii. 6 5 ⁱThe foolish shall not ^kstand ^{*}in
xciv. 8. Prov. i. thy sight: ^lthou hatest all workers of
7 22. viii. 5. Ec iniquity.
v. 4.
k i. 5. cxxx. 3.
* Heb. before
thine eyes.

l x. 3. Lev. xx. 23. 6 Thou shalt ^mdestroy them that
Prov. vi. 16—19. speak leasing: the LORD will abhor
Hos. ix. 15. Zech ⁿthe [†]bloody and deceitful man.
xi. 8. Matt. vii
23. xxv. 41.

m iv. 2. Rev. xxi. 7 But ^oas for me I will come *into*
8. xxii. 15. thy house ^pin the multitude of thy
n xxvi. 9. lv. 23. mercy; *and* ^qin thy fear will ^rI wor-
2 Sam. xvi. 8. ship toward ^{*}thy holy temple.
xx. 1. Is. xxvi.
21. Rom. i. 29.

† Heb. man of bloods and deceit. 8 ^tLead me, O LORD, in thy right-
xxvi. 8—10. ship toward ^{*}thy holy temple.
xliii. 1. Gen.
xxxix. 14. 25, 26.
o lv. 16. Josh. xxiv. 15. Luke vi. 11, 12. p li. 1. lii. 8. lxix. 13. 16. Is. lv. 7.
Rom. v. 20, 21. q cxxx. 4. Hos. iii. 5. Acts ix. 31. Heb. xii. 28, 29. 1 Pet. i.
17—19. r xxviii. 2. cxxxii. 7. cxxxviii. 2. 1 Kings viii. 29, 30, 35, 38. Dan vi.
10. Heb. iv. 16. t Heb. the temple of thy holiness. Is. lxiv. 11 s xxv. 4.
5. lxxxvi. 11. cxix. 10. 64. cxliii. 8—10. Prov. iii. 5, 6.

eousness, because of [†]mine enemies; [†]make thy way straight before my face.

9 For ^uthere is no [†]faithfulness in ^{*}their mouth; ^{*}their inward part is ^{*}very wickedness; [†]their throat is an open sepulchre; [†]they flatter with their tongue.

10 [†]Destroy thou them, O God; ^alet them fall [†]by their own counsels; cast them out in ^bthe multitude of their transgressions; for ^cthey have rebelled against thee.

11 But ^dlet all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever ^eshout for joy, because thou [†]defendest them: let them also that ^flove thy name be joyful in thee.

12 For thou, LORD, wilt ^gbless the

26. lv. 15. lix. 12, 13. lxiv. 6—8. lxvi. 7. lxviii. 1, 2. lxix. 22—25. lxxi. 13. lxxix. 12. lxxxiii. 9—18. cix. 6—20. cxxxvii. 7—9. cxl. 9, 10. cxliv. 6, 7. Deut. ii. 30. 1 Sam. xxv. 29, 39. 2 Sam. xv. 31. xvii. 14, 23. 2 Chr. xxv. 16. Esth. vii. 10. Job v. 12—14. 1 Cor. iii. 19. 2 Tim. iv. 14. [†]Or, from. b Lam. i. 5. Hos. ix. 7. c Is. i. 2. 20. lxiii. 10. Dan. ix. 5, 9. d xxxv. 27. xl. 16. lviii. 10. lxviii. 3. lxx. 1—4. Judg. v. 31. Is. lxv. 13. Rev. xviii. 20. xix. 1—7. e xlvii. 1—5. lxx. 13. Job xxxviii. 7. Zech. ix. 9. [†]Heb. coverest over, or, protectest. f lxix. 36. Rom. viii. 28. 1 Cor. ii. 9. Jam. i. 12. ii. 5 g i. 1—3. iii. 8. xxix. 11. cxii. 1 cxv. 13.

Heb. those which observe me. xxvii. 11. liv. 5. lix. 10. marg. 2 Sam. xii. 14. t Prov. iv. 25. Matt. iii. 3. Heb. xii. 13. u xxxvi. 1—4. lii. 2. lviii. 3. lxii. 4. 9. cxi. 1—3. Jer. ix. 3—6. Mic. vi. 12. Rom. i. 29—31. iii. 13. [†]Or, steadfastness. ^{*}Heb. his mouth, that is, the mouth of any of them. x li. 6. lviii. 2. lxii. 4. marg. lxiv. 6. Jer. iv. 14. xlvii. 9. Mark vii. 21. 22. Luke xi. 39. [†]Heb. wickednesses. y Luke xi. 44. Rom. iii. 13. z xii. 2, 3. Job xxxii. 21, 22. Prov. xxix. 5. 1 Thes. ii. 5. [†]Or, Make them guilty. Rom. iii. 19, 20. a vii. 9—15. ix. 15. 16. x. 15. xvii. 13. xxi. 8—10. xxviii. 3, 4. xxxi. 18. xxxv. 1—8.

secuted by Saul: but the latter seems most probable.—The word rendered “meditation,” appears to denote those inward thoughts, desires, fears, or sorrows, which break forth in earnest prayers, or are relieved by complaining unto God, and by pouring out the heart before him.

V. 2—6. (Notes, x. 16. xlv. 4. Hab. i. 12—17. Heb. xii. 14. Rev. xxi. 22—27.)—The word (הוֹלָלִים) rendered “foolish,” signifies *insane*, or *mad*; denoting the infatuation of sinners, when urged on by their unbridled passions, to venture all consequences for the sake of present gratification. (Note, Ec. ix. 1—3.)—While men continue *impenitent*, their characters are abominable in the sight of God, they abide under his wrath, and if they die in that state they must be eternally the objects of his abhorrence. The penitent sinner’s character and state are changed, and he is reconciled to God: but sin is irreconcilably the object of divine hatred. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Rev. xxi. 5—8. xxii. 14, 15.)

V. 7, 8. (Marg. Ref.)—*Mine enemies*. (8) “Those who ‘observe me.’ Marg. My enemies ‘would gladly see me trip, and they watch for my halting; therefore ... order my goings, ... that I may never ... fall, and give them any advantage over me. ... For with what triumph would they blaze abroad my real faults, who now stick not to tell all manner of lies of me?’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 9. St. Paul quotes this, among other scriptures, to prove the depravity of both Jews and Gentiles in an unconverted state. (Notes, Rom. iii. 9—20.)—If the Israelites, with all their advantages, manifested such hateful dispositions, in opposing “the man after God’s own heart,” and afterwards in their conduct towards their promised Messiah; it is plain that the whole race must be corrupt and alienated from God; that nothing, except an internal

renovation by the Spirit of God can make them holy; and that they can never find acceptance with God, upon the ground of their own obedience to his righteous laws; but must be saved *mercifully*, if at all. The flattery, treachery, and calumny, with which the Israelites behaved towards their anointed king, originated from their hatred to God and holiness; and the profane and polluting discourse, springing from the loathsome filthiness of their hearts, resembled the opening of a sepulchre, which would both be very noisome and unwholesome.—Some, however, consider the open sepulchre as an emblem of rapacity and sensuality. (Note, Prov. xxx. 15, 16.)

V. 10, 11. These verses might be rendered as follows: “Deal with them as guilty, O God! Let them fall by their own counsels. Cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee. But all those who put their trust in thee shall rejoice, they shall shout for joy for ever, because thou defendest them. They that love thy name shall be joyful in thee.”—The future tense is indeed often used, for the imperative, or the optative mood, in the Hebrew, which has not that precision, as to tenses and moods, which prevails in many other languages. But where the literal rendering contains simply a *prediction*, and changing the future for the imperative, or optative, implies an *imprecation*, or a *wish*; the literal version is frequently preferable. Yet it cannot be denied, that the form of imprecation is often used; implying that the impenitent enemies of God and Christ will perish, with the approbation of all holy creatures; and that the very prayers of believers for themselves and the church, will be answered in the destruction of their enemies. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxxv. 25—28. lviii. 1—3. lxix. 22—28. cix. 6—20.)

V. 12. Note, iii. 3—5.

^h xxxii. 10.
[•] Heb. *crowd*.
ⁱ iii. 3. lxxxiv. 11.

righteous; with favour ^h wilt thou * com-
pass him as *with* ⁱ a shield.

PSALM VI.

David, being sick, deprecates wrath and intreats mercy, with mournful complaints, and earnest pleadings, 1—7. Confiding in God, he triumphs over his enemies, 8—10.

^u iv. title.

To the chief Musician on ^a Neginoth upon * Sheminith, A Psalm of David.

* Or, *the eighth*.
xii. title. 1 Chr. xv. 21. Marg.

^b xxxviii. 1. Is. liv. 9. lvii. 16. Jer. x. 24. xlv. 28. 1 Cor. xi. 31, 32.

O LORD, ^b rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Before we offer our prayers unto the Lord, we should seriously meditate on his perfections and promises, and on our own character and wants; that our words may be spoken with recollection, from a full heart, in a due sense of our indigence, dependence, and unworthiness, and with fervency and expectation.—If we willingly submit to him as our King, and worship him as our God, we may expect every thing from his almighty favour.—While many are eagerly presenting their petitions to earthly princes, let us make our requests known to our God and King. It is our privilege that we may come before him as often, and ask as much, as we will: and it must be our sin and folly, if we do not avail ourselves of his condescension and bounty. We should take care, that he may hear our voice every morning, as the first and best employment of the day, in order that we may find help and comfort from him, in the various events of it: and let us not forget Him, “who arose a great while before day, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed;” lest we should yield to sloth, or admit carnal excuses for our negligence. (Note, *Luke* vi. 12. *P. O.* 1—19.) In this sacred exercise, our affections should be directed to the Lord, and we should look up to him for help; expecting an answer from him, as we do to a letter which we have directed to a kind friend.—Such prayer will determine the heart against every sin: for though the Lord pities sinners, yet he “has no pleasure in iniquity;” nor can we walk or dwell with him, while any sin reigns in our hearts. How great then is the folly and madness of the wicked! and how will they endure to be driven from his presence, as the objects of his unchangeable and eternal detestation! Indeed we none of us could come before God, if it were not for his abounding mercy: humility and reverence then become us in all our worship; and we must always look unto Jesus Christ, the true Temple, in whom God dwells, as reconciled to the believing sinner. (Note, 1 *Kings* viii. 28—30.) His true worshippers will have many enemies and *observers*, which will increase their temptations, and render their path more perplexed: but if this excite them to greater watchfulness, and render them more fervent in prayer to be led in the straight way of righteousness, it will be of great service to them.—We need not wonder at the cruelty, treachery, hypocrisy, or flattery of *our* enemies, when we consider how David and how Christ was treated: but we

2 Have mercy upon me, O LORD, ^c for I *am* weak: ^d O LORD, heal me, for ^e my bones are vexed.

3 ^f My soul is also sore vexed: but thou, O LORD, ^g how long?

4 ^h Return, O LORD, ⁱ deliver my soul: oh, save me ^k for thy mercy's sake.

5 For ^l in death *there is* no remembrance of thee: ^m in the grave who shall give thee thanks?

Mal. iii. 7. i xvii. 13. xxii. 20. lxxxvi. 13. cxvi. 4. 8. cxx. 2. cxxi. 7. lxxxviii. 10—12. cxv. 17. cxviii. 17. Is. xxxviii. 18, 19. Dan. ix. 18. Eph. i. 6. 1 xxx. 9. m Ec. ix. 10. John ix. 4.

^c xxxviii. 7, 8. xli. 3. ciii. 18—17.
^d xxx. 2. Gen. xx. 17. Ex. xv. 26. Num. xii. 13. Deut. xxxii. 39. Job v. 18. Jer. xvii. 14. Hos. vi. 1. Matt. iv. 24. xxxii. 3. xxxviii. 3. li. 8. Job xix. 20. xxxiii. 19—21.
^e xxxii. 14. xxxi. 9. 10. xxxviii. 8. xlii. 5. lxxvii. 2, 3. Prov. xviii. 14. Matt. xxv. 38.
^f xlii. 1, 2. lxxvii. 7. Luke xviii. 7. h lxxx. 14. xc. 13.
^g lxxx. 14. xc. 13. lxxxviii. 14. Matt. xxv. 38.
^h lxxx. 14. xc. 13. lxxxviii. 14. Matt. xxv. 38.
ⁱ lxxx. 14. xc. 13. lxxxviii. 14. Matt. xxv. 38.
^j lxxx. 14. xc. 13. lxxxviii. 14. Matt. xxv. 38.
^k lxxx. 14. xc. 13. lxxxviii. 14. Matt. xxv. 38.
^l lxxx. 14. xc. 13. lxxxviii. 14. Matt. xxv. 38.
^m lxxx. 14. xc. 13. lxxxviii. 14. Matt. xxv. 38.

should remember that we are by nature as depraved as our opposers; that we may renewedly repent of the sinful thoughts, words, and actions of our past lives; that we may still watch over our own hearts, and against all polluting or dissembling conversation; and that we may bless God for restraining or converting grace, and for Jesus Christ and his salvation. We must by no means desire and pray for the destruction of our enemies; but we may predict the ruin of God's enemies, who will “fall by their own counsels, and in the multitude of their iniquities;” and their enmity to his people will be proved to have sprung from their rebellion against him. But we should earnestly pray for, and help, the joy of the righteous: they trust in the Lord's mercy, grace, and providence, and desire to love his name and walk in his ways: he is their Shield and Salvation, and his favour shall protect and bless them for ever.—Neither their former sins, nor their present defects, temptations, conflicts, or troubles, should be allowed to silence their praises, or prevent their rejoicing. Joy is their privilege, their duty, and their strength; and they should be exhorted to “rejoice in the Lord always.”

NOTES.

PSALM VI. (Note, v. title.) *Sheminith*.] This word signifies the eighth: and some suppose that the Psalm, or tune, was adapted to a harp with eight strings.—This is the first of the *penitential psalms*; but it is not known on what occasion it was written.

V. 1, 2. ‘Though I deserve destruction, yet let thy mercy pity my frailty.’ (Notes, *Is.* lvii. 15, 16. *Jer.* x. 23—25.)—*Are vexed*. (2) Or, *are shaken*, or *disturbed*.

V. 3, 4. (Notes, xiii. 1—4. xciv. 1—7.)—‘Return, O Lord, in mercy to my soul, and relieve and comfort me.’ (Marg. Ref.)

V. 5. The Psalmist pleaded, that if God cut him off in his wrath, it would terminate all his opportunities of serving and glorifying him on earth; and if left finally to perish, he should never remember God with gratitude and praise any more to eternity. (Notes, xxx. 9, 10. lxxxviii. 10—12. *Is.* xxxix. 17—22.)

In the grave.] *הַשְׁמָד*: *εν τω αδη*. *Sept.* The word is often translated *hell*, and it frequently denotes the place of separate spirits, happy or unhappy, according to the context; yet it sometimes must be understood of the grave, and that appears to be the sense in this place. (Note, xvi. 8—11.)

^a xxxviii. 8, 9. ^b ix. 3. lxxvii. * 6 ^a I am weary with my groaning; all the night make I my bed to swim; ^c ii. 3—5. cxliii. 4—7. Job x. 1. ^d I water my couch with my tears.

^e Or, every night. 7 ^a Mine eye is consumed because of grief; ^b it waxeth old because of all mine enemies.

^c xxxix. 12. xlii. 3. Job xvi. 20. Jer. xiv. 17. Lam. i. 2. 16. ii. 11. 18. 19. iii. 48. —50. Luke vii. 38. 8 ^a Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for ^b the LORD hath heard the voice of my weeping.

^d xxxix. 9, 10. xxxviii. 10. lxxxviii. 9. Job xvii. 7. Lam. v. 17. 9 ^a The LORD hath heard my supplication; ^b the LORD will receive my prayer.

^c cxix. 115. cxxxix. 19. Matt. vii. 23. xxv. 41. Luke xiii. 27. 10 ^a Let all mine enemies be ashamed and ^b sore vexed; let them ^c return and ^d be ashamed suddenly.

^e lvi. 8. cxvi. 8. Is. xxx. 19. xxxviii. 3. 5. Heb. v. 7. ^f i. 4. xxxi. 22. xl. 1. 2. lxi. 19. 20. cxviii. 5. cxx. 1. cxxxviii. 3. Jon. ii. 2. 7. 2 Cor. xii. 8—10. u cxvi. 1, 2. 2 Cor. i. 10, 11. x v. 10. vii. 6. xxv. 3. xxxv. 26. xl. 14, 15. lxxi. 13. lxxxiii. 16, 17. lxxxvi. 17. cix. 28, 29. cxii. 10. cxxxii. 18. Is. xxvi. 11. Jer. xx. 11. y ii. 5. xxi. 8, 9. z Job vi. 29. Mal. iii. 18. a Prov. xxix. 1. 1 Thee. v. 3.

V. 6, 7. David, as visited and chastised by distressing sickness, and a variety of sufferings; and at the same time, mourning for his sins in deep repentance, complained, that his complicated sorrows caused him every night to water his couch with copious tears, and made him waste, become dull-sighted, and as it were grow old prematurely. In this distress, he earnestly pleaded with God to visit him in mercy, without further delay. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8—10. The Psalmist, having deeply humbled himself before God, at length found his peace and hope revive. As he trusted that the Lord would not leave him to perish in another world, with the workers of iniquity, he resolved not to associate with them in this: and he warned them to repent and cease from their enmity to him; otherwise he was assured, that shame and vexation would suddenly and irrevocably seize upon them. Many mournful psalms end thus triumphantly, for the encouragement of other mourners to hope and pray. (*Notes*, xiii. 5, 6. xxx. 9—12.)—The old version thus renders the last verse: ‘All my enemies shall be confounded and sore vexed; they shall be turned back, and put to shame suddenly.’ (*Note*, v. 10, 11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Infidels, profligates, and hypocrites, and ungodly men of every description, have always more noticed David's sins, than his mourning for them: for the former serve for an objection to the truths which they hate, and an excuse for the sins they love; but they are not disposed to imitate him in the latter.—Great tenderness of conscience, and a disposition to mourn for sin with brokenness of heart, distinguish the believer from all other men. He may be overtaken in a fault, nay he may fall into grievous transgression; but recollection fills him with anguish: or if for a space he be, as it were, stupified, rebukes and corrections bring him to himself: and, while conscience performs its salutary but painful office, and he is suffering under the rod of his offended Father, he not unfrequently becomes afraid of his “hot displeasure.” Ashamed and trembling, he then deprecates eternal misery. Pains and enfeebling diseases, which vex his bones, may excite his prayers for deliverance; but the sense of divine wrath, which vexes his soul, renders him most earnest in crying

PSALM VII.

David, protesting his innocence of the crimes charged on him, intreats God to protect him from his enemies, and to plead his cause for the sake of the people, 1—9. He expresses his confidence in God, predicts the destruction of persecutors, and determines to praise the Lord, 10—17.

^a Shiggaion of David, which he sang unto the LORD, concerning the words of Cush the Benjamite.

^b O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: ^c save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:

2 Lest ^a he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces, ^b while there is none to deliver.

out, “O LORD, how long?” how long will it be ere thou give me some token of thy pardoning love? ere thou return to glorify thy mercy in saving my soul? The true penitent desires to live on earth to remember and give thanks to his God; and he seeks the deliverance of his soul from hell, and the resurrection of the body from the grave, for the same purpose. To enjoy the favour, and celebrate the praises, of his God and Saviour, form that happiness on earth and in heaven, which he desires; but he cannot endure the thought of ceasing for ever to love and praise him. His sorrow for sin is inward, and flows most in retirement: groans and tears express the compunction of his heart: and when his crimes have dishonoured God, and caused his enemies to exult and triumph, and returning comforts are withheld; his spirits are exhausted, his eye is dimmed, and he seems to wax old before his time. But such mourning will terminate in rejoicing: the Lord will not number the weeping penitent with “the workers of iniquity;” for he will separate from them, and rebuke and warn them. His very tears have a prevailing voice with God, who has heard and will hear his prayers: and all they, who rejoice in the falls and sorrows of the Lord's devoted servants, will be “put to shame, vexed, and perish suddenly,” unless they repent.—Sinners of every rank have sorrowed and wept for their transgressions; but Jesus alone was a sinless sufferer, and through his sufferings, and in no other way, can the penitent find mercy. At length HE will bid the impenitent workers of iniquity to depart from him; and then will all his enemies be confounded, vexed, and perish with an everlasting destruction.

NOTES.

PSALM VII. *Title.* “Shiggaion” signifies *wandering*, or *variable*; and, it is probable, denotes the musick to which the psalm was set.—Many conjectures have been formed concerning Cush; but at last we only know, that he was of the same tribe as Saul, and most likely one of his relations and courtiers, who brought some false accusation against David. (*Notes*, 1 Sam. xxii. 7, 8. xxvi. 17—19.)

V. 1, 2. In extreme danger, the Psalmist, according to

1 *liz.* 3. *Josh.* xxii. 22. 1 *Sam.* xx. 6. xxii. 8. 13. xxiv. 9. xxvi. 18. 19. 2 *Sam.* xvi. 7. 8. *Job* xvi. 17—19. *k* *lxvi.* 18. 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 11. *Job* xi. 14. 1 *lv.* 20. *cix.* 5. *Gen.* xlv. 4. *Prov.* xvii. 13. *Jer.* xviii. 20. 21. *m* 1 *Sam.* xxiv. 7. 10. 11. xxvi. 10—17. 24. *n* 1 *Sam.* xix. 4. 5. xx. 1. xxii. 14. xxiv. 11—15. 17—19. xxv. 28. 29. xxvi. 21. *o* *Job* xxxi. 5—10. 38—40. *p* *xliv.* 5. *lx.* 12. *Job* xl. 12. *Is.* x. 6. *lxiii.* 3. *Zech.* x. 5. *Mal.* x. iv. 3. *q* *xliv.* 12. *Job* xvi. 15. *xl.* 13. *Jer.* xvii. 13. *r* *iii.* 2. *Hab.* iii. 13. *s* *iii.* 7. *xii.* 5. *xxxv.* 1. 23. *xliv.* 26. *lxviii.* 1. 2. *Is.* iii. 13. *t* *lxiv.* 3. *xciv.* 2. *Is.* xxxiii. 10. *xxxvii.* 20. *u* *xliv.* 23. *lix.* 5. *lxviii.* 65. *Is.* li. 9. *Rev.* xi. 17. 18. *xvi.* 5—7. *xviii.* 20. *xix.* 2. *z* *xciii.* 4. *cxiii.* 5. 6. *cxviii.* 6. *Is.* lvii. 15. *a* *ix.* 8. *xi.* 4. *lxxxii.* 1. *xcvi.* 13. *xcviii.* 9. *Gen.* xviii. 25. *Acts* xvii. 31. *Rom.* xiv. 10—12. 1 *Cor.* iv. 4, 5. *b* *xxvi.* 1. *xxxv.* 24. *xlvi.* 1. *Gen.* xxxi. 53. 2 *Chr.* xx. 12. *c* *xvii.* 2, 3. *xviii.* 20—24. *xxxv.* 24—27. 2 *Cor.* i. 12. *y* *xlvi.* 11. *xxxvii.* 14. *marg.*

3 O LORD my God, ⁱ if I have done this; ^k if there be iniquity in my hand;
4 ^l If I have rewarded evil unto him that was at peace with me; (yea, ^m I have delivered him that ⁿ without cause is mine enemy:)
5 ^o Let the enemy persecute my soul and take *it*; yea, let him ^p tread down my life upon the earth, and ^q lay mine honour in the dust. ^r Selah.
6 ^s Arise, O LORD, in thine anger, ^t lift up thyself because of the rage of mine enemies: and ^u awake for me *to* the judgment *that* thou hast commanded.
7 ^v So shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: for their sakes therefore ^w return thou on high.
8 ^x The LORD shall judge the people: ^y judge me, O LORD, ^z according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity *that* is in me.

righteousness, and according ^d to mine integrity *that* is in me.

9 Oh, ^e let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but ^f establish the just: ^g for the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins.

10 ^h My defence *is* of God, ⁱ which saveth the upright in heart.

11 ^j God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry *with the wicked* every day.

12 If ^k he turn not, ^l he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.

13 He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; ^m he ordaineth his arrows against the ⁿ persecutors.

14 Behold, ^o he travaileth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falsehood.

15 He shall rise up against him, and shall slay him, and shall bring forth falsehood.

and unite in his holy worship. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, lxxv. 2—10. cxli. 6—10. *Jer.* xii. 1—4.)

V. 8—11. The heart-searching Judge of the world decides not only on men's conduct towards him, but in all the causes between one and another. (*Note*, xvii. 1—3.) To him therefore David referred the cause between him and his persecutors, desiring to be judged, *in this respect*, according to his righteousness and integrity, which were known to God. (*Notes*, xxvi. 1. 2 *Sam.* xxii. 21—28.)—He also earnestly prayed that the wickedness of the wicked might cease; and that God would establish the righteous.—He was assured, that *the righteous Judge* and Preserver of the upright, would defend him as a Buckler, (*marg.*) and would at length manifest that anger, which was every day excited by the crimes of his enemies.—‘How few among Christians seriously and deliberately consider, ‘whether the sentence of that day’ (the day of judgment) ‘is likely to be in their favour!’ yet how many, with the ‘utmost composure and self-complacency, repeat continually the words of this psalm, as well as those in the ‘*Te Deum*, ‘We believe that thou shalt come to be our ‘Judge!’’ *Bp. Horne*.

V. 12, 13. ‘Vengeance... will certainly come, though ‘it stay long, and not fail to do execution: for it is decreed in heaven, (if they do not repent,) and will pierce ‘through the heart of Saul, and all the rest of my fierce ‘and outrageous persecutors.’ *Bp. Patrick*. (*Note*, 6, 7.)

V. 14—16. ‘When an evil thought is instilled into the ‘heart of a man, the seed of the wicked one is sown; by ‘... cherishing the diabolical suggestion “he conceiveth” ‘a purpose of “mischief;” when that purpose is gradually ‘formed and matured for the birth, he “travaileth with ‘“iniquity;” at length, by carrying it into action, he ‘“bringeth forth falsehood.”’ *Bp. Horne*. (*Note*, *Jam.* i. 13—15.) The persecutor especially, being determined upon iniquity, is restless and in torment, till he can effect

his custom, resorted to God by faith and prayer. He had many persecutors: but it is probable that the one, whom he distinguishes from the rest, was Saul; who was so enraged against him, and had so much power in his hands, that he both could, and would, have torn him in pieces, as a lion does his prey; nor would any have attempted to deliver him, had not God been his Protector. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxii. 9—19. xxiii. 26—28.)

V. 3—5. David here appealed to God for his innocence, as to the charges brought against him. So far from having risen up, as an enemy or traitor, against his prince, when at peace with him; or even returned evil for the evil requital which his eminent services had received; (as some explain the clause;) he had twice preserved the life of his treacherous and implacable persecutor, who had not the smallest cause for his cruel enmity. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xx. 1—6. xxiv. xxvi. 8—25.) If this were not the case, and if the accusations of his enemies were true; he was willing to lose his life and reputation, and to be exposed to the deepest ignominy. (*Notes*, *Job* xxxi. 5—12. 16—23. 38—40. *Jer.* xvii. 14—18. xviii. 19, 20. 2 *Cor.* xi. 7—12.)

V. 6, 7. David was assured that the Lord intended to cut off Saul. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xv. 26—29. xxiv. 8—15. xxv. 23—31. xxvi. 8—12.) This was “the judgment” which he had commanded,” and for which David prayed, not only on his own account, but for the sake of the people. Saul's tyranny, and neglect of his duty as king of Israel, had crushed and scattered the Israelites: and his persecution and impiety had driven them from the ordinances and worship of God, and seduced them into many crimes. The Psalmist therefore prayed that the righteous Judge would ascend his exalted tribunal, exert his omnipotent authority, and by some visible interposition check the progress of impiety, and give encouragement to his servants; that they might again be collected in his courts,

^{* Heb. hath digged. xxxv. 7. cxix. 85. Job vi. 27. Jer. xviii. 20.} 15 He ^{*} made a pit, and digged it, ^o and is fallen into the ditch *which* he made.

^{o ix. 15, 16. x. 2. xxxv. 8. xciv. 13. cxl. 9, 10. cxli. 10. Esth. vii. 10. Job iv. 8. Prov. v. 22. xxvii. 27. Ec. x. 8, 9.} 16 ^p His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealings shall come down upon his own pate.

^{p xxxvi. 4. 12. xxxvii. 12, 13. 1 Sam. xxiii. 9. xxiv. 12, 13. xxvi. 10. xxviii. 19. xxxi. 3, 4. 1 Kings ii. 32. Esth. ix. 25. Matt. xxvii. 3—5. q xxxv. 28. li. 14. lxxi. 15, 16. xcvi. 2. cxl. 3. cxlv. 7. r ix. 2. xcii. 1. 8. Dan. iv. 17. 25. 34. Acts vii. 48.} 17 I will praise the LORD ^a according to his righteousness: and will sing praise to the name of the LORD ^r most high.

his purpose by any method of deceit and violence. But, with much expense and trouble, he only digs a pit for himself, and the ruin he aimed at others, falls on the crown of his own head, and gives him a mortal wound. Thus Saul was killed by the Philistines, whom he wanted to employ in cutting off David; (*Notes*, 1 Sam. xviii. 17—27. xxxi. 2—6:) and the Jews, who excited the Romans to crucify Christ, were awfully destroyed by the Romans, and numbers of them crucified. (*Note*, Matt. xxvii. 24, 25.)

V. 17. *Most high.*] lxxxiii. 18. Is. lvii. 15. Dan. iv. 17—34. v. 18—21.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The servants of God must expect the persecution of the tongue, as a preparation for further injuries; and to the ingenuous mind it often appears very formidable. But no slanderers or persecuting tyrants can do real harm to those who trust in the Lord their God: when there is none else to deliver, he will take care, both of their persons, and their characters; and will preserve them from Satan, that “accuser of the brethren,” and “devouring lion,” and “from every evil work unto his heavenly kingdom.”—Let us then wage our warfare with the weapons of faith and prayer; and, instead of injuring our peaceful neighbours, let us persevere in endeavouring to overcome evil with good. This will enable us to rejoice in the testimony of our consciences, when loaded with slander and obloquy, and to appeal to God with confidence. But ‘wretched they who persecute their benefactor! Happy he who can reflect that he has been a benefactor to his persecutors!’ *Bp. Horne*. Indeed the Christian would deem himself worthy of all the injury and ignominy, which his foes desire for him, were he guilty of the crimes of which they accuse him.—But, while we patiently bear the injuries to which we are exposed, we should be much affected and grieved, when we behold “one sinner destroying much good:” and we ought to pray that the Lord would convert or destroy all those, who scatter and oppress his people; and effectually interpose to encourage their faith and obedience, and to stop the growth of impiety and infidelity.—When earthly judges abuse their power, it is a comfort to reflect that the Lord will reverse their decrees, and plead the cause of his people: he is a Judge who “trieth the heart and reins;” nor can we stand before him, even according to his new covenant of mercy, without “simplicity and godly sincerity,” and conscientious integrity in our habitual conduct. The Lord is every day provoked by the wicked; and while he waits to receive

PSALM VIII.

The glory of God is displayed in the works of creation, 1—3; and in his condescending love to man, 4—9

To the chief Musician upon ^a Gittith,
A Psalm of David.

O LORD ^b our Lord, ^c how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set ^d thy glory above the heavens.

the submissions, and pardon the sins, of those who repent and turn to him, he is preparing to execute judgment on all the impenitent. But persecutors must expect his severest vengeance. Satan suggests the mischievous imagination, and they welcome it; and iniquity and murder are thus conceived, and then effected by lies and treachery. Let them however remember, that they are only plotting their own destruction: for the persecuted servants of the Lord will be celebrating his praises, and rejoicing in his favour, while their persecutors are cast into the pit of destruction, and enduring the wrath of their righteous Judge: and all their subtle projects will concur in bringing about this final event.—Let us then under all our trials look unto the Saviour. He alone was perfect in righteousness; yet none was ever reviled, slandered, and hated as he was. He lived and died, doing good to his enemies, and praying for them: but after his exaltation, the welfare of his church required that judgment should be executed upon such as continued impenitent. The Jews first felt the weight of his indignation, and at the same time great multitudes of Gentile converts compassed him about. Wherever Anti-Christian corrupters or persecutors have been from time to time destroyed, the church has been replenished with numerous real converts to the faith; and when these enemies of the truth shall finally come to an end, the whole earth will be filled with truth and righteousness. Shortly will arrive that final judgment which God has decreed, when all unbelievers will finally perish: may we, at that solemn season, ‘be numbered with his saints in glory everlasting!’

NOTES.

PSALM VIII. *Title*. “Gittith” perhaps is the name of some tune, which David had learned when in Gath, or from the Gittites, and to which this and two other psalms were set. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Various other conjectures have been formed; and the following may be considered as the most probable. ‘I take it to have been composed by David, after he had overthrown... Goliath of Gath; which is... a lively emblem of Christ’s conquest over our great enemy the devil.’ *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 1. The eternal JEHOVAH, the universal Creator and Benefactor, is that Lord and Governor, whom all ought entirely to obey and serve; and to him as God their Saviour, all true believers render thankful and willing obedience. He infinitely excels all creatures in every thing which can excite love and adoration. The earth is full of the discoveries of his perfections; and his glory fills the high-

^e Matt. xi. 25. ² * Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou * ordained * strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest * still ^h the enemy and the avenger.

^g iv. 4. xlv. 10. ³ When ⁱ I consider thy heavens, ^k the work of thy fingers, ^l the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained :

^h xlv. 16. ⁴ ^m What is man that thou art mindful of him? and ⁿ the son of man, that thou ^o visitest him?

ⁱ xix. 1. cxi. 2. ^j Job xxii. 12. ^k xxxvi. 24. Rom. i. 20. ^l xxxiii. 6. Gen. i. 1. Ex. viii. 19. ^m cxli. 18. Luke xi. 20. ⁿ cxlvi. 19. cxlvi. 7—9. cxlviii. 3. Gen. i. 16—18. Deut. iv. 19. Job xxv. 3. 5. ^o cxliv. 3. 2 Chr. vi. 18. Job vii. 17. xxv. 6. Is. xl. 17. Heb. ii. 6, 7. ^p iv. 2. lxxx. 17. cxlvi. 3. Is. li. 12. Ez. viii. 15. Matt. viii. 20. ^q cvi. 4. Gen. xxi. 1. Ex. iv. 31. Luke i. 68. xix. 44. 1 Pet. ii. 12.

^p ciii. 20. Gen. i. 26, 27. ii. 7. 2 Sam. xiv. 20. Job iv. 19—20. Phil. ii. 7, 8. Heb. ii. 7, 9, 16. ^q xxi. 3—5. xlv. 1—3. 6. John xiii. 31, 32. Eph. i. 21. Phil. ii. 9. —11. Heb. ii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 20, 21. Gen. i. 26, 28. ix. 2. Matt. xxviii. 18. Heb. i. 2. cx. 1. 1 Cor. xv. 24—27. Eph. i. 22. Heb. ii. 8. 1 Pet. iii. 22. ^r Heb. *Flocks and oxen, all of them.* Gen. ii. 20. ^t cxlviii. 10. Gen. i. 20—25. Job xxxviii. 39—41. xxxix. 1, &c. xl. 15—24. xli. 1, &c. u. 1. civ. 24. Deut. xxxiii. 26. Job xi. 7.

⁶ Thou ^r madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast ^s put all *things* under his feet:

⁷ ^t All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field:

⁸ ^u The fowl of the air, and the fish ^v of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.

⁹ O LORD our Lord, "how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

est heavens, and is exalted far above them.—"O LORD, "our Governor." *Prayer Book version.*

V. 2. God has often magnified his own perfections, through the simplicity and weakness of the instruments, by which he accomplishes his grand designs. (*Note, Judg. vii. 13—22. P. O. 16—25.*)—The new born infant is such a display of his power, skill, and goodness, as unanswerably confutes the cavils of Atheism. Even little children have been taught so to love and serve him, that their praises and confessions have baffled and silenced the rage and malice of persecutors: and thus a victorious *strength* has been manifested by them; while the wise, learned, and mighty, have either joined the enemy, or timidly and feebly crouched before him.—The meanest and most despised persons have often been made successful in their attempts to promote his cause. Thus David overcame Goliath, though but as a babe in comparison of that insulting champion: and the despised Nazarene, with his obscure and unlettered apostles, prevailed against the combined wisdom, learning, and power of the world, and against the sagacity and influence of Satan, "the god of "this world." And by successive instruments whom man disdains, the same cause shall still more fully prevail, till every avenger and enemy is finally stilled, and all the wicked are silent in darkness. (*Notes, Matt. xi. 25, 26. 1 Cor. i. 26—31. 2 Cor. iv. 7.*)—The LXX render the clause, here translated, "ordained strength," "*perfected 'praise';*" and the Evangelist, recording our Lord's words, gives them according to that version. (*Note, Matt. xxi. 14—16.*)

V. 3. The Psalmist appears to have composed this sacred hymn, while his attention was fixed, during the silence of the evening, on "the moon walking in brightness," and on "the stars of light;" but, instead of being tempted to worship the heavenly host, he contemplated the magnificent scene, and the immensity of the creation, till he was filled with adoring admiration of the Creator's incomprehensible majesty, which naturally suggested the subsequent reflections. (*Notes, cxlviii. 3. Deut. iv. 19. Job xxxi. 24—28.*)

V. 4—9. Adam, even when created in the image of God, was *infinitely* beneath his Maker; and it was an unspeakable favour for him to be placed at the head of this lower world, in a state of honour and dominion. (*Note, Gen. i. 26, 27.*) After the fall, it was still more wonder-

ful that his children should be permitted to retain any authority over, or derive any benefit from, the different orders of creatures. But the apostle teaches us, that the Holy Spirit, who spake by David, also intended Christ, the eternal Son of God, who by his incarnation became "the Son of man." Thus he was "made a little lower "than the angels," by assuming and dwelling in a nature inferior to their's, "for the suffering of death:" which object having been accomplished, he arose from the dead, and was "crowned with glory and honour;" and in human nature exercises universal dominion, even an authority infinitely more extensive and absolute, than ever the first Adam possessed, or could possibly have administered. (*Note, Heb. ii. 5—9.*)—In so wonderful a manner did the God of glory shew himself mindful of feeble, mortal, sinful man! and thus has he visited and honoured one of our race, for the common benefit of all who believe in him! (*Note, Ps. cxliv. 3, 4.*)

Than the angels. (5) עֲלֵיָאִים. *Elohim* is generally translated *God*, or *gods*: yet the apostle quotes the LXX, who render it *angels*; which shews the latitude with which the term is used. (*Notes, lxxxii. 6, 7. John x. 32—39.*) But when the true God is meant, it is, though plural, always joined with the singular verb; and the name *JEHOVAH* is never given to any but to the true God: and, when applied to Christ, it shews who he is, even "the true God "and eternal Life."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No words can express the glorious excellency of *JEHOVAH*, our Ruler and Lord; nor can Cherubim or Seraphim reach his worthiness by their most exalted adorations: yet he graciously accepts the upright though feeble efforts of men on earth, and even counts himself honoured by the praises of babes and sucklings! He works by the weakest instruments for the greater confusion of his enemies and the honour of his name; and all the vengeance and rage of earth and hell shall soon be stilled by the prevalence of his despised gospel.—Every creature speaks the Creator's praise to the mind of the devout believer; whose pious contemplations render his solitary walks unspeakably pleasant and profitable. But each display of the divine glory should lead us to reflect on our own meanness and sinfulness. What indeed is man, that the Lord should still visit him, and be mindful of him? What are we, but mean,

PSALM IX.

David praises God for punishing his enemies, and maintaining his cause, 1—6. He shews that God will preserve his servants, and calls on them to praise his name, 7—12. He prays for deliverance from present trials, that he may still praise the Lord; and predicts the ruin of the wicked, 13—20.

To the chief Musician upon Muth-labben, A Psalm of David.

^a I WILL praise thee, O LORD, ^b with my whole heart; ^c I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

² I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, ^e O thou most High.

3 When mine enemies are turned back, ^f they shall fall and perish at thy presence.

4 For ^g thou hast maintained my right and my cause; thou sittest in the throne judging ^h right.

5 Thou hast ⁱ rebuked the heathen, ^j thou hast destroyed the wicked, ^k thou hast put out their name for ever and ever.

6 ^l O ^m thou enemy, ⁿ destructions are come to a perpetual end: and ^o thou hast destroyed cities; their ^p memorial is perished with them.

^k Deut. ix. 14. Prov. x. 7. xiii. 9. ^l Or, The destructions of the enemy are come to a perpetual end, and their cities hast thou destroyed, &c. ^m vii. 5. viii. 2. Ex. xv. 6. Mic. vii. 8. 10. ⁿ xvi. 9. Ex. xiv. 13. Is. x. 24, 25. xiv. 6—8. Nah. i. 9—13. 1 Cor. xv. 26. 54—57. Rev. xx. 2. ^o 1 Sam. xxx. 1. xxxi. 7. Is. x. 6, 7, 13, 14. xiv. 17. xxxvii. 26. Jer. li. 25. ^p Is. xiv. 22, 23. Jer. li. 62—64.

guilty, polluted, ungrateful, rebellious, and apostate creatures? We are unworthy of the least of those manifold advantages, which we derive from the sheep and oxen, the fishes and the fowls, and the other animals, which are still subjected to us, and subservient to our benefit: nor should we ever partake of these common mercies, without admiration joined with gratitude. But in the person of Emmanuel, every other instance of divine condescension is eclipsed, and our most exalted previous conceptions of the divine love are far exceeded, and the powers of our minds are almost overwhelmed. His love, his humiliation in assuming our nature, his atoning sufferings unto death, his subsequent glory, and his dominion over all creatures, which shall endure till all enemies are put under his feet, can never sufficiently be admired and adored.—Thus our nature, in the second Adam, is infinitely more honoured and exalted, than it could have been in the first Adam. Thus also the true dignity of human nature, even the worth of a rational, immortal soul, though ruined by sin, yet capable of recovery and eternal felicity, is clearly shewn. And if we trust and submit to Christ as our Saviour and Lord, he will advance us also to glory, honour, and immortality. We had indeed cause to celebrate the excellencies of the Lord our Governor, as displayed in the works of creation: but what words can reach his praises, who is now become our Salvation, and has laid us under new and still more powerful obligations to obedience, as our Redeemer, and as displaying among us sinners on earth those glories, “which angels desire to look into!”

NOTES.

PSALM IX. Title. Muth-labben.] The import of this title, is very doubtful. “Muth” signifies death: and some imagine that “labben” the son, may denote Goliath, either in respect of his eminence, or his coming forth as the champion between the Philistines and Israel. Goliath is called by a name something like this, and which is rendered “a champion.” (אִישׁ־הַחַיִּים, a man who comes between. 1 Sam. xvii. 4.) If, however, this be the meaning, it is very obscurely expressed: and, as Zion was not the place of Israel’s assembling for publick worship, till David had for some time been king over all Israel, the Psalm must have been

composed long after Goliath’s death. (11—14.) Others therefore suppose “Muth-labben” to mean, the death of his son, and refer the occasion of the Psalm to the death of Absalom.—The Psalmist might have some reference to the various deliverances of his past life; but he was also lead, while praising God for them, to speak, as the type of Christ, concerning his conflicts and victories, and those of his church; and to celebrate her triumphs over every heathen and Anti-christian persecutor, while he included also the trials and deliverances of every believer.

V. 1—3. The Psalmist determined, on occasion of some recent deliverance, to “praise JEHOVAH with his whole heart;” not feignedly, not as ascribing any share of the honour to himself, not in a cold and languid manner, but fervently and zealously.—He would make the works, which God had wrought for him, known to all around: and thus rejoice in ascribing glory to his name, and in reflecting what a powerful and faithful Patron and Friend he had, and what an honour and benefit this was to him. His enemies hitherto had been turned back, and had stumbled and perished, not by his valour, but by the presence and power of God; and this made him confident of continued victories and final triumph. (Notes, xxvii. 1—3. 2 Sam. xxii. 37—42.)—This admits of the most obvious application to the works of God for his church, and for every believer; and no doubt was intended by the Holy Spirit, to be thus used in our worship and meditations.—O thou most High. (2) “God is in the loftiest and most exalted pre-eminence, and sovereignty, over the whole creation; and in essence and glory, surpassing all comprehension.” (Marg. Ref. e.)

V. 4—6. God had pleaded David’s righteous cause against the wicked persecution of Saul, and had advanced him to the throne of all Israel, with the destruction of almost the whole family of Saul. He had given his king the victory over the surrounding heathen nations, who perished in great numbers, and had finally lost the reputation of their former successes. So that every enemy which had before destroyed the cities of Israel, was deprived perpetually of power to continue these desolations; and most of them soon became so insignificant, that the memorial of them, and of their former greatness, perished

p xc. 2. ci. 12. 24
—27. Heb. i. 11,
12. xiii. 8. 2 Pet.
iii. 8.

q 1. 3—5. ciii. 19.
Rev. xx. 11.

r 1. 6. xciv. 15.
xcvi. 13. xcvi. 13.
9. xcix. 4. Gen.
xviii. 25. Is. xi.
4. 5. Acts xvii.
31. Rom. ii. 5. 6.
16.

s xviii. 2. xxxii. 7.
xli. 1. xlviii. 3.
xlii. 8. xci. 1, 2.
cxlii. 4. 5. Deut.
xxxiii. 27. Prov.
xviii. 10. Is. iv.
5. 6. viii. 14.
xxxii. 2. Nah. i.
7. Luke xiii. 34.
Heb. vi. 18.

* Heb. an high
place. xx. 1.
xlv. 7. Marg.

t 1. 15. lxxvii. 1, 2.
cviii. 12.

u xci. 14. Ex.
xxxiv. 5—7.

1 Chr. xxviii. 9.
John xvii. 3.

2 Cor. iv. 6.
2 Tim. i. 12.

1 John ii. 3, 4.
v. 20.

x v. 11. lvii. 1. cxlvi. 5, 6.

Jer. xxix. 13. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10.

13, 14.

xiv. 1.

xvii. 26.

xi. 50, 51. Rev. vi. 9, 10. xvi. 6.

7 But ^p the LORD shall endure for ever: ^q he hath prepared his throne for judgment:

8 And ^r he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.

9 ^s The LORD also will be ^{*} a Refuge for the oppressed, a Refuge ^t in times of trouble.

10 And they that ^u know thy name will ^x put their trust in thee: for thou, LORD, ^y hast not forsaken them that seek thee.

11 ^z Sing praises to the LORD, ^a which dwelleth in Zion: ^b declare among the people his doings.

12 ^c When he maketh inquisition for

blood, he remembereth them: ^d he forgetteth not the cry of the ^e humble.

13 ^f Have mercy upon me, O LORD; ^g consider my trouble *which I suffer* of them that hate me, ^h thou that liftest me up from the gates of death:

14 That ⁱ I may shew forth all thy praise ^j in the gates of ^k the daughter of Zion: ^l I will rejoice in thy salvation.

15 ^m The heathen are sunk down in the pit *that* they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.

16 The LORD is ⁿ known *by* the judgment *which* he executeth: ^o the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands.

^{*} Higgsaion. Selah.

ⁿ lxxviii. 11. lviii. 10, 11. lxxxiii. 17, 18. Ex. vii. 5. xiv. 4. 31. Deut. xxix. 22—25. Josh. ii. 10, 11. Judg. i. 7. 1 Sam. vi. 19, 20. xvii. 46. 2 Kings xix. 19, 34, 35.

cxl. 9. Prov. vi. 2. xii. 13. Is. viii. 15. xxviii. 13.

14. xcii. 3. marg.

d x. 14. 17. xxii. 24. xxxiv. 6. cii. 17. Ex. iii. 7. 9. Luke xviii. 7, 8.

† Or, *afflicted*. Judg. x. 16.

e li. 1. cxix. 132. f xiii. 3. xxv. 19. cxix. 153. cxlii. 6. Neh. ix. 32. Lam. i. 9, 11.

g xxx. 3. lvi. 13. lxxxvi. 13. cvii. 18. cxvi. 3, 4. Is. xxxviii. 10. Jon. ii. 6.

h li. 15. lxxxix. 13. cvi. 2. cxxxviii. 1.

i xxii. 22. 25. xxxv. 18. xlii. 4. cix. 30, 31. cxvi. 18, 19. cxviii. 19, 20. cxlix. 1, 2.

k Is. xxxvii. 22. lxii. 11. Mic. iv. 13. Matt. xxi. 5.

l xlii. 5. xx. 5. xxi. 1. xxxv. 9. li. 12. 1 Sam. ii. 1. Is. xii. 3. Hab. iii. 18. Luke i. 47.

m vii. 15, 16. xxxv. 8. xxxvii. 15. lvii. 6. xciv. 23. Prov. v. 22. xxii. 8. xxvi. 27.

o xi. 6. That is, *Meditation*. v. 1. xix.

14. xcii. 3. marg.

with them.—Thus the sixth verse must be understood, if we adhere to the translation in the text; but the marginal reading here seems to give the proper sense. The destructions caused by the enemy were terminated; God had destroyed their cities; and the remembrance of them had failed from among men.—Thus likewise the renowned monarchies, that successively made havock on earth, and oppressed Israel, are now destroyed and almost forgotten; the first opposers of Christ and Christianity have shared the same fate; and all these divine interpositions are earnest of the final ruin of all the enemies of the cause of Christ. (*Notes, Dan. ii. 38—45.*)

V. 7—12. The reflection on the transient glory of earthly kingdoms, and illustrious conquerors, led the Psalmist to reflect on the eternity of JEHOVAH, and of his universal kingdom. This eternal Sovereign did not, indeed, immediately inflict vengeance on his enemies; but he was preparing his “throne for judgment.” He would soon judge the whole human race in righteousness; and uprightly, or according to his declarations and promises, decide on the cause of each individual belonging to the people of Israel, and all other nations (עַמִּים). In the mean while, he would prove a Refuge for the protection and comfort of such, as were oppressed or persecuted for his sake, to which they should resort in times of trouble or danger. (*Notes, lxii. 8—10. 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3. Prov. xviii. 10, 11. Is. xxxii. 1, 2.*)—Indeed all who, by believing his word and experiencing his faithfulness and mercy, had obtained the knowledge of his name, or perfections, would trust in him entirely and exclusively; for it had never been known, that the Lord had forsaken any that sought him, because of their weakness, or the power of their enemies. But it was only as dwelling in Zion, on the mercy-seat, above the ark of the covenant, through the sacrifices and ordinances which typified the promised Saviour, that he could be sought by sinful men with acceptance; and therefore his people should abound in praising him, as the God of salvation; and making known his works, that others might learn

to seek and serve him.—He sometimes indeed permitted his servants to be tried by persecution; but there would be a season of inquisition for blood, when the prayers of the humble would be remembered, and completely answered. (*Marg. Ref. c.—Notes, Is. xxvi. 20, 21.*)

V. 13, 14. David, after all his triumphs, still had enemies, conflicts, and trials: the church, though victorious over all former opposers, is still “militant here on earth:” and the believer, though rescued from “the gates of death” and hell, and enabled to bless God for many deliverances, must still encounter troubles and temptations, and mingle prayers with his thanksgivings.—The expression, “the daughter of Zion,” seems to denote the inhabitants of Zion, with all those who came to worship at the sanctuary, (which was placed there when this Psalm was written,) considered as one collective body, the visible church, the type of the true church, which God our Saviour has espoused to himself, and which, in the true mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, shall shew forth all the praises of him, who has lifted her up from the gates of death, and raised her to that glorious felicity. (*Notes, xxii. 22—25. cxviii. 19—24. Is. xii. 4—6. Heb. xii. 22—25. Rev. xiv. 1—5.*)—The contrast between “the gates of death,” and “the gates of the daughter of Zion,” is remarkable. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*I will rejoice, &c.* (14) *Notes, xiii. 5, 6. 1 Sam. ii. 1. Hab. iii. 17—19. Luke i. 46—55.*)

V. 15, 16. The several nations, who had engaged in war against David, had only brought destruction on themselves, by all their combinations and stratagems; and given JEHOVAH the occasion of manifesting his power and justice, in the judgments which he executed upon them.—To this reflection the Psalmist adds, “Higgsaion Selah;” a thing to be meditated on with the greatest attention: (*‘res meditanda summè,’ Junius;*) probably, this is the true meaning of the two words thus connected. (*Marg.*) The example was very instructive, and ought to be deeply considered by the enemies of God for their warning, and by his servants for their encouragement in seasons of trouble and danger.

^p Prov. xiv. 32. 17 ^p The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that ^a forget God.

^q xlv. 17. 20. 1. 18 For ^r the needy shall not alway be forgotten: ^s the expectation of the poor shall *not* perish for ever.

^r 12. xii. 5. lxxii. 4. 12—14. cii. 17. 20. cix. 31. Luke i. ^s Prov. xxiii. 18. xxiv. 14. Phil. i. 20.

19 ^t Arise, O LORD; ^u let not man prevail: ^v let the heathen be judged in thy sight.

20 ^w Put them in fear, O LORD; *that* the nations ^x may know themselves *to be but* men. Selah.

^x ii. 1—3. lxxix. ^y lxxvi. 12. ^z lxxxii. 6, 7. Is. xxxi. 3. Ez. xxviii. 2. 9. Acts xii. 22, 23.

V. 17. ‘All wickedness came originally with the wicked one from hell; thither it will be again remitted; and they who hold on its side must accompany it on its return to that place of torment, there to be shut up for ever.’ *Bp. Horne*. This will be the case even with whole nations who forget God, and their obligation to him, and that worship and obedience which they owe him: for this forgetfulness is the effect of ingratitude, contempt, and aversion, it deserves his wrath, and is the source of all other crimes. (*Note, Rom. i. 28—32.*)—The future condemnation of the wicked seems to be intended; for as all men go down to the grave, the word, rendered *hell*, must in this connexion have a more awful meaning. (*Notes, xvi. 8—11. Rev. xx. 11—15.*)

V. 18—20. Many princes have claimed and received divine honours: the arrogant titles of infallibility and of *his holiness*, which one chief antichrist has assumed, are well known: and the proud and impious conduct of multitudes too evidently proves, not only that they forget God, but that they forget themselves to be men; sinful, weak, and dying creatures, who will soon be called to give an account of themselves to God.—David therefore prayed that these haughty enemies of the Lord and his people, might be so terrified, as to recollect their own weakness, and submit to omnipotence. The LXX translate the first clause, “Place a lawgiver over them;” and the original word, by varying a vowel point, means a *Teacher*; and in this sense the prayer is for their instruction and conversion.

Fear. (20) מוֹרָא, pointed as if it were instead of מוֹרָא, from יָרָא *timuit*.—מֹדֵק doctor, part. hiph. from יָדָה: in *hiph.* הִדְקָה *docuit*.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

All our mercies should be acknowledged before God, in fervent praises: the whole glory of every success or deliverance belongs to him; our whole heart should be lifted up in rendering him this tribute; we should delight in shewing forth publicly his marvellous works, to us and to his church; and our joy must not rest in any of the gifts of our God, but ascend to him, and centre in him as our all-sufficient Portion.—The enemies of Christ and of his people for a time may stand their ground, and prevail: but in due season, they will be dismayed, and fall and “perish at his presence.”—He who advanced David, and maintained his righteous cause; who exalted the Saviour “to his own right hand in heavenly places,” in defiance of all his enemies; will shortly bring to an end the wickedness of persecuting tyrants, and cover them with eternal infamy. This almighty Lord will help the Christian also in all his conflicts and temptations, and support and comfort him in all his troubles, till he is finally delivered from the body of sin; and till “Satan is bruised under his feet,” and death itself is “swallowed up in victory.” The eternal God has already prepared his throne for judgment: he will certainly

execute judgment in righteousness and in faithfulness; and then every iniquitous sentence will be reversed, and every oppressor punished.—In the mean while, all “who know his name, will trust in him” for temporal protection and eternal salvation; and their experience will daily increase their knowledge and confirm their faith: for the Lord never did, and never will, forsake or reject any, who seek his favour according to his word. He is “in Christ reconciling the world unto himself;” he may be found on a mercy-seat: let saints then sing praises to him, and call upon sinners to come and trust in him. The blood of many martyrs has been shed, and their persecutors have supposed that no inquisition would be made for it: but from time to time the Lord anticipates that day, when “the earth shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.” He is ever mindful of the cry of the humble. His consolations more than counterbalance outward afflictions, and if any are cut off by martyrdom, their souls are forwarded to heaven. There the church is triumphant; here it must be militant.—Satan, who hates us, will stir up opposition and excite our depravity by his suggestions: but the Lord, who has lifted us up from the gates of death and hell, considers all our conflicts and temptations; he will give us merciful deliverances on earth, that we may praise him with his people; and in a little time will completely rescue our souls; that, in his temple above, we may rejoice in his salvation and triumph in his praise. Then the wicked of every description will sink into the pit of destruction: their own crimes will fall upon them, and they will be caught in their own snare: then especially will the power and justice of God be made known to all the world, by “the judgments that he execute;” and even whole nations of those, who forgot and despised him, shall be turned into hell, and for ever shut up in that region of darkness and despair.—Many of his people are here permitted to be poor and afflicted, and seem to be forgotten; and they are all “poor in spirit,” and have nothing to trust to but his mercy and grace. But they shall not always be forgotten: their expectation of help and salvation from God shall not perish in disappointment for ever.—Often it has seemed, as if man would prevail against the cause of God; but the church has prayed, her Advocate has pleaded, and the arm of the Lord has been extended; some of her enemies have been judged and have perished; many have been intimidated, and others humbled in cordial submission; so that the cause of God yet maintains its ground. Still we have abundant reason to unite in prayer, and to say, ‘Arise, O Lord, let not Satan or man prevail to confine thy church within such narrow limits, to corrupt it by so many heresies and scandals, or to distract it with so many divisions and disputes: put those in fear and to shame, who arrogate more to themselves, than can belong to fallible, sin-

PSALM X.

PSALM X.
The Psalmist complains that the Lord hid his face, amidst the outrages of wicked persecutors, 1—11. He prays for redress, and professes his confidence in God, 12—18.

WHY ^a standest thou afar off, O LORD? ^b why ^b hidest thou *thyself* in times of trouble?

2 *The wicked ^c in *his* pride doth persecute the poor: ^d let them be taken in the devices that they have imagined.

3 For the wicked ^e boasteth of his ^f heart's desire, ^g and ^h blesseth the covetous ⁱ whom the LORD ^j abhorreth.

4 The wicked, through ^k the pride of his countenance, ^l will not seek *after God*: ^m God is not in all his ⁿ thoughts.

5 ^o His ways are always grievous; ^p thy judgments *are* far above out of ^q thy sight: ^r as for all his enemies, ^s he puffeth at them.

his sight: *as for* all his enemies, ^s he puffeth at them.

6 He hath ^t said in his heart, ^u I shall not be moved: for *I shall* ^v never *be* in adversity.

7 His mouth is ^w full of cursing, ^x and ^y deceit, and fraud: ^z under his tongue is ^{aa} mischief ^{ab} and ^{ac} vanity.

8 He sitteth in ^{ad} the lurking places of the villages: in the secret places doth he murder the innocent: ^{ae} his eyes ^{af} are privily set against the poor.

9 ^{ag} He lieth in wait ^{ah} secretly as a lion in his den: he lieth in wait ^{ai} to catch the poor, he doth catch ^{aj} the poor, when he draweth him into his net.

10 He ^{ak} croucheth, ^{al} and ^{am} humbleth himself, that the poor may fall ^{an} by his strong ones.

11 He hath ^{ao} said in his heart, ^{ap} God hath forgotten: he hideth his face, he will never see *it*.

ful, mortal man; humble and convert every opposer, and destroy every system of superstition and delusion; that all the inhabitants of the earth may know themselves to be lost, sinful men; that they may gladly welcome the Saviour, and become his willing subjects. Higgaion. Selah. Amen.

NOTES.

PSALM X. V. 1. David's name is not prefixed to this Psalm; yet it is probable that it was composed by him, with reference to the persecution, which he and the church of God suffered during the reign of Saul: but it is applicable to similar cases in every age. While the trial continues, and comfort and deliverance are withheld, the Lord seems to "hide himself," or to "stand at a distance," as if regardless of the event: (Notes, xiii. 1—4. xxii. 1:) but he only waits to be called upon by importunate prayer to come and deliver his people.

V. 2—11. Several of the psalms seem intentionally to have been written in general terms, that they might serve to direct the devotions of the church in persecution, and those of every believer in his personal troubles and afflictions.—Pride and ambition caused Saul to envy and hate David, as one who had eclipsed his glory, and who was appointed by God to the kingdom, as "the man after his own heart;" and therefore he persecuted him. (Notes, 1 Sam. xviii. 6—11. xx. 31.)—The Jewish priests, scribes, and rulers hated Christ and his apostles, because their ignorance and hypocrisy were exposed, and their authority endangered, by his clear and convincing instructions, his answers to their objections, and his holy example: and the

same general principle has made way for the persecution of the humble and zealous servants of God in all ages. But the Psalmist predicted, (for the original is in the future tense, "They shall be taken, &c.;") that his enemies would ruin themselves, instead of him.—Saul at length avowed and boasted of his desire of murdering David, which at first he concealed: and he "blessed the covetous," who courted favour by betraying him. But God abhorred such men; as indeed they resembled Judas who sold his Lord.—Saul, with evident haughtiness, refused to submit to the decree of God made known by Samuel, or to seek his favour; and in his subsequent conduct, he acted as an infidel or an atheist. He became grievously cruel and oppressive in his government, especially when he murdered the priests. (Notes, 1 Sam. xxii. 14—19.) God's judgments were out of his sight: he believed nothing about them; and, growing more presumptuous by impunity, he scorned all those as enemies, who opposed his rage. His conversation became a mixture of profaneness, perjury, violent imprecations, and deceit; and he was continually avowing his base and mischievous purposes. (Notes, 1 Sam. xx. 30—33.) Personally, and by his agents, he watched for David in every place where he was likely to surprise him; being bent on murdering a poor fugitive who had never injured him, as much as a hungry lion is of seizing his prey. Nay, he even seemed to pay court, and humble himself, to David and others, as well as to stoop to the meanest practices, that he might get him within his reach, and murder him by one of his captains. This deliberate plan of virulent opposition to one whom God had

g iii. 7. vii. 6. ix. 19.

h xiv. 2. Is. xxvi. 11. xxxiii. 10.

i ix. 12. xiii. 1. xlv. 24. lxxiv. 19. lxxvii. 9.

* Or, afflicted.

k lxxiv. 10. 18.

Num. xi. 20. 1

2 Sam. xii. 9, 10.

Luke x. 16.

1 Thes. iv. 8.

1 Gen. ix. 5. xlii.

22. 2 Chr. xxiv.

22. Luke xi. 50,

51.

m xxxv. 22. Prov.

xv. 3. Jer. xvi.

17. xxiii. 24.

Heb. iv. 13.

n Hab. i. 13.

o Judg. i. 7.

2 Kings ix. 26.

2 Chr. vi. 23.

† Heb. *teareth*.

xiv. 3.

12 ^g Arise, O LORD: O God, ^h lift up thine hand; ⁱ forget not the ^k humble.

13 Wherefore doth the wicked ^k condemn God? he hath said in his heart, ^l Thou wilt not require it.

14 ^m Thou hast seen it; for ⁿ thou beholdest mischief and spite, ^o to requite it with thy hand: ^p the poor ^q committeth himself unto thee: thou art ^r the helper of the fatherless.

15 ^s Break thou the arm of the wicked

ed and the evil man: ^t seek out his wickedness *till* thou find none.

ed and the evil man: ^t seek out his wickedness *till* thou find none.

16 ^u The LORD is King for ever and ever: ^v the heathen are perished out of his land.

17 LORD, ^w thou hast heard the desire of ^x the humble: ^y thou wilt ^z prepare their heart, ^a thou wilt cause thine ear to hear:

18 ^b To judge the fatherless and the oppressed, that ^c the man of the earth may no more ^d oppress.

a 1 Chr. xxix. 18. 2 Chr. xxix. 36. xxx. 12. Prov. xvi. 1. Rom. viii. 26. Jam. i. 16, 17. b cii. 17. Is. lxxv. 24. Acts iv. 24—31. xii. 5, &c. 1 Pet. iii. 12. c 14. lxxvii. 4. xciv. 1—6. Luke xviii. 7, 8. d xvii. 14. Luke xvi. 25. 1 Cor. xv. 47, 48. Phil. iii. 18, 19. e Or, terrify.

expressly marked out as the object of his special favour, could be the result of nothing but contempt of God, and practical atheism. (Notes, xxxvi. 1—4.)

Whom the Lord abhorreth. (3) *הַיִּיטֵן*. He contemneth, or provoketh the LORD. (13. Heb.) *Παρωξύνει* τον Κυριον. Sept. And thus also in the 13th verse.—*פָּהֵל*, in *pihel*, generally means, to provoke, or greatly to despise.—The clause may either mean, “the Lord abhorreth, or despiseth, the covetous man;” or, “the covetous man despiseth, or provoketh, the Lord.” (Zech. xi. 8.)

V. 12, 13. The honour of God required, that such impious persons, who despised him and defied his wrath, should be openly rebuked; and his oppressed servants, who entrusted their cause with him, as openly delivered. (Marg. Ref.)—“What is it, but thy long-suffering, ... that makes the wicked thus insolently despise thee? He concludes, ‘thou wilt never punish him, because thou art so patient with him.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 14, 15. Though the Lord did not immediately appear to punish the persecutors, the Psalmist was fully assured, that he observed with strict attention all their mischief and malice; and would by his power openly requite his enemies. In confidence of this, his poor and persecuted servants “left themselves” in his hands, as destitute orphans who had no other helper, but who were assured of his compassionate protection. They also prayed against their oppressor, that God would “break his arm,” (or deprive him of power,) and search out, in order to terminate, his wickedness, that none of it might remain. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, lviii. 6—9. Ez. xxx. 20—26. Zech. xi. 15—17.)

V. 16. The Canaanites had been destroyed out of the land by the power of JEHOVAH, the eternal King of Israel; and Saul and his adherents were in reality no less heathens than they: David, therefore, in faith expected their extirpation from among the people of God. (Note, Rev. xi. 1, 2.) The original words, (*עוֹלָם וָעֶד*) rendered “for ever and ever,” appear always strictly to denote eternity.

V. 17, 18. The encouragement to be derived from the readiness, which God had ever shewn, to answer the prayers of the humble; the reason of this condescension to them in particular, because their prayers sprang from hearts prepared by his special grace; (Notes, Rom. viii. 24—27. Jam. v. 16—18. Jude 20, 21;) the pleasure, so to speak, which he took in listening to them; and the deliverance in consequence granted to his church by crush-

ing worldly oppressors; are circumstances replete with instruction and encouragement.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As every believer, and the whole church, in conformity to Christ, must have seasons of trial and humiliation, the tempter and his party for a time succeed; (Note, Gen. iii. 14, 15;) and the Lord will sometimes seem to stand at a distance when his help is most wanted. But this will lead the believer to humble faith and prayer, and conduce to his good; and he should remember that even the Saviour once exclaimed, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Notes, Matt. xxvii. 46. 50.) For it is far better to be a tempted, persecuted, and deserted saint, than a prosperous persecutor.—It is a sad mark of a reprobate mind, when men glory in those desires, principles, and practices, which are really shameful. (Note, Phil. iii. 17—19.)—Nothing is more hateful to God, more contrary to true religion, or more prolific of other crimes, than covetousness. Yet many who are severe against sins of inferior malignity, favour and speak well of the covetous; too often, it is to be feared, from covetousness in themselves. But persecutors are most liable to this; for the tools which they employ, are generally those who sell their souls, and would, if they had the opportunity, sell Christ himself, “for filthy lucre’s sake.” (Notes, Matt. xxvi. 14—16. 57—62. Acts vi. 9—14. 1 Tim. vi. 6—10.)—Pride, however, is especially the image of Satan and the root of apostasy; and where it greatly prevails, it will appear even in a man’s looks. The proud man scorns dependence, or subjection to any Lord; he feels no want of a Teacher, a Priest, or a Saviour; he excuses or vindicates his transgressions of God’s law; he abhors the humbling truths of his gospel; and he is more disposed to rival God, or rob him of his glory, than to render him the worship and obedience which he demands. (Note, 2 Thes. ii. 3, 4.) He therefore banishes from his mind all thoughts of him, as much as he can. From such ungodliness, iniquity and fraud must spring of course; except as restrained by the fear of man or by contrary lusts. And when a person of this character obtains power and authority, he is formed for a tyrant and a persecutor. The judgments of God are not feared or thought of; human opposition is disdained and derided. Grievous oppressions conducted with perjuries, deceit, lies, and all kind of abominable words and

PSALM XI.

David, when advised to flee from his enemies, professes confidence in God, 1—3. He shews the Lord's abhorrence of the wicked, and his care of the righteous, 4—7.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm of David.*

IN the LORD put I my trust; ^b how say ye to my soul, ^c Flee, as a bird to your mountain?

2 For, lo, ^d the wicked bend *their* bow, they ^e make ready their arrow upon the string, ^f that they may ^g privately shoot at ^h the upright in heart.

3 If ^h the foundations be destroyed, ⁱ what can the righteous do?

4 ^k The LORD is in his holy temple, ^l the LORD's throne is in heaven: ^m his eyes behold, his eye-lids try, the children of men.

5 The LORD ⁿ trieth the righteous: but ^o the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth.

6 ^p Upon the wicked he shall rain ^q snares, fire and brimstone, and ^r an

† Or, a burning tempest.

h lxxv. 3. lxxxii. 5. Is. lvi. 12. 2 Tim. ii. 19. i 1 Kings xix. 13 —18. xxii. 12—14. 2 Chr. xxxii. 13—15. Neh. vi. 10—12. Jer. xxvi. 11—15. Dan. iii. 15—18. vi. 10. &c. John xi. 8—10. Acts iv. 5—12. 24 —33. k ix. 11. xviii. 6. Ex. xl. 34, 35. l 1 Chr. xvii. 5. Hab. ii. 20. Zech. ii. 13. 2 Thes. ii. 4. m ii. 4. ciii. 19. Is. lvi. 1. Matt. v. 34. xxiii. 21, 22. n vii. 9. xvii. 3. xxvi. 1. Pet. i. 12. o v. 4, 5. x. 3. xxi. 8. Prov. vi. 16—19. Jer. xii. 8. Zech. xi. 8. p cv. 32. Gen. xix. 24. Ex. ix. 23, 24. Job xviii. 15. xx. 23. Is. xxiv. 17, 18. Ez. xiii. 13. xxxviii. 22. Luke xvii. 29. q Or, quick burning coals. xviii. 12, 13.

actions, may be expected, as circumstances arise and occasion requires. (Notes, 2 Thes. ii. 8—12. 2 Pet. ii. 15—19. Jude 11—13.) From this source, no doubt, originates a great part of that enmity and contempt, which infidels express against the inoffensive disciples of Christ. Full of self-conceit, they affect to be thought wiser, and are ambitious of being greater, than other men. They consider Christianity and its zealous friends as standing in their way; and in opposing them, they bring ruin on themselves.—Alas, how many in all ages have answered this character! and more have shewn the disposition, who could not or dared not indulge it. Indeed, all our deliberate sins spring from unbelief, forgetfulness, or contempt of God; and our hearts are prone to atheism itself. But the Lord beholds, and will requite, the spite and malice of his enemies, and all those crimes, which elude or out-brave human justice: he will judge in behalf of the fatherless and oppressed, against the worldly oppressor. Let then the poor, afflicted, persecuted, or tempted believer recollect, that Satan is, by usurpation and human choice, the prince of this world, and the father of all wicked men: and the children of God cannot reasonably expect much kindness, truth, or justice, from such persons as formerly “crucified the Lord of glory.” But this once-suffering Jesus, now reigns as King over all the earth, for the benefit of his church; and of his dominion there shall be no end. Let us then commit ourselves unto him. Let us humbly trust in his mercy, and beg of him to prepare our hearts for himself; for the desires which he imparts, he will regard and answer. He will rescue the believer from every temptation, and break the arm of every oppressor, and “bruise Satan under our feet shortly.” When that enemy shall be chained, and cast into the bottomless pit, every antichrist shall be destroyed, oppression and persecution shall cease, and the nations shall learn war no more; for they shall become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus, the Prince of peace. But from heaven alone will all sin and temptation be excluded: no Canaanite shall find entrance there; no lust shall then remain in the heart of any inhabitant; no imperfection will be known; but all shall be complete in love, purity, and joy.

NOTES.

PSALM XI. V. 1—3. It is probable, that this psalm

was composed, when David first began to be in danger from the envy and malice of Saul; and that after David came to the throne, it was given to the chief musician for the service of the sanctuary.—Many suppose these verses to be the language of *enemies*, who wanted to discourage David's hope in God: but, as the unprincipled wickedness of his persecutors is fairly allowed, it is far more likely that they contain the *prudent* advice of his timid friends; who advised him, and his small party, to flee from court to *their* mountain, (the pronoun is plural,) to some place of safety pointed out to them, as the bird escapes from the fowler. They represented, that malice and treachery were combined against him; and that he would soon be slain, as by an arrow shot in the *dark*, from an unknown hand; that all foundations of religion and justice were subverted; that the most upright conduct would rather endanger him, than do him any service; and that there was no good to be done by the most righteous persons in such circumstances: or, “The righteous man, what is he doing,” who expects safety in such a dangerous situation? But David considered the service of Saul and of Israel, as his post of duty; and, trusting in the Lord, he would not at present listen to any exhortations to desert it. (Notes, 1 Sam. xxii. 5. xxvii. 1, 2.)

V. 4, 5. In the subsequent part of the psalm, David shews the reasons of his confidence. JEHOVAH, as dwelling in his sanctuary, and manifesting his glory from the mercy-seat, was the God of Israel, the reconciled Friend of his people: but his throne was fixed in heaven, far above the power and machinations of all earthly potentates. (Notes, cxv. 3—7. 1 Kings viii. 27. Is. lvi. 1, 2.)—His omniscience, perfectly viewing the character of every man, and his impartial justice, concurred in detecting and punishing wicked persecutors and oppressors, who were the objects of his holy and most decided detestation: and though he tried and proved the righteous by sharp afflictions, yet the event would certainly be favourable to them. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 6. The language of this verse is evidently taken from the awful judgment of God on Sodom and Gomorrah, which were destroyed by fire and brimstone from heaven. (Notes, Gen. xix. 24, 25. Deut. xxix. 19—25.) Thus at last the wicked, *ensnared* in their own counsels, and driven away by the wrath of God as a tremendous tempest, will

q xvi. 5. Gen. horrible tempest: *this shall be* ^a the
xliij. 34. 1 Sam. portion of ^r their cup.
ix. 23. Job xx.

14. 23. Job xx.
23. xxvii. 13.
&c.
1. xxv. 8. Is. li. 17.
22. Jer. xxv. 15
—17. Hab. ii.
16. John xviii.

PSALM XII.

David, lamenting the decay of godliness, and the prevalency of deceit, craves help from God, 1, 2. He predicts the destruction of flatterers, proud boasters, and oppressors, 3—5. He comforts himself in assurance of divine protection, grounded on the faithful promises of God, notwithstanding the triumph of the wicked, 6—8.

• Or, *The eighth.* To the chief Musician upon * Shemi-
vi. title. 1 Chr.
xv. 21. nith, A Psalm of David.

HELP, LORD; for ^a the godly man +
ceaseth; for ^b the faithful fail from
among the children of men. a

2 ° They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: *with* ^d flattering lips, *and* with ^e a double heart do they speak.

3 The LORD shall * cut off all flattering lips, *and* ^f the tongue that speaketh ^h proud things:

4 Who have said, ^g With our tongue
will we prevail; our lips *are* ^h our own:
^h who is lord over us?

marg. Jam. i. 8. e Job xxxii. 22. f xvii. 10. lxxiii. 8, 9. Ex. xv. 9.
 l Sam. ii. 3. xvii. 43, 44. 2 Kings xix. 23, 24. Is. x. 10. Ez. xxviii. 2, 9. xxix. 3. Dan.
 iv. 30, 31. vii. 8, 25. Mal. iii. 13. 2 Pet. ii. 18. Jude 16. Rev. xii. 5. || Heb.
great. iii. 21. Prov. xviii. 21. g Jer. xviii. 18. Jam. iii. 5, 6. || Heb.
with us. h Gen. iii. 5. Ex. v. 2. Job xxi. 14, 15. Jer. ii. 31. xlv. 16, 17. Dan.
 iii. 15. xi. 36. 2 Thes. ii. 4.

receive their portion in "the lake which burneth with fire
"and brimstone." This is the cup of vengeance which
will be given them to drink, seeing they have rejected
"the cup of salvation."—*Snares.*] Or, "burning-coals."
Marg.

Marg.

V. 7. 'He who is in himself essential righteousness, cannot but love his own resemblance, wrought in the faithful by his good Spirit: with a countenance full of paternal affection, he beholds and speaks peace and comfort to them, in the midst of their sorrows; until admitted, through mercy, to that glory, from which justice excludes the wicked, and beholding that countenance which has always beheld them, they shall enter on a life of boundless and everlasting felicity.' *Bp. Horne. (Notes, Rev. xxi. 22—27. xxii. 1—5.)*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The servant of God should abide in his place and at his work, though it expose him to many dangers and difficulties : and the honour of God, the interests of his people, and regard to consistency of character, require eminent persons to expose themselves more, in times of persecution, than their inferiors are called to do. (*Notes, Neh. vi. 10—14. Dan. vi. 10, 11. Acts viii. 1.*) But the believer, though not terrified by the power and rage of his enemies, will frequently be tempted to desert his post, or to neglect his work, by the fears of his friends. They will clearly see his danger ; but, through want or weakness of faith, they will not perceive his security ; and they will often give him counsel, which savours of worldly policy, rather than of heavenly wisdom. But such dangerous temptations must be rejected with firmness and decision. (*Note, Matt. xvi. 21—23.*) Let it not be thought, that, in times of prevailing iniquity, when all regard to the laws of God and man is discarded, the righteous can do no good. ‘ All is not over, while there is a man left to re-
‘ prove error, and bear testimony to the truth ; and a man,
‘ who does it with becoming spirit, may stop a prince, or
‘ senate, when in full career, and recover the day.’—‘ No
‘ place on earth is out of the reach of care and trouble.
‘ Temptations are every where ; and so is the grace of God.’
Bp. Horne.—The upright and zealous servants of God are

indeed peculiarly exposed to the malice of wicked persecutors, who commonly have power on their side; but let us not forget the almighty God. Upon his mercy-seat he hears the prayers, and defends the cause, of his people; but into that holy temple the daring sinner has no access. On his exalted throne he rules over all the kings of the earth; he notices all the devices of his enemies, and the perils of his friends: he will permit the persecutor to proceed just as far as is requisite, to prove and increase the faith and holiness of his servants. (*Notes*, lxvi. 8—10. lxxvi. 10. cxxv. 3.) But he abhors those, who delight in cruelty and violence, and will shortly assign them their horrible portion in the pit of destruction. He loves his own image in his people; he beholds them with complacency and paternal care; he protects their lives till their work be done, and then receives them to his heavenly kingdom. And what has he to fear, who has a righteous cause, a rejoicing conscience, an almighty Friend, and a faithful promise on his side? (*Notes*, 2 Sam. xxii. 29—33.)

NOTES.

PSALM XII. V. 1—4. This psalm may be supposed to have been written towards the end of Saul's reign; when his impiety and abuse of authority, had given such a sanction to vice and ungodliness, that not only piety, but truth and honesty, seemed about to expire; while every kind of wickedness was practised without fear or shame.—Dissimulation, flattery, profane and arrogant boastings, treachery, and calumny, were the general recommendations of the superior people in Israel, to the favour of their king and his courtiers; and the infection spread rapidly among all orders of men. Forgetful of God, to whom they were indebted for the gift of speech, and for what purpose it was given, and of their accountableness to him, they considered their tongues as their own, to be employed as they pleased; and they thought to carry all before them, by their wit, eloquence, flatteries, or calumnies. But in fact they were only exposing themselves to the judgments of God, against flatterers and proud boasters. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Is.* lix. 3—8. *Jer.* ix. 3—6. *Rom.* iii. 9—18. *Jam.* iii. 3—12.)

ⁱ x. 12. lxxiv. 21, 22. lxxix. 10, 11. cxlvi. 7, 8. Ex. ii 23, 24. iii. 7—9. Judg. x. 16. Prov. xiv. 31. xxii. 22, 23. Ec. iv. 1. v. 8. Is. xix. 20. Ez. xviii. 12, 13. 18. Jam. v. 4. k Is. xxxiii. 10. Mic. vii. 8, 9. * Or, would ensnare him. x. 5. Job v. 15. 21. l xviii. 30. xix. 8. cxix. 140. Prov. xxx. 5. m lxvi. 10. n xvi. 1. xxxvii. 28. 40. cxii. 8. cxlv. 20. Deut. xxxiii. 3. l Sam. ii. 9. Is. xxvii. 3. l Pet. i. 5. Jude q 1. † Heb. him, that is, every one of them. o x. 18. Matt. iii. 7. p Prov. xxix. 12. Hos. v. 11. Mic. vi. 16. q Judg. ix. 18, &c. l Sam. xviii. 17, 18. Esth. iii. 6, &c. Is. xxxii. 4—6. Mark xiv. 63—65. ‡ Heb. vilest of the sons of men. Job xxx. 8. Dan. xi. 21.

5 ¹For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, ^k now will I arise, saith the LORD; I will set him in safety from him that ^{*}puffeth at him.

6 ¹The words of the LORD are pure words; ^m as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.

7 Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, ⁿ thou shalt preserve [†] them from ^o this generation for ever.

8 ^p The wicked walk on every side, when the ^q vilest men are exalted.

V. 5, 6. For the comfort of the remnant of poor and persecuted believers, David addressed them in his prophetic character. The Lord assured them, that he noticed their oppressions, and regarded their sighs and sorrows; and that he was about to arise in order to punish their enemies, and to set them in safety from the power, and the cruel sarcasms and menaces, to which they were exposed. He also reminded them, that they might confidently depend on this assurance; for the words of God formed a perfect contrast to the deceitful and iniquitous speeches of their neighbours. His testimonies and promises had often been tried by his servants, during the sharpest distresses, and had always been found sincere and faithful; and every one of his words was holy, just, good, and inestimably precious: they were like silver, which has been many times refined, in the most perfect manner, from all remaining alloy.—The death of Saul, the ruin of his party, and the advancement of David to the throne, in a short time after this, formed an exact fulfilment of the prediction.

V. 7. The LXX render this verse as follows, ‘Thou, LORD, wilt guard us, and preserve us from this generation, and for ever.’ Not only from this wicked race, but “from every evil work unto thy heavenly kingdom.” (Note, 2 Tim. iv. 16—18.)

V. 8. When such vile men as Doeg and his party, (the dregs of the human race,) were advanced to great authority; the wicked were emboldened to shew themselves, and encouraged openly to avow their corrupt principles, and practise every kind of iniquity. (Notes, lii. 1 Sam. xxii. 6—19.) But when the power should be put into other hands, they would be driven away, and the righteous would be countenanced: and this would soon take place. (Notes, ci.) “The wicked walk on every side: when they are exalted, it is a shame for the sons of men.” Old Translation.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

To the carnal mind, increasing taxes, the decay of trade, and such like events, characterize bad times; but the decrease of piety, and the prevalence of iniquity, form the worst times, in the judgment of the spiritually-minded.—When pious men are removed by death, and none are raised up in their places; when the authority, influence, and example of the great, embolden men in impiety, and

PSALM XIII.

David mournfully complains, that God delays to comfort and deliver him; and prays for help, that his enemy might not insult over him, 1—4. Trusting in the mercy of God, he expects to rejoice, and to sing his praises, 5, 6.

To the ^{*}chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

^a HOW long wilt thou ^b forget me, O LORD? for ever? ^c how long wilt thou hide thy face from me: 2 How long shall I ^d take counsel in my soul, having ^e sorrow in my heart

* Or, overseer. a vi. 3. xxxv. 17 lxxiv. 1. lxxx. 4 lxxxv. 5. lxxxix. 46. xc. 14. xciv. 3, 4. b x. 12. Lam v. 20. c xxii. 1, 2. xlii. 23, 24. lxxxviii. 14. Deut. xxxi. 17. Job xiii. 24. Is. lix. 2. d lxxvii. 2—12. xciv. 18, 19. cxlii. 4—7. Job vii. 12—15. ix. 19—21. 27, 28. x. 15. xxiii. 8—10. Jer. xv. 18. e xxxviii. 17. cxvi. 3. Neh. ii. 2. Prov. xv. 13. Ec. v. 17. Jer. viii. 18. xlv. 3. Matt. xxvi. 38. John xvi. 6. Rom. ix. 2. Phil. ii. 27.

discourage the profession of godliness, and the labours of faithful ministers; when apostasies, superstitions, and damnable heresies corrupt the church, or when persecutions waste it, and when infidels and profligates triumph; then the believer thinks the times very bad, however otherwise peaceful and prosperous. But by these very things he will be excited to call upon God, who can and will deliver, when human help is vain.—Honesty and sincerity will not long survive piety in any place: they who cast off all regard to God, will dissemble and flatter to serve their own interests with man: and reciprocally, daring iniquity will increase impiety; till men speak and act, as if they had made themselves, could take care of themselves, and need please none but themselves. But he who made man’s mouth, will call him to an account for all his proud, dissembling, profane, and even useless words: (Note, Matt. xii. 33—37 :) and he who made our souls and bodies, is Proprietor of them, and demands the use of them. He will cut off the flatterer as well as the slanderer, and the proud infidel as well as the covetous oppressor. He waits, till his people are sufficiently tried, and till his enemies have filled up their measure: but he hears the sighs and prayers of his afflicted people; and he will defend their cause, and deliver them from the generation of the wicked, and from the wicked one, and that for ever. He will also rise to revive his church from the ruins, with greater glory: he hath promised, and his word is more pure and precious than the finest silver. Let us rest upon it, and comfort our souls with it; though we cannot but grieve to see the degeneracy of the times, and the abounding of iniquity and infidelity. And even should we witness the advancement of the vilest of men to the highest dignities in church and state, and the consequent triumphs of error and wickedness over the cause of truth and holiness; still let us wait and pray: the Lord will yet make his cause triumphant; and the prayers of the remnant of his people are an appointed means of ushering in those better and more glorious days, which cannot now be very far distant.

NOTES.

PSALM XIII. V. 1—4. ‘David was in some great distress, when he indited this psalm, either by the persecution of Saul, or of Absalom. Theodoret thinks the latter; and gives this reason for it: That the trouble which Saul

daily? how long shall 'mine enemy
be exalted over me?

3 ^h Consider *and* hear me, O LORD
my God: 'lighten mine eyes, ^k lest I
sleep the *sleep of death*;

4 ^l Lest mine enemy say, ^m I have
prevailed against him; *and* those that
trouble me rejoice ⁿ when I am moved.

5 But ^o I have trusted in thy mercy;

6 ^p my heart shall rejoice in thy salva-
tion.

6 ^q I will sing unto the LORD, be-
cause ^r he hath dealt bountifully with
me.

PSALM XIV.

David describes the universal depravity of mankind,
and the enmity of the wicked against the people of
God, 1—6. He longs and prays for the salvation of
Israel, 7.

from the painful conflict; they may then be led to suspect, that their past experience was a delusion, and to fear that the Lord intends to cast them off for ever. At such times their fervent expostulations with God will very frequently be tinged with unbelieving fears. They cannot bear, that their Beloved should seem to forget them; they are tormented at the thought of final separation from him; they are wretched under the suspension of his comforts; and they cannot but anxiously enquire, "how 'long" this painful trial is to last, and whether it must be *for ever*. They inwardly take counsel about ascertaining the state of their souls, discovering the cause of their troubles, or devising how to obtain deliverance; but all seems in vain: every day appears an age, while continual sorrow oppresses their hearts; and they are ready to trouble themselves with the idea, how Satan and their other enemies are triumphing in their fallen state. All this however is intended for their humiliation; that they may search out and repent of their sins, renounce every false confidence and worldly idol, and be made more fervent in prayer. They will not then say, "There is no hope:" but after his example, who "being in an agony prayed more earnestly," they will call upon God to consider their trouble, and to lighten their eyes; to confirm their hope, direct their path, and renew their comforts; that they may not lie down in darkness and despair. They will plead with him the triumphs of the ungodly and of Satan, if they should be left under the power of sin, in despondency, or to perish; and surely it cannot be for his glory, that his worshippers should be insulted over by his enemies! In this way, they will pour out their prayers, renouncing all confidence, save in the mercy of their God through the Saviour's blood: and at some times suddenly, at others gradually, they will find their burdens removed, and their comforts restored. Believing, they then rejoice in his salvation, and their doleful complaints are changed for songs of praise and thanksgiving. (Notes, Is. xii.)—But, even though long delays take place, they who trust in the Lord's mercy, shall at length rejoice in his salvation; they shall allow that their fears and complaints were unnecessary; and shall joyfully and gratefully acknowledge, that "he hath dealt bountifully with them." (P. O. Job ix.) And it may be of use to the tempted and discouraged believer to recollect, that the Saviour, soon after his doleful complaint, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" subjoined, "It is finished;" and, "Father, into thy hand I commend my spirit:" and that the depth of his humiliation immediately preceded the dawn of his glorious exaltation. (Notes, Matt. xxvii. 46, 50. John xix. 28—30.)

'gave him was before his great sin, and so he was full of confidence; but that of Absalom was after it, which 'made him cry out in this doleful manner.' Bp. Patrick.—A concurrence of inward and outward trouble made the Psalmist fear, lest God should have forgotten to be gracious towards him, having cast him out of his presence, to be no more regarded. (Note, lxxvii. 5—12.) But could the Lord really intend thus finally and eternally to reject him, and to hide his face from him? Would he always leave him to perplex himself with vain counsels and contrivances, and to be oppressed with melancholy thoughts, without inward comfort, or outward relief? Would he permit his cruel enemy, who was also an enemy to religion, to insult over him? He could not suppose this would be the case; and he begged that God would think of his heavy sorrows, so as to direct him in his perplexity, by giving him heavenly wisdom; to cheer him with divine consolations; and to relieve his distresses: lest he should die in darkness and despondency, and thus give occasion for exultation to his impious foes.—Whatever enemy the Psalmist especially meant, Satan, our common enemy, was not forgotten.

'How would the powers of darkness boast,
'If but one praying soul were lost!' Watts.

V. 5, 6. David here owns his unworthiness, as well as his misery: but as the salvation of God originated from his rich mercy to sinners; and as he was conscious that his whole dependence was placed on that mercy, and not in any claim he could make on divine justice; he took courage from this consideration, and rising above his distresses, he became confident that he should soon rejoice in God, as delivered and comforted by him; and celebrate, in glad songs of praise, the gracious interposition of the Lord in his behalf.

Hath dealt bountifully. (6) חַנּוּן, 'retribuere, conferre... *bonum vel malum*.' Robertson.—The LXX render it here by εὐεργετῶ, and also in cxvi. 7: and by ἀνταποδιδῶμι, cxix. 17.—The verb is more frequently rendered *reward* or *recompense*, but a gracious recompence is intended, when good received from God is spoken of; and this is "dealing bountifully." (lxii. 12.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The most eminent believers are sometimes left to great discouragement, either for the chastisement of their sins, or the trial of their faith. When former comforts are suspended, and a sense or fear of divine wrath unites with an accusing conscience; or when temptations stir up the corruptions of the heart, and they can find no deliverance

^a lxxiii. 3. xcii. 6.
cvii. 17. 1 Sam.
xxv. 25. Prov.
i. 7. 22. xiii. 19.
xxvii. 22. Luke
xii. 20.

^b x. 4. marg. lii.
1—6. Job xxii.
13. Rom. i. 28.
Eph. ii. 12.

^c xxxvi. 1—4.
lxxiii. 8. 9. 11.
12. xciv. 4—8.
Gen. vi. 5. 12.

^d Job xv. 16. Matt.
xii. 34. xv. 19.
John iii. 19. 20.
Rom. i. 21. &c.
Tit. i. 16. iii. 3.

^e 1 Pet. iv. 3. Rev.
xxi. 8.
Rom. iii. 10—12.
Eph. ii. 1—3.

^f xxxiii. 13. 14. cii.
19. 20. Gen. vi.
12. xi. 5. xviii.
21. Is. lxiii. 15.

^g lxxii. 5. cvii. 43.
Prov. ii. 9. viii. 5. ix. 4. 16. Is. xxvii. 11. Jer. iv. 22.
Dan. xii. 10. Matt. xiii. 15. Rom. iii. 11. h lxix. 32. lxxxiii. 16. 2 Chr. xix. 3.

ⁱ cxix. 176. Ec. vii. 29. Is. liii. 6. lix. 7.
8. 13—15. Jer. ii. 13. Rom. iii. 12. 23. Eph. ii. 3. 2 Pet. ii. 13—15. * Heb.
stinking. xxxviii. 5. Job xv. 16. Is. lxiv. 6. Ez. xxxvi. 25. 2 Cor. vii. 1. k 1. Ex.
viii. 31. xii. 30. Deut. i. 35. Job xiv. 4. Rom. iii. 10. 1 Cor. vi. 5.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David.

THE ^a fool hath said in his heart, *There is* ^b no God. ^c They are corrupt, they have done ^d abominable works, ^e *there is* none that doeth good.

² ^f The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were ^g any that did understand, *and* ^h seek God.

³ They are ⁱ all gone aside; they are *all* together become ^j filthy: ^k *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

NOTES.

PSALM XIV. V. 1. This psalm is thought to have been written on occasion of Absalom's rebellion, and the people's defection from their aged and pious king; and the mention of Zion, as the place whence salvation was to come (71), shews that it was composed some time after David came to the kingdom over all Israel. From the degeneracy of Israel shewn in that instance, the Psalmist takes occasion to lament the entire depravity of human nature: and the psalm is almost entirely the same as the fifty-third.—The word *fool* (חָסִיד) in scripture, denotes one who not only is destitute of true wisdom, but who hates it; the openly ungodly and wicked man. (*Marg. Ref. a.*) Persons of this description, "like not to retain God in their knowledge," and therefore "say in their hearts, No God." Averse from obedience and submission to the authority of any superior, and even from the thoughts of an omnipotent ever-present, heart-searching, and righteous Governor and Judge; and disliking his spiritual worship and holy law; they secretly wish that there were no God; they try to hope there is none; they seek for arguments and objections against his existence, perfections, or authority; they try to believe what they wish to be true, and by the aid of Satan, through the just judgment of God, they in a measure succeed. In order, however, to exclude troublesome misgivings, and to strengthen their cause, they propagate these absurdities, and endeavour to make proselytes.—This is the real history of the rise and progress of atheism, that deepest stigma of human nature. Man, having done abominable works, being conscious of guilt, and bent on further transgression, expects nothing but wrath from God, and so runs into atheism for a shelter from terror and alarm: unless idolatry, or some species of false religion, can be rendered equally efficacious in quieting the conscience, and giving encouragement in sin. And, as speculative atheism is the offspring of a depraved heart and vicious life, it also tends to the increase of wickedness: thus the fatal infection spreads, and produces general degeneracy and profligacy. (*Note, Rom. i. 28—32.*)

V. 2, 3. Upon the strictest scrutiny, the all-seeing Judge could not find one of the children of men, who un-

⁴ ^l Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who ^m eat up my people *as* they eat bread, ⁿ and call not upon the LORD.

⁵ There [†] were they in great fear: for ^o God *is* in ^p the generation of the righteous.

⁶ ^q Ye have shamed the counsel of the poor, because ^r the LORD *is* his refuge.

⁷ ^s Oh, that ^t the salvation of Israel *were* come out of Zion! When the LORD ^u bringeth back the captivity of his people, ^v Jacob shall rejoice, *and* Israel shall be glad.

Neh. iv. 2—4. Is. xxxvii. 10, 11. Ez. xxxv. 10. Dan. iii. 15. Matt. xxvii. 40—43. r ix. 9. cxlii. 4, 5. Heb. vi. 18. † Heb. *Who will give, &c.* liii. 6. cvi. 47. 1 Chr. xvi. 35. s xxv. 22. li. 18. Is. xiv. 32. xlv. 17. xvi. 13. lix. 20. lxii. 11. Zech. ix. 9. Luke ii. 10, 11. Rom. xi. 26. t cxvii. 1, 2, 4. Job xlii. 0. Jer. xxx. 18. xxxi. 23. Ez. xxxix. 25. Joel iii. 1. Am. ix. 14. u xlvi. 11. lxxxv. 6. cxlix. 2. Neh. xii. 43. Jer. xxxiii. 10, 11. Rev. xviii. 20. xix. 7.

xciv. 8, 9. Is. v. 13. xxvii. 11. xxix. 14. xlv. 19, 20. xlv. 20. Rom. i. 21, 22. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. Eph. iv. 17, 18.

m Jer. x. 25. Am. viii. 4. Mic. iii. 2, 3. Gal. v. 15. n lxxxix. 6. Job xxi. 15. xxvii. 10. Is. lxiv. 7.

† Heb. *they feared a fear.* liii. 5. Ex. xv. 16. Esth. viii. 17. Prov. i. 26, 27. xxviii. 1. Is. vii. 2. viii. 12.

o xlv. 5. 7. 11. Is. viii. 10. xii. 6. xli. 10. xliii. 1, 2. Matt. i. 23. p xxii. 30. xxiv. 6. lxxiii. 15. cxii. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

q iii. 2. iv. 2. xxii. 7, 8. xlii. 10. r ix. 9. cxlii. 4, 5. Heb. vi. 18.

† Heb. *Who will give, &c.* liii. 6. cvi. 47. 1 Chr. xvi. 35. s xxv. 22. li. 18. Is. xiv. 32. xlv. 17. xvi. 13. lix. 20. lxii. 11. Zech. ix. 9. Luke ii. 10, 11. Rom. xi. 26. t cxvii. 1, 2, 4. Job xlii. 0. Jer. xxx. 18. xxxi. 23. Ez. xxxix. 25. Joel iii. 1. Am. ix. 14. u xlvi. 11. lxxxv. 6. cxlix. 2. Neh. xii. 43. Jer. xxxiii. 10, 11. Rev. xviii. 20. xix. 7.

derstood his obligations, duty, and interest, or that sought the favour and glory of the Lord. All were turned aside from the right way into different ways of disobedience: all were become filthy and corrupt, or *putrid*, in his sight: not one could be found disposed to do that which is spiritually good.—This must be understood of man left to himself, man as he is by nature, without regeneration: and St. Paul quotes the passage to prove the need which both Jews and Gentiles have of redemption and salvation by grace, and through faith in Christ. (*Notes, Rom. iii. 9—20.*)—Between this verse and that which follows, three verses are inserted in the version used in the common Prayer Book, which are taken from some copies of the Septuagint: for in other copies they are not found, any more than in the Hebrew and Syriack. The apostle in the third chapter of Romans, has the same verses; and it is evident that he selected them from several parts of the Old Testament, especially from the fifth, thirty-sixth, and one hundred and fortieth Psalms, and the fifty-ninth chapter of Isaiah: it is therefore probable, that some transcriber of the Septuagint inserted those verses from that remarkable passage of the apostle.

V. 4—6. Every kind of wickedness will in the event be found contrary to prudence and wise self-love. But those who persecute the worshippers of God, and take pleasure in this hateful employment, and refuse to ask any mercy or favour from him, do in effect set him at defiance; which is the height of madness and folly. (*Notes, John xv. 17—21. Acts viii. 1. xxvi. 9—11.*) Yet, when they would cast off the fear of God, they become slaves to various terrors; and often add one crime to another, from fear of offending their fellow-creatures, or to avoid the consequences of their former misconduct. Whereas God dwells among the righteous, to protect them from dangers and alarms.—The Psalmist having stated these general principles, remonstrates with his insulting enemies, for deriding the counsel of the poor believer, who makes the Lord his refuge: when their own inward terrors evince, that they cannot find security and comfort elsewhere.

V. 7. The more fully and deeply David experienced and witnessed the depravity of man, and the disposition of Israel to apostatize; the more fervently he longed and

PSALM XV.

a i. 1—4. xxiii. 6
xxiv. 3—5.
xxvii. 4. lxi. 4.
lxxxiv. 4. xcii.
13. John iii. 3—
5. xiv. 3. xvii.
24. Rev. vii. 14
—17. xxi. 3, 4.
23, 24.
* Heb. *sojourn*.
b ii. 6. iii. 4. xliii.
3, 4. lxxxvii. 1—
3. Heb. xii. 22.
Rev. xiv. 1.
c lxxxiv. 11. Prov.
i. 7, 8. xxviii.
18. Is. xxxiii. 15.
Mic. ii. 7. Luke
i. 6. Gal. ii. 14.
1 John ii. 6.

The inhabitant of Zion, or character of the heirs of heaven, 1—5.

A Psalm of David.

LORD, ^a who shall ^{*} abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in ^b thy holy hill?

2 ^c He that walketh uprightly, and

^d worketh righteousness, and ^e speaketh the truth in his heart.

3 *He that* ^f backbiteth not with his tongue, nor ^g doeth evil to his neighbour, nor ^h taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

4 In whose eyes ⁱ a vile person is contemned; ^j but he honoureth them

1, 2. g 1 Sam. xxiv. 11. Is. lvi. 2. Matt. vii. 12. Rom. xii. 17. xiii. 10. 3 John 11.
† Or, *receiveth*, or, *endureth*. Prov. xxii. 10. xxv. 23. h ci. 4. 2 Kings iii. 13, 14.
Esth. iii. 2. Job xxxii. 21, 22. Is. xxxii. 5, 6. Dan. v. 17, &c. Acts xxiv. 2, 3. 25. Jam.
ii. 1—9. i xvi. 3. ci. 6. cxix. 63. Matt. xii. 49, 50. 1 John iii. 14.

d Acts x. 35. Rom.
ii. 16. Eph. ii.
10. Heb. xi. 33.
1 John ii. 29. iii.
7. Rev. xxii. 14,
15.
e xxxiv. 12, 13. Is.
lxiii. 8. Zech.
viii. 16, 17. Eph.
iv. 25. Col. iii. 9.
Rev. xxi. 8.
f ci. 5—8. Ex.
xxiii. 1. Lev.
xix. 16. Jer. ix.
4—9. Rom. i. 30.
Tit. iii. 2. Jam.
iv. 11. 1 Pet. ii.

prayed for the salvation of Israel, by the power and favour of JEHOVAH, who was worshipped on mount Zion. By this it is reasonable to suppose, that he did not merely intend Israel's deliverance from bondage, or from subjection to foreign enemies or domestick usurpers: nor did he pray only for his own restoration to the throne, and return to the courts of God; but especially for the promised kingdom and salvation of the Messiah, and for the deliverance of his people from the "captivity" or bondage of Satan, to the liberty of God's service, with all its glorious and joyful effects. (Notes, 1 Chr. xvi. 34—36. 2 Tim. ii. 23—26.)

Salvation.] שְׁלוּמָה; nearly the same as JESUS. (Note, Matt. i. 20, 21.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

All the wickedness of men's words and actions springs from the corrupt fountain of their hearts: and if the thoughts of ungodly persons were detected and published, (as they will be at the day of judgment,) how vile would they appear! (Note, 1 Cor. iv. 3—5.)—Infidelity and iniquity have a reciprocal influence on each other; and they are progressive, till men's foolish hearts become darkened, and atheism is conceived and promulgated. Men differ in their peculiar propensities and outward characters: but they are all naturally carnal, alienated from God, destitute of true wisdom, incapable of things spiritually good, gone aside from the right way, and corrupt in their desires and imaginations: and therefore all would have gone further, and sunk deeper in "abominable works," continually and eternally, if it had not been for the inestimable redemption of Jesus Christ. We should be thankful, if we have been restrained from the more destructive excesses, into which so many are hurried; but we ought not to rest in any thing short of union with Christ, and a new creation unto holiness by his Spirit. If we have experienced this blessed change, let us give the Lord all the glory; and let us pity and pray for our fellow-sinners.—The enmity of the human heart against God appears, not only from man's proud aversion to call upon his name, but from the delight, which in all ages men have taken in persecuting his inoffensive people: all however who engage in this attempt will prove their own folly; and the terrors, to which they have often been exposed, evince that they do violence to the light of their own consciences. However the poor believer may be derided for his confidence in God, he has obtained such a Refuge from every danger and enemy, as shall never make him ashamed: for God himself dwells among the righteous, and is their Protector in every generation.—All our acquaintance with the depravity of human nature, should endear to us "salvation out of Zion:"

and while we rejoice in the earnest, and are waiting for the completion, of our own salvation, we should long and pray for the enlargement and prosperity of the church. When that expected season shall arrive, that the Jews shall be re-admitted among the people of God; then indeed "will Jacob rejoice, and Israel be glad," and the event shall prove "as life from the dead" to the whole race of men. (Note, Rom. xi. 11—15.) But in heaven alone shall the whole company of the redeemed rejoice, without alloy or interruption for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM XV. V. 1. It is probable that, as soon as the ark was stationed on mount Zion, the Psalmist addressed himself to God; desirous of being taught who would be the accepted and persevering worshipper at his tabernacle. This was typical of the true church of God on earth; all the members of which are heirs also of heaven. (Note, Heb. xii. 22—25.) The enquiry, therefore, is virtually this: Who is he, that so worships God in this world, as to have a well grounded hope of eternal life hereafter? It is not enquired, what are the grounds of a sinner's acceptance with God: on this subject we are fully instructed in other parts of scripture: but the question is, What are the characteristic marks of those who are thus accepted, by which they may be distinguished from all other persons? And the answer is evidently in perfect consistency with the New Testament, and especially with St. John's first epistle, viz. 'They may be distinguished by their sanctification.' (Notes, 1 John ii. 3—6. 26—29. iii. 4—10. 18—24. v. 1—5.) Thus believers are conformed in their measure to Christ, the perfect exemplar: and the character, here given of them, forms a beautiful contrast to that of ungodly men, as delineated in the preceding psalm. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 2, 3. "The fruits meet for repentance;" "the work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope," "the fruits of the Spirit," and "the things which accompany salvation," are here compendiously enumerated, or rather pointed out, in some of the most striking and observable particulars. (Notes, Luke iii. 10—14. Gal. v. 22—26. 1 Thes. i. 1—4. Heb. vi. 9, 10.)

V. 4. "The vile person" is an openly wicked and ungodly man, who renders himself base and contemptible by his crimes. (Notes, 1 Sam. xxv. 23—31. Dan. xi. 21.) Persons of this description may be exalted in station, and abound in wealth; and many will pay court to them: but the true servant of God will form a juster estimate of their character and state. He will neither envy their prosperity, nor give any sanction to their impiety. If they be magis-

T 5

4 ¹ Their sorrows shall be multiplied ^{that} ^{*} hasten *after* another god: ^k their drink-offerings of blood will I not offer, nor ¹ take up their names into my lips.

5 ^m The LORD is the Portion of mine inheritance and ^a of my cup: thou maintainest my lot.

6 ^p The lines are fallen unto me ^a in pleasant places; yea, ^r I have a goodly heritage.

7 I will bless the LORD, ^a who hath given me counsel; ^r my reins also instruct me ^u in the night seasons.

8 ^{*} I have set the LORD always before me: because ^r he is at my right hand, ^r I shall not be moved.

9 Therefore ^a my heart is glad, and ^b my glory rejoiceth: ^c my flesh also shall ^r rest in hope.

10 For thou wilt not leave ^d my soul in hell; ^e neither wilt thou suffer ^f thine Holy One to see corruption.

11 Thou wilt shew me ^g the path of life: ^h in thy presence is fulness of joy; ⁱ at thy right hand *there are* ^k pleasures for evermore.

Rev. i. 18. xx. 13, 14. e Acts ii. 27—31. xiii. 35—38. 1 Cor. xv. 42. 50—54. f Dan. ix. 24. Luke i. 35. iv. 34. Acts iii. 14. g xxi. 4. Prov. ii. 19. iv. 18. v. 6. xii. 28. Is. ii. 3. Matt. vii. 14. Rom. viii. 11. 1 Pet. i. 21. h xvii. 15. xxi. 5. 6. Matt. v. 8. Acts ii. 28. 1 Cor. xiii. 12. 2 Cor. iv. 17. Eph. iii. 19. 1 John iii. 2. Rev. vii. 15—17. xxii. 5. Mark xvi. 19. Acts vii. 56. 1 Pet. iii. 22. k xxxvi. 8. Matt. xxv. 46.

tification, and eternal felicity of his people, in whom *alone* of Adam's race he greatly delights. (Notes, Prov. viii. 31. Is. lxii. 1—5. John xv. 9—11. Eph. v. 22—27.)

V. 4. It is the opinion of learned men, that this psalm was composed when David lived among the Philistines; and when, perhaps, some of his associates were strongly tempted to join the idolatrous worship, which they witnessed. But he shewed them, that this would certainly bring on them additional miseries, by the just judgment of God. Adverting perhaps to Joshua's resolution, "As for me and my house we will serve the LORD;" (Note, Josh. xxiv. 15;) he avowed his determination to have no communion in such abominations, and not so much as to mention the names of their detestable idols.—We do not read of "drink-offerings of blood" in any other place. Either it was customary among the idolaters to taste the blood of the victims, (which were often *human* victims,) before it was poured out in honour of the idol; or they poured the blood, as the Israelites did wine, for a libation, on the sacrifice when burning on the altar: or else the wine, used in idolatrous sacrifices, was as abominable to God, as if the blood itself had been drunk; which, being the atonement for sin, was expressly prohibited to be tasted by the Israelites.—Even the sacrifices at the sanctuary of God at length became an abomination to those who rejected Christ; and to those who hastened after others professing to be the promised Messiah. In like manner, the most splendid services of those, who approach God through other mediators than Jesus Christ, whether deceased men, or angels, are, as idolatrous, an abomination to God. (Notes, Is. lxvi. 3, 4. Col. ii. 18, 19. Heb. x. 26, 27.)

V. 5, 6. JEHOVAH was David's present comfort, a Source of exultation and refreshment, as the cup of water to the thirsty, or of wine to the faint: he was also his future Inheritance; and he who allotted him his portion, would maintain him in it, and never leave him to forfeit it. As Canaan was divided by *lot* and *line*, these metaphors are used to represent his joy in the favour of God. (lxxviii. 55. Notes, xxiii. 5, 6. Num. xxvi. 53—56. Josh. xiii. 6.) But the Saviour himself has obtained the most goodly heritage; and his people are admitted to partake of it. (Notes, Matt. xxv. 19—23. Luke, xix. 11—27. Rev. ii. 20—22.)

V. 7. The Psalmist's meditation, experience, and chastisements, and the immediate communications of wisdom and knowledge, which he received during his midnight reflections and devotions, concurred with outward instructions, in counselling him, and teaching him to act, with prudence and caution, in his difficult circumstances. They likewise combined, in confirming him to choose God for his Portion. In the dark season of adversity and affliction, and when chastened with painful sickness, as well as in the silent hours of the night, heavenly wisdom was communicated to him.—The *reins*, or *kidneys*, were considered by the Israelites, as especially affected, by whatever caused uneasiness or satisfaction; nay, they are often spoken of as the seat of reflection and the secret purposes of the soul. (Marg. Ref. t.)

V. 8—11. David might perhaps have some regard to his own hope and experience, in these verses: but doubtless Christ was especially intended.—As Man, he relied on the power, truth, love, and promise of the Father: therefore he was not moved in his deepest sufferings; but "for the joy set before him, he endured the cross, and despised the shame." (Note, Heb. xii. 2, 3.) He willingly yielded to death, assured that his human soul should not be left in the place of separate spirits, nor his body in the grave till it began to corrupt; but that he should arise on the third day, and afterwards ascend to heaven, as the First-fruits of the Resurrection, and the Fore-runner of his people. Thus was he shewn "the path of life," and he pointed it out to his followers; even the way into the presence of God, where is fulness of joy: and he was seated at the right hand of the Father, where are pleasures, for him and for his people, for evermore.

In hell. (10) *ἡνῶς*: εἰς ἄδην. Sept. εἰς ἄδης. Acts ii. 27—32.—Many learned men interpret the two clauses of this verse to mean exactly the same thing, referring both of them to the body of Christ, laid in the grave, and raised before it saw corruption: but, as the article concerning 'Christ's descending into hell,' in the very ancient form called the apostle's creed, though doubtless of something later date than the apostolical age, is grounded on this expression, and the application of it; it is evident, that the compilers of it supposed that something further was intended than merely being *buried*. And the original (as

PSALM XVII.

David appeals to God for his integrity, 1—4. He prays to be upheld, and saved from his proud, malicious, and prosperous enemies, 5—14. He chooses the path of righteousness, and expects complete satisfaction when he shall awake in the likeness of God, 15.

* A Prayer of David.

^b **HEAR** * the right, O LORD; * attend unto my cry; give ear unto my prayer, *that goeth* † not out of feigned lips.

2 ^d Let my sentence come forth from

lips of decent. xviii. 44 marg. cxlv. 18. Jer. iii. 10. Matt. xv. 8. John i. 47. d xxxvii. 6. 33. 2 Thes. i. 6—9. Jude 24.

a lxxvi. cxi.
titles.
b vii. 8 xviii. 20.
xliii. 1. cxi. 12.
1 John iii. 21.
* Heb. justice.
c v. 2. lv. 2, 3. lxi.
1. lxvi. 19. cxlii.
6. 2 Chr. vii. 15.
Neh. i. 6. Dan.
ix. 18, 19.
† Heb. without

well as the translation of the LXX quoted in the Acts of the Apostles,) favours the idea of a distinct meaning in each clause. Both the Hebrew word *חַיָּה* and the Greek *αἴδης*, by which it is constantly rendered, denote the state of man, when no longer seen on earth. 'When spoken of the body, they signify the grave;—when of the soul, they refer to that state in which the soul is without the body, whether *Paradise* or *Hell*, properly so called.' *Archbp. Usher*. The human nature of Christ consisted of body and soul: his soul was, during the space between his death and his resurrection, as certainly in the place of separate spirits, as his body was in the grave; but when he arose, they were both called forth and reunited. (*Notes, Acts ii. 25—32. xiii. 24—37.*) These words are never used, but with respect to men between death and the resurrection; and never concerning angels, or the state of men after the resurrection: nor are they ever used, when the burial or grave of an individual is spoken of. But they are applied, both with respect to the grave and the place of separation, to good and to bad men in general, without much discrimination: and the representation given in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, seems to place Lazarus as well as the rich man, in *Hades*; but in another division of it. (*Notes, Luke xvi. 19—31.*)—Thus the pagans placed their Elysium adjacent to Tartarus, as two parts in the same region of the dead.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our Lord and Saviour has shewn us, by his example, how to overcome temptations, and how we may be preserved through trials: we must trust in God, and pour out our prayers before him, as in Christ reconciled to every believer. But we must also remember continually, that all good comes from God, to whom the whole glory appertains; and that the most perfect obedience, of his noblest creatures, cannot render him their Debtor, or add to his felicity. What then are our defective and polluted services! Yet, when from our heart we avouch the God of heaven for our Lord, we shall for his sake do good to his people: and if we account them to be, as they really are, "the excellent of the earth," and delight in them, and in their prosperity; we may, after his example, in a subordinate degree, be very useful to them. And, as our righteousness and salvation were the purchase of his blood, we should not be reluctant to deny ourselves, to labour, or to suffer for that purpose.—Not only they who seek after other gods, but those who worship other mediators, and invent other methods of salvation than that revealed in the scripture, are hastening to multiply their own sorrows: God abhors their pompous and expensive superstitions and services; our great High Priest will not present such sacrifices, nor mention the names of such worshippers, in his continual intercession; and Christians

should carefully avoid all fellowship with anti-christian delusions. They need not have recourse to these vain expedients, any more than to worldly vanities: for "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" is their God and Father in him; their present Comforter and their all-sufficient and eternal Portion; and he will maintain their lot, as well as that of their Surety, in defiance of the united power and policy of earth and hell. The poorest believer may therefore triumphantly say, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage." (*Notes, Rom. viii. 28—39.*) What thanks then are due to him, who has counselled us to make this happy choice; who has taught us to profit by our daily experience, and to find comfort in him in the hours of solitude, and in seasons of affliction! He who has learned to set God before him, to act as in his presence, and to rely on his watchful care and protection, may be sharply tried and tempted: but he cannot be moved; for the power, which upheld the Saviour, is engaged on his side. While our hearts rejoice in such blessings, let us use our tongues, as indeed "the glory" of our nature, in celebrating the praises of our God; while too many are proving their tongues to be "unruly evils full of deadly poison." And as the Saviour, the Holy One of God, saw not corruption, but arose the First-fruits of them that slept, and ascended into heaven to open for us the paths of life and salvation; so the believer need not fear, either lest his soul should be left to perish, or lest his body should remain in the grave. His flesh too may rest in hope; for though it see corruption, it shall be raised again incorruptible: and both body and soul shall be shewn the path of life, and admitted into the presence of God, "where is fulness of joy, and to his right hand, where are pleasures for evermore." Wherefore let us comfort ourselves and each other, with these words.

NOTES.

PSALM XVII. *Title*. The inscription found at the beginning of many of these sacred hymns, viz. "A psalm of David," may literally be rendered "A psalm to David;" and thence some have been led to think that he did not write all, or even most of them. But at the head of this psalm the same mode of expression is used; and consequently if those psalms were not composed by him, but only addressed to him, this psalm would be entitled "A prayer to David." This shews that our version is so far right; that the translation is of the same import as the original, which means *A Psalm, ascribed to David, as its author*.

V. 1—3. We shall not fully enter into the spirit of this psalm, unless we place ourselves in the circumstances of David. The whole tenour of it shews, that he has recorded his earnest meditation and prayer, at the most in-

^e Ez. xviii. 25. 29. thy presence; let thine eyes behold
^{xxxiii. 17. 20.}
^f xi. 5. xxvi. 2. ^e the things that are equal.

3 ^f Thou hast proved mine heart;
4 thou hast visited *me* in the night;
5 thou hast tried me, *and* ^h shalt find no-
thing: ⁱ I am purposed *that* my mouth
shall not transgress.

4 Concerning ^k the works of men,
by the word of thy lips, I have kept
me from the paths of ^m the destroyer.

5 ⁿ Hold up my goings in thy paths,
^o *that* my footsteps ^{*} slip not.

6 ^p I have called upon thee; for
thou wilt hear me, O God: ^q incline
thine ear unto me, *and* hear my speech.

7 Shew ^r thy marvellous loving kind-
ness, O thou that [†] savest ^s by thy right

hand them which put their trust in ^t
thee, from those that rise up against ^u
them.

8 Keep me as ^v the apple of the eye,
^w hide me under the shadow of thy
wings,

9 From the wicked that ^x oppress
me, *from* my ^y deadly enemies *who*
compass me about.

10 ^z They are inclosed in their own
fat: ^{aa} with their mouth they speak
proudly.

11 They have now ^{ab} compassed us
in our steps: they have ^{ac} set their eyes
bowing down to the earth;

12 ^{ad} Like as a lion *that* is greedy of
his prey, and as it were a young lion
^{ae} lurking in secret places.

as a lion that desireth to raven. vii. 2. xxii. 13. 2 Tim. iv. 17. 1 Pet. v. 8. sitting.

teresting crisis, when Saul, instigated by groundless sus-
picions, and false accusations, and pursuing him as a
traitor, had surrounded him with his troops, and must
have seized on him, had not God most wonderfully inter-
posed. (Notes, liv. title. 1 Sam. xxiii. 19—28.)—The per-
secuted and slandered servant of God, in this extremity,
appealed to his omnipotent Lord; and conscious, that he
had in no respect deserved ill of his cruel enemy, he
called upon God to “hear justice,” and to accept his
prayer, which was not the language of deceit respecting
men, or hypocrisy towards God. (Notes, cxlv. 18. Jer. iii.
6—11.) He besought him to pronounce sentence be-
tween him and Saul, according to his intimate acquaint-
ance with the cause, as he knew that equity was on his
side: for the Lord had long proved the heart of his servant;
he had seen his conduct and thoughts, even at midnight,
when traitors either meet to form their plans, or meditate
how to carry them into execution. Indeed, circumstances
had served to *try him as by fire*; seeing he had every temp-
tation to seek opportunities of avenging himself. Yet
God was witness, that nothing of this kind had been
thought of by him; nay, he had avoided every disrespect-
ful word concerning Saul, the Lord’s anointed; lest he
should excite his followers to attempt ought against him.

V. 4, 5. “The works of men,” (of Adam, or of his
descendants, as inheriting his fallen nature,) are those
works to which they are propense; and among others, they
have a strong propensity to “render evil for evil:” but
David had so studied the oracles of God, that by regarding
his promises and precepts, he had resisted every tempta-
tion to this conduct.—The word, rendered “destroyer,”
signifies a robber or murderer: but the Psalmist seems not
so much to have intended, that he had kept himself out
of the reach of those who wished to murder him, or from
the ways of Satan the destroyer; as that he had been kept
from embracing any opportunity afforded him of killing
Saul. And he still prayed, that he might be upheld, and
not left to fall into so great a crime, however injured and
tempted. (Notes, Ps. cxix. 114—117. 133. 1 Sam. ii. 9.)

—In the present circumstances of human nature, the ways
of godliness are become slippery paths, through the arti-
fices of Satan, and the snares of the world, combining
with “the sin that dwelleth in us.”—In some of these
things David may be considered as a type of Christ: he
alone was universally and perfectly free from sin, and could
say in the fullest sense, that a heart-searching God could
find nothing wrong in him (3).

V. 6—8. (Marg. Ref.) “Make wonderful thy mercies,
“O thou, who savest those that trust, from those who rise
“up against, thy right hand” (7). This address to God,
as the especial Protector of those, who trust in him, from
those who rebel against him, is worthy of special notice.
In answering such prayers he acts according to his known
character. (Rom. xv. 5. 13. Notes, 2 Cor. vii. 5—7. Heb.
xiii. 20, 21. 1 Pet. v. 10, 11.)

Apple. (8) תִּפְּלָה אֵינִי. As the pupil, or black spot,
the daughter of the eye. The singular precaution, with
which the Creator has secured the pupil of the eye, and by
which every creature instinctively guards it from injury,
forms a striking illustration of the Lord’s watchful care
over his people, amidst the peculiar dangers to which they
are on every side exposed. (Notes, Deut. xxxii. 10. Prov.
vii. 2. Zech. ii. 6—9.)

V. 9, 10. (Marg.) David’s persecutors were prosperous,
self-indulgent, and luxurious; and thus they grew arro-
gant, impious, unfeeling, and presumptuous. (Notes, lxxiii.
6—9. cxix. 70.)

V. 11, 12. “Indeed they have now gotten me and my
“followers into a very great strait; and which way soever
“we turn ourselves, we are in danger to fall into the hands
“of those, who have stedfastly resolved on our utter ruin.
“... No lion can be more desirous to tear a lamb in pieces,
“than Saul is to make a prey of me.” Bp. Patrick. Saul
and his associates acted also with dark subtlety, and seemed
to be thinking of something else, when they were watch-
ing their opportunity of mischief and murder. (Marg.
—Notes, vii. 14—16. 1 Sam. xviii. 17—27. xxiii. 22—28.
Matt. xxvi. 3—5.)

^b iii. 7. vii. 6. xlii. 23 26. cxix. 126. Is li 9.
* Heb. prevent his face.
† Or. by thy sword. vii. 11—13
e Is. x. 5. 15. xlii. 5 xxxvii 26. Hab i. 12. Acts iv. 28.
‡ Or. by thine hand.
d Luke xvi. 8. John viii. 23. xv. 19. xvii. 14. 1 John iv. 4, 5. e xlix. 17—19. lxxiii. 12. Luke xii. 19—21. xvi. 25. Jam. v. 5. f Job xii. 6. 9. xxi. 7—15. xxii. 18.

13 ^b Arise, O LORD, *disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, [†]which is ^ethy sword:
14 From men [†]which are thy hand, O LORD, from ^dmen of the world, ^ewhich have their portion in *this* life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy

^g Prov. ii. 4. Matt. xlii. 44.
h xxxix. 6. Job xxi. 21. xxvii. 14—17. Luke xvi. 27, 28.
i v. 7 Josh. xxiv. 15.
k iv. 6. cxix. 111 Job xix. 26, 27. 2 Cor. iii. 18.
l xvi. 11. xxxvi. 8. Job xiv. 12. Is. xlii. 14. Job xiv. 12. Is. xlii. 14. Job xiv. 12. Is. xlii. 14.

^g hid *treasure*: ^hthey are full of children, ^hand leave the rest of their *sub-* stance to their babes.
15 [†]As for me, ^kI will behold thy face in righteousness: [†]I shall be satisfied when ^mI awake ⁿwith thy likeness.

9. lxxv. 4. Matt. v. 6. Rev. vii. 16, 17. xxi. 3, 4. 23. xxvi. 19. Matt. xxvii. 52, 53. n Gen. i. 26, 27. Phil. iii. 21. 1 John iii. 2, 3.

V. 13—15. In this extremity, unless the Lord speedily interposed, (as one who had delayed till no more time could be lost,) to prevent Saul from accomplishing his wicked design, and to disappoint him of his prey, by some humiliating event; he would certainly take away David's life, and so render the promises of God of no effect: but this could not be.—Saul and his men had been as the “sword,” and “hand,” of God, by which he executed vengeance on many, and corrected others, in Israel; but they were mere mortal men of a worldly spirit, who preferred an earthly portion to the favour of God, and consequently had their good things in this life. God indeed gave them abundance of those treasures, which are commonly *hidden* for security, and spent in self-indulgence with their children. They were also full of children: and after living in plenty, nay, luxury, perhaps till old age; they left a numerous and flourishing family to inherit their riches: but they were not “rich towards God.” (Notes, xlix. 10, 11, 15—18. lxxiii. 11—14. Job. xxi. 7—22. xxvii. 13—23.) And would the Lord suffer his servant to be destroyed by such profane, selfish men?—The Psalmist however determined, whatever might be the event, to act as in the immediate presence of God, to maintain a good conscience, and to walk before God in righteousness: and then, whether he died soon, or lived many years, he should certainly at last obtain full satisfaction, when he awaked in the eternal world, or at the general resurrection, perfectly renewed to the divine image in righteousness and true holiness.—The former clause of the last verse is here interpreted of David's *purpose*, and only the latter of his *prospect*. Some explain both to mean his expectation of happiness in the eternal world; yet not excluding his hope of deliverance from his urgent dangers.—The Septuagint render the last clause; “I shall be satisfied in beholding thy glory.” (Notes, xxxvi. 5—9. cxix. 111. Matt. v. 6—8. 1 John iii. 1—3. Rev. xxi. 22—27. xxii. 2—5.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Believers must follow their Saviour, in the way by which he passed through this world to glory; and such men as were *his* enemies will be *their's* also: but he was more hated, insulted, and cruelly intreated, than any of his followers ever were. They cannot, like Jesus, plead sinless perfection in any part or action of their lives; but through his merits and grace, they may “rejoice in the testimony of their conscience, to their simplicity and godly sincerity.” (Note, 2 Cor. i. 12—14.) They have right on their side, when oppressed or persecuted, their own hearts do not condemn them of hypocrisy; and therefore they have confidence before a just and merciful God: their prayers are not the language of dissembling lips, but the fervent desires of their hearts, and they may expect that

he will give sentence in their behalf, when they are slandered and injured; even such an equal sentence, as must proceed from the presence of a holy God.—Unallowed evil, felt and mourned over, should in no wise weaken this confidence: but without conscious integrity in our conduct towards God and man, such appeals would be the most impious presumption. The Lord sees us in secret, visits us in the night, and witnesses our conduct in our most secret retirement, when solitude tempts the hypocrite to sin, and when the imagination is apt to roam after forbidden objects: and if he find one indulged and allowed iniquity, he will abhor our feigned devotions. We should therefore purpose not to offend with our lips, or even in our hearts.—We must not conform to the works of men, if we would escape the paths of the destroyer; for “broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat.” (Notes, Matt. vii. 13, 14. Rom. xii. 2. Eph. ii. 1, 2.) We must treasure up the precepts and promises of God's word in our hearts, for our direction and encouragement; and pray continually to be upheld by his grace, if we would walk in the paths of holiness: for our way through this evil world is very slippery; we are weak, and apt to be heedless; and our own watchfulness or resolutions, and former upright and consistent behaviour, cannot safely be depended on. But the Lord will incline his ears to those who call upon him: he has always magnified his loving-kindness to such as have trusted in him; upholding and defending them by his right hand from all their enemies; keeping them safer by his grace, than the pupil of the eye is kept by his providence; and with greater tenderness, than “the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings.” (Notes, Ruth ii. 11, 12. Matt. xxiii. 37—39.)—The profane, the sensual, and the proud, indeed are at all times their enemies; yet they are not always left to take an active part against them: but Satan is their most deadly foe: he is destitute of compassion, hardened in malice, and replete with subtlety; and concerning him we may pray in assured faith, “Arise, O LORD, disappoint him, and cast him down; deliver my soul from this wicked one.” He is indeed *the sword*, by which the Lord punishes his enemies, and scourges a guilty world; but his children shall not be given over to be a prey to him, nor to his instruments.—The most afflicted Christian needs not envy the most prosperous “men of the world, who have their portion in this life.” (Note, Luke xvi. 24—26.) They indeed receive from the Lord that abundant treasure, which they love to lay up securely for themselves; to spend in varied kinds of gratification, or hoard to aggrandize their families: and frequently the desires of their hearts in these matters are granted them. Yet they must die, and leave *their* good things behind them, to enter another world, where they have no portion but darkness and

PSALM XVIII.

David's psalm of thanksgiving, for his manifold deliverances, and singular prosperity, 1—50.

a xxxvi. title. cxvi. 16. Acts xiii. 36. Heb. iii. 5.
b xxxiv. 19. Ex. xv. 1, &c. 1 Sam. v. 1, &c. 1 Sam. ii. 1—10. Is. xii. 1—6.
c cxvi. 1—6. cxliv. 1, 2. 1 John iv. 19.
d 32. xxviii. 7, 8. cxviii. 14. Is. xii. 2. Phil. iv. 13. Col. i. 11.
e xxviii. 1. lxii. 2. 7. Is. xxxii. 2.
f xci. 2. cxliv. 2. Jer. xvi. 19.
* Heb. rock.
g xci. 4. Prov. ii. 7.
h cxxxii. 17. 2 Sam. xxii. 3.
i Prov. xviii. 10.
k v. 2, 3. xxviii. 1, 2. lv. 16. lxii. 8. 2 Sam. xxii. 4. Phil. iv. 6, 7.
l lxv. 1, 2. Neh. ix. 5. Rev. iv. 11. v. 12—14.
m xci. 15. Luke i. 71. Acts ii. 21. Rom. viii. 31—39.
n cxvi. 3. 2 Sam. xxii. 5, 6. Is. xiii. 8. liii. 3, 4. Matt. xxvi. 38, 39. Mark xiv. 33, 34. 2 Cor. i. 9.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David, ^a the servant of the LORD, who spake unto the LORD the words of this song, ^b in the day *that* the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul: And he said,

^c **I WILL** love thee, O LORD, ^d my Strength.

^e **2** The LORD is my Rock, and ^f my Fortress, and my Deliverer; my God, my ^g Strength in whom I will trust; ^h my Buckler, and ⁱ the Horn of my salvation, *and* ^j my high Tower.

^k **3** I will call upon the LORD, ^l *who* is *worthy* to be praised: ^m so shall I be saved from mine enemies.

ⁿ **4** The sorrows of death compassed

me, and ^o the floods of ^p ungodly men made me afraid.

^q **5** The ^r sorrows of hell compassed me about: ^s the snares of death prevented me.

^t **6** In my distress I called upon the LORD, and cried unto my God: ^u he heard my voice out of his temple, and ^v my cry came before him, *even* into his ears.

^w **7** Then ^x the earth shook and trembled; ^y the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth.

^z **8** There ^{aa} went up a smoke ^{ab} out of his nostrils, and ^{ac} fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it.

^{ad} **9** He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and ^{ae} darkness *was* under his feet.

^{af} **10** And ^{ag} he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind.

Joel iii. 16. Matt. xxiv. 29. Heb. xii. 26. 2 Pet. iii. 10. Rev. xx. 11. 23. Mark xv. 33. John xiii. 7. c 2 Sam. xxii. 11, 12. Ez. i. 5—14. x. 20—22.

despair. But the believer walks here in the light of God's countenance, in a delightful attendance on his ordinances and obedience to his commands: he rejoices in the hope of glory; when he dies, his soul departs hence "to be with Christ which is far better;" and at the resurrection his body shall be raised incorruptible and glorious: and being completely changed into the image of his God and Saviour, he shall be eternally and perfectly satisfied with a happiness, large as his desires and capacities. Lord, teach us to "choose this good part, which shall never be taken from us." (Note and P. O. Luke x. 38—42.)

NOTES.

PSALM XVIII. Title. Note, 2 Sam. xxii. 1.

V. 1. This introductory verse is not found in the parallel passage in the second book of Samuel. The variations, between the two copies, seem to have been principally poetical improvements of the style, as few of them materially alter the sense, and several evidently render the composition more elegant. Indeed, the whole Psalm seems one of the most finished poetical compositions, extant in any language.—The word (פָּנָה) here rendered, "I will love thee," is peculiarly emphatical: "I will love thee with my inmost soul, and all its powers, and with the most fervent affections of my heart."—"I will greatly desire and long after thee." (Notes, lxiii. 1—4. cxvi. 1.)—The experience which the aged Psalmist had acquired, of the Lord's faithfulness, power, and love, no doubt excited the lively exercises of admiring and adoring love, as well as gratitude.—Some think that David spake in the person of the risen Redeemer, taking a retrospect of his sufferings and triumphs; and the words, in that view, convey a most interesting and animating reflection to the mind of the true Christian.

V. 2, 3. (Note, 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3.) 'As the Psalm so evidently throughout is a thanksgiving for past deliverances, the verbs in this verse (3) seem to require the same rendering which is given to them below, at ver. 6.' Bp. Horne. That is, they should be rendered in the past, and not in the future tense.—But perhaps the Psalmist meant to give the feelings and purpose of his heart, while struggling with his difficulties and overcoming them by faith, to which the event corresponded: for the words are plainly future; and a total disregard to the tense should not be supposed without evident necessity. (Notes, cxlii. title. Is. xxxviii. 9—13. Jon. ii. 1, 2.)

V. 4, 5. (Note, Sam. xxii. 5, 6.) The word rendered "sorrows," in these verses, signifies *cords*, or *pangs*, especially those of women in travail; and it is translated *pangs* in the Septuagint. And as St. Luke, in recording the apostle Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, uses the same word concerning Christ, in respect of his resurrection, where it does not seem so apposite as *cords* or *bonds* would have been; it is supposed, that he refers to the Septuagint version of this Psalm. This is an additional proof, that it should be considered chiefly, as prophetic of his conflicts and triumphs. Note, Acts ii. 22—24.)

V. 6. This verse also is future in the original. (Note, 2, 3.) It varies from the parallel verse in Samuel, by using two nearly synonymous words, for "called" and "cried," while in the other copy the latter is merely a repetition of the former.

V. 7. The words "foundations of heaven," used in Samuel, is here changed for "foundations of the hills," or mountains. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 10. Two letters in the original, nearly alike, one used in Samuel, the other here, make the variation between the two copies: probably it was originally a trivial

V. 15. (*Note, 2 Sam. xxii. 7—16.*) As the grand imagery of this passage more aptly suits the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, than any of David's deliverances; (*Notes, Matt. xxvii. 51—53. xxviii. 1—8. Acts i. 1—12;*) so it naturally leads the pious mind to reflect on the awful descriptions given us, of the Saviour's last

g iv. 1. Job xviii. 7. xxxvi. 16. Luke xii. 50. xxiv 46—48. ^a Heb. *ankles*. 2 Sam. xxii. 37. n iii. 7. ix. 3. xxxv. 2—5. cxviii 11, 12. Num. xxiv. 17. —19. Is. liii. 10. —12. lxii. 1—6. Rev. vi. 2. xix. 19, 20. i 1 Sam xvii 49. —51. xxiii. 5. xxx. 17. 2 Sam. v. viii. x. xviii. 7. v. xxi. 15—22. xxii. 39. k 32. Ez. xxx. 24, 25. l 1 Chr. xxii. 18. 1 Cor. xv. 25—28. Eph. i. 22. Phil. iii. 21. + Heb. *caused to bate*. lxvi. 3. 2 Sam. xxii. 40. Is. xiv. 14. m Lam. v. 5. n xxxiv. 21. 2 Sam. xxii. 41. Prov. viii. 36. John xv. 23. o 2 Sam. xxii. 42, 43. Job xxxv. 12, 13. Is. lix. 1, 2. Jer. xi. 11. xiv. 12. Ez. viii. 18. Hos vii 14. Zech. vii. 13. Luke xiii. 25. p l. 22. 2 Kings xiii. 7. Is. xli. 2. 15, 16. q Is. x. 6. xxv. 10. Zech. x. 5. Mal. iv. 3. r 2 Sam. ii. 9, 10. v. 1—7. Acts v. 31. s xxii. 27, 28. cviii. 9. 2 Sam. v. viii. x. xxii. 44—46. Is. xlii. 6, 22, 23. lli. 15. Rom. xv. 12, 18. Eph. i. 22. t Hos. i. 10. Rom. ii. 26. 1 Pet. ii. 10. Rev. xi. 15. ^a Heb. *At the hearing of the ear*. Rom. x. 16, 17. ^b Heb. *sins of the stranger*. 2 Sam. i. 13. Is. lxii. 8. Ez. xlv. 7. *marg.* ^c Or, *yield feigned obedience*. Heb. lie. lxviii. 30. 2 Sam. xxii. 44—46.

36 Thou hast ^aenlarged my steps under me, that my ^bfeet did not slip.

37 I have ^bpursued mine enemies, and overtaken them: neither did I turn again till they were consumed.

38 I have ⁱwounded them, that they were not able to rise: they are fallen under my feet.

39 For thou hast ^kgirded me with strength unto the battle: ^lthou hast [†]subdued under me those that rose up against me.

40 Thou hast also given me ^mthe necks of mine enemies; ⁿthat I might destroy them that hate me.

41 They cried, ^obut *there was* none to save *them*; *even* unto the LORD, but he answered them not.

42 Then did ^pI beat them small as the dust before the wind: ^qI did cast them out as the dirt in the streets.

43 Thou hast delivered me ^rfrom the strivings of the people; *and* ^sthou hast made me the head of the heathen: ^ta people *whom* I have not known shall serve me.

44 ^aAs soon as they hear of me they shall obey me: the ^bstrangers shall submit themselves unto me.

45 The strangers shall ^afade away, ^uand ^bbe afraid out of their close places.

46 ^yThe LORD liveth; and ^zblessed be my Rock; and let ^athe God of my salvation be ^bexalted.

47 *It is* God that ^aavengeth me, and [†]subdueth the people unto me.

48 He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, ^cthou liftest me up above those that rise up against me: thou hast delivered me from the ^dviolent man.

49 Therefore ^dwill I ^egive thanks unto thee, O LORD, among the heathen, ^eand sing praises unto thy name.

50 Great deliverance giveth he ^fto his King; and sheweth mercy ^gto his anointed, to David, and to his Seed for evermore.

PSALM XIX.

The heavens, and especially the sun, proclaim the Creator's glory to all lands, 1—6. The manifold excellence and usefulness of the word of God, 7—11. David prays to be delivered from his sins, and accepted in his services, 12—14.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

^aTHE heavens declare the glory of God; and ^bthe firmament sheweth his handy-work.

'mies are victorious; and to glorify him without reserve, 'when we are so.' Bp. Horne.

V. 49. St. Paul quotes this verse to prove, that the gentiles would glorify God for his mercy: (Note, Rom. xv. 8—13:) and this shews beyond a doubt, that he considered the Psalm as prophetic of Christ, and in some respects as his language. (Notes, xxii. 23—31.) Yet it is not advisable to apply every clause to him, so as to overlook his ancestor and type; who seems to have been led by the Holy Spirit, from speaking of his own conflicts and deliverances, to use language, which could never have its full accomplishment, but in his promised Seed.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In David, the type, we may here behold Jesus our Redeemer, conflicting with enemies, compassed with sorrows, and with "floods of ungodly men," (Notes, Ps. xxii. 11—18. Matt. xxvii. 39—44,) enduring not only the pains of death, but the wrath of God for us: yet calling upon the Father with strong cries and tears; rescued from the grave with a tremendous earthquake, and various convulsions of nature; advanced to the mediatorial throne, and made Head of the heathen, as a recompence of his most perfect obedience even unto death; executing vengeance on the Jewish nation, beating them as small as the dust before the wind, and casting them out as the mire in the

streets; and proceeding either to reconcile, or to put under his feet, all other enemies, till death the last enemy shall be destroyed. (Note, 1 Cor. xv. 20—28.) In the full assurance of these truths, and expectation of his appearing and his glory, we should hasten to submit willingly to his authority, and to embrace his salvation; we should trust in his merits, rejoice in his triumphs, and imitate his example. We also ought most fervently to love the Lord "our Strength and our Salvation;" we too should call on him in every trouble, and praise him for every deliverance; we should aim to walk with him in all righteousness and true holiness, approving our hearts unto him, and keeping ourselves from our own iniquities. May he arm us for every conflict, and aid us in all; may we make no league with sin, nor give quarter to any lust. By his strength may we leap over every interposing wall of difficulty; by his light may we pass through every dark valley; till at length we share the Saviour's resurrection and ascension into heaven: for if we belong unto him, he conquers and reigns *for* us, and we shall conquer and reign *through* him; and partake of the mercy of our anointed King, which is entailed on all his seed for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM XIX. V. 1. This Psalm seems especially to have been intended to prove, that the idolatry and irreligion

^c xxv. 7-10. ^{lxxviii.} 3-6. ^{cxix.} 1-3. ^{cxviii.} 12. ^{Ex.} xv. 20, 21. ^{Is.} xxxviii. 19. ^{lxxiv.} 16. ^{cxix.} 8, 9. ^{Gen.} i. 17, 18. ^{viii.} 22. ^{Deut.} iv. 19. ^{Or,} without these their voice is heard. ^{Heb.} without their voice heard. ^f lxxviii. 3. ^{Is.} xlix. 6. ^{Rom.} x. 18. ^{2 Cor.} x. 13-16. ^{Or,} rule, or direction. ^g ^{Gen.} i. 14-18. ^{Mal.} iv. 2. ^h ^{Is.} lxi. 10. ^{lxii.} 5. ^{John} iii. 29. ⁱ ^{1 Cor.} ix. 24-26. ^{Phil.} iii. 13, 14. ^{Heb.} xii. 1, 2. ^k ^{cxix.} 9. ^{Job} xxv. 3. ^{Ec.} i. 5. ^{Col.} i. 23. ^{1 Job} xxii. 14. ^{Or,} doctrine. ^{lxxviii.} 1-7. ^{cxix.} 72. ⁹⁶⁻ 100. ^{105.} 127. ^{128.} cxlvii. 19. ^{20.} Deut. vi. 6-9. ^{xvii.} 18-20. ^{Josh.} i. 8. ^{Job} xxiii. 12. ^{Rom.} iii. 2. ^{xv.} 4. ^m xviii. 30. ^{Deut.} xxxii. 4. ^{Rom.} xii. 2. ^{Jam.} i. 17. ^{Or,} restoring. ^{xxiii.} 3. ^{cxix.} 9. ^{Jam.} i. 21-25. ⁿ xciii. 5. ^{cxix.} 14. ^{24.} 111. ^{152.} ^{Is.} viii. 16. ^{20.} ^{John} iii. 32, 33. ^{v.} 39. ^{Acts} x. 43. ^{2 Tim.} i. 8. ^{1 John} v. 9-12. ^{Rev.} xix. 10.

2 ^e Day unto day uttereth speech, and ^d night unto night sheweth knowledge.

3 ^e There is no speech nor language, ^{*} where their voice is not heard.

4 ^f Their [†] line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. ^g In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun;

5 Which is ^h as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and ⁱ rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.

6 ^k His going forth is from the end of the heaven, ^l and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof.

7 [¶] The [†] law of the LORD is ^m perfect, ⁿ converting the soul: ^o the testi-

mony of the LORD is ^o sure, ^p making wise the simple.

8 The ^q statutes of the LORD are ^r right, ^s rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD ^t is pure, ^u enlightening the eyes.

9 ^x The fear of the LORD is clean, ^y enduring for ever: ^z the judgments of the LORD are ^{aa} true and righteous altogether.

10 More to be desired are they ^{ab} than gold, yea, than much fine gold: ^{ac} sweeter also than honey, and ^{ad} the honey-comb.

11 ^{ae} Moreover, by them is thy ser-

^{cxix.} 7. ^{2 Sam.} xxiii. 5. ^{2 Tim.} ii. 13. ^{Heb.} vi. 18, 19. ^{cxix.} 130. ^{Prov.} i. 4, 22, 23. ^{Col.} iii. 16. ^{2 Tim.} iii. 15-17. ^q ^{cxix.} 45. ^{cxix.} 12. ^{16.} 80. ^{171.} ^{Gen.} xxvi. 5. ^{Ex.} xviii. 16. ^{Deut.} iv. 5, 6. ^{Ez.} xxxvi. 27. ^{cxix.} 128. ^{Neh.} ix. 13. ^s ^{xl.} 8. ^{cxix.} 14. ^{24.} 54. ^{92.} 111. ^{143.} ^{Deut.} xii. 11, 12. ^{xvii.} 11. ^{14.} ^{Neh.} viii. 12. ^{Is.} lxiv. 5. ^{Jer.} xv. 16. ^{Rom.} vii. 22. ^t ^{xii.} 6. ^{cxix.} 140. ^{Prov.} xxx. 5. ^{Rom.} vii. 12-14. ^u ^{cxix.} 98-100. ^{105.} 130. ^{Prov.} ii. 6. ^{vi.} 23. ^{xxxi.} 11-14. ^{xxxvi.} 1. ^{cxv.} 13. ^{Gen.} xxii. 12. ^{xlii.} 18. ^{1 Sam.} xii. 24. ^{1 Kings} xviii. 3, 4. ^{12.} ^{Neh.} v. 15. ^{Prov.} viii. 13. ^{Acts} x. 22. ^{Rom.} iii. 10-18. ^y ^{cxix.} 10. ^{cxii.} 1-6. ^z ^{x.} 5. ^{xxxvi.} 6. ^{lxxii.} 1, 2. ^{cxix.} 7, 39, 62, 75, 106, 137, 138, 142, 160, 164. ^{cxlvii.} 19. ^{Ex.} xxi. 1. ^{Deut.} iv. 8. ^{Is.} xxvi. 8. ^{Rom.} ii. 2. ^{xi.} 22. ^{Rev.} xv. 3. ^{xvi.} 7. ^{xix.} 2. ^{Heb.} truth. ^a ^{cxix.} 72, 127. ^{Job} xxviii. 15-17. ^{Prov.} iii. 13-15. ^{viii.} 10, 11, 19. ^{xvi.} 16. ^b ^{lxiii.} 5. ^{cxix.} 103. ^{Job} xxiii. 12. ^{Prov.} xxiv. 13, 14. ^{* Heb.} the dropping of honey-combs. ^{1 Sam.} xiv. 26-29. ^c ^{cxix.} 11. ^{2 Chr.} xix. 10. ^{Prov.} vi. 22, 24. ^{Ez.} iii. 17-21. ^{xxxiii.} 3-9. ^{Matt.} iii. 7. ^{Acts} xx. 31. ^{1 Cor.} iv. 14. ^{1 Thes.} v. 14. ^{Heb.} xi. 7.

of mankind were wholly inexcusable. Even the Gentiles, to the remotest regions of the earth, were shewn the glory of God, by the heavens and the heavenly orbs, the benefit of which they received; but they forgot the Creator: Israel however had fuller and more adequate instructions from the sacred oracles. (*Notes*, cxlvii. 19, 20. *Is.* xl. 21-26. *Jer.* x. 11-15. *Rom.* i. 18-23.)

V. 2. The day and night, in constant rotation, instruct mankind in the knowledge of the glorious Creator; and each day and night, as it were, transmits this task to its successor: or they answer to each other, as when men sing in parts, alternately.

V. 3-6. The luminaries of heaven are not capable of articulate discourse, as man is; (which seems to be intimated by the abruptness of the original, "No speech, no language, their voice is not heard;") yet their instructions may be understood by every nation under heaven: and whilst other teachers are confined to some particular district, they preach to the whole human race. (*Note*, *Rom.* x. 18-21.) This is especially the case with the glorious sun, who has, as it were, his tabernacle pitched in the centre of the heavens. Thence every morning he issues forth, in all the vigour, alacrity, and beautiful adorning, with which a bridegroom would leave his chamber to go to his nuptials; and rejoices like an active racer, who glories in his strength, and anticipates the victory, when about to start for the prize. Thus he daily diffuses through the whole earth, light, warmth, and fertility; and preserves and invigorates all animal and vegetable life, and even penetrates by his piercing beams into the heart of the earth. (*Notes*, *Gen.* i. 14-19. *Deut.* iv. 19.)—The sun in the firmament may be considered as an emblem of "the Sun of righteousness," diffusing divine light and salvation by his gospel to the nations of the earth. He delights in communicating blessings to his church, which as a Bridegroom he has espoused to himself: and his course will be unwearied as that of the sun, till the whole earth be filled with his light and salvation. (*Notes*, lxxxiv. 11, 12. *Mal.* iv. 2, 3. *John* iii. 27-36.)

V. 7-11. The word, here translated "law," may be rendered *doctrine*; and be understood as a general name for divine revelation, as then extant, the law of Moses being the principal part of it. The whole of this is "perfect;" (*Note*, *Deut.* xxxii. 4;) and it is intended to convert the soul from sin and the world, to God and holiness; and thus to restore man from his fallen state. By it the Lord *testifies* to us all those truths, which relate to the mysteries and perfections of his nature, to our own state and character, to the way of salvation, and to the eternal world; with the invitations and promises connected with them. (*Marg. Ref.* n.—*Notes*, *Ps.* cxix. 111. *Is.* viii. 20. *1 John* v. 9-12.) This "testimony is sure," and entirely to be depended on; and the ignorant and unlearned, who seem most exposed to delusion, by unreservedly and simply crediting the word of God, become wise unto salvation, and learn to live a holy, useful, and happy life, in this evil world: whilst human reasonings on these subjects commonly bewilder men in error and uncertainty.—This sure testimony 'preserves ignorant souls from being seduced to worship the sun...; for it makes them, at the first word, so wise, as to understand that the LORD "created the heavens, as well as the earth." *Bp. Patrick*.—"The statutes" frequently mean the *ordinances* of God, by which Israel maintained communion with him, and received all blessings from him. These, though burdensome in themselves, under that dispensation, were entirely suited to its object, and proved a source of joy to the believing worshipper. (*Marg. Ref.* q.) But some explain the word in this place, to signify the laws given to regulate the conduct of magistrates, in administering justice; which were peculiarly equitable, and tended to render the nation happy. "The commandment," or the moral law, is "holy, just, and good," and spiritual; enlightening the mind to perceive what men should be and do, and how far they are from that holiness which it demands. Thus they learn their true character, are shut up under sin and condemnation, and are brought to welcome the divine Saviour, as well as to walk in newness of life. (*Notes*, *Ex.*

vant warned: *and* ^a in keeping of them
^d Prov. iii. 16—18. *there is* great reward.
 xi. 18. xxix. 18.
 Is. iii. 10. 11.
 Matt. vi. 4. 6.
 18. Heb. xi. 6.
 26. Jam. i. 25.
 2 John 8. Rev.
 xiv. 13.
^e xl. 12. Job vi
 24. Is. lxiv. 6.
 1 Cor. iv. 4.
 Heb. ix. 7.
^f li. 5—10. lxxv. 3. ¹ presumptuous sins; ^k let them not
 1 John i. 7.
^g xc. 8. cxxxix. 2. 23, 24. Lev. iv. 2, &c. Jer. xvii 9
 xxi. 14. Num. xv. 30, 31. Deut. xvii. 12, 13. 2 Pet. ii. 10
 vi. 12—14. 16—22

have dominion over me: then shall I
 be ¹ upright, and ^m I shall be innocent
 from the ^{*} great transgression.

14 ⁿ Let the words of my mouth,
 and the meditation of my heart, be ac-
 ceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my
[†] Strength, and ^o my Redeemer.

[†] Heb. rock. xviii. 2. ^o Job xix. 25. Is. xliii. 14. xlv. 6. xlvii. 4. liv. 5. Tit.
 ii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Rev. v. 9.

xx. 1. Rom. iii. 19, 20.)—"The fear of the LORD, is
 "clean," as it sets the soul against all sin, and leads to
 holy watchfulness and diligence; and being once truly im-
 planted in the soul, it will endure for ever. The term also
 may include the worship rendered to God, according to
 his word; which was free from all profane mixtures of
 superstition and idolatry, and far removed from the gross
 immoralities attending the religion of the surrounding na-
 tions. The obligation to this holy worship is perpetual;
 but the external form was varied, when the old dispensa-
 tion was superseded by the new, and a more spiritual wor-
 ship appointed.—"The judgments" commonly, in the
 books of Moses, denote the *judicial law*: (Notes, Ex. xxi.
 1. Deut. iv. 6—8. vi. 1:) but the term is used in various
 senses, in other parts of Scripture; and may include warn-
 ings, counsels, threatenings, and the instances given of
 divine wrath executed on sinners in different ways.—In
 every sense "the judgments of God were true and right-
 eous altogether," without the least exception in any one
 particular. (Marg. Ref. z.)—Indeed, the sacred word,
 (even as David had it,) was in his judgment more valuable,
 because more useful, than much fine gold; and he found
 it more pleasant than honey to his taste. He loved the
 Scriptures, especially because they warned him to avoid
 sins and temptations: nay, the observance of them was
 its own abundant recompence; though it likewise entitled
 him to a gracious reward, in another world, the earnest
 of which he had richly experienced. (Notes, cxix. 97—105.
 Jam. i. 22—25.)

V. 12—14. From the consideration of the word of
 God, David's thoughts recurred to himself. Viewed in
 this glass, his *errors* or deviations, appeared innumerable;
 and he exclaimed, "Who can understand his errors?"
 Who can know, or find out, or recollect, all his failures
 of conformity to this perfect rule? He therefore not only
 desired to be pardoned, and cleansed from those sins,
 which he had discovered and confessed, but also from such
 as he had forgotten or overlooked: for, by "secret faults,"
 he evidently meant the transgressions which had escaped
 his own notice, or vanished from his memory; and not
 those which had been kept secret from human observation.
 The treachery of his heart likewise appeared to him so
 great, that he feared being drawn aside into deliberate and
 presumptuous sins, the result of proud contempt of God,
 and being brought under the dominion of some powerful
 lust; and this dictated a fervent prayer to be kept back by
 divine grace from such dreadful crimes and consequences.
 (Notes, Num. xv. 30—36.) In this way he hoped to be
 preserved upright and innocent from the great offence of
 rebellion, idolatry, or apostasy: and he earnestly intreated,
 that "the words of his mouth, and the meditation of his
 "heart," might, by divine grace, be rendered such as

might properly obtain a merciful acceptance in the sight
 of that holy Lord God, whom he entitled "his Strength,
 "and his Redeemer." (Note, Job xix. 23—27.) His de-
 pendence therefore was entirely the same as that of every
 Christian, who says, "Surely in the Lord" Jesus, "have
 "I righteousness and strength."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The heavens so declare the glory of God and proclaim
 his wisdom, power, and goodness, that atheists, infidels,
 idolaters, and all ungodly men, will be for ever left without
 excuse. Indeed, we may all learn profitable lessons from
 these constant teachers, who instruct, by day and night,
 men in every clime, and of every tongue. By considering
 these inanimate servants of our Creator, we may learn to
 adore his magnificence and liberality; we may be stirred
 up to cheerfulness, constancy, and diligence in doing
 good; and led to use our nobler gifts of reason and speech
 to proclaim his praise.—The transition is thence easy and
 natural to the contemplation of the Sun of righteousness,
 the Bridegroom of the church and Light of the world.
 While we walk in his holy light and consolations, and are
 made fruitful in good works by his genial influence; we
 should long and pray for that time, when he shall enlighten,
 cheer, and fructify every nation on earth with his blessed
 salvation. He shines upon us through his word: may he
 send forth more and more faithful ministers to publish it
 throughout the earth! Where that is truly received, "it
 "converteth the soul" from sin to God. May we heartily
 believe his "sure testimony," and imbibe heavenly wis-
 dom from this pure and inexhaustible Fountain: may we
 rejoice in attending on all his ordinances; and thus receive
 communications of light, grace, strength, and consolation
 from the fulness of Christ, and render to the Lord the
 glory due unto his name. May we study and understand
 his enlightening commandments; examining ourselves by
 them, and walking with delight according to their holy
 instructions, while we embrace the precious promises, and
 daily plead them before our God. May his holy and puri-
 fying fear, which endures for ever, be deeply grafted in
 our hearts, that we may stand in awe of his righteous
 judgments, and be warned from every evil way; that we
 may flee for refuge to his gracious salvation, and have our
 consciences directed and our hearts encouraged by every
 part of his sacred word. Then shall we prize our Bibles
 more than all manner of riches, and find more delight in
 them than in all the pleasures of sense; being guided by
 them into that happy path, which leads to still more com-
 plete felicity in the eternal world.—But let it be observed,
 that the more any man studies and understands the holy
 scriptures, the more deeply will he be convinced of his
 own sinfulness, in thought, word, and deed: serious and

PSALM XX.

a xli. 1. xlii. 1.
1. 15. ix. 11. xci.
16. cxxxviii. 7.
Jer. xxx. 7. Matt.
xxvi. 38, 39. Heb.
v. 7.
b ix. 10. lxxxiii.
18. Ex. xxxiv. 5
—7. Prov. xviii.
10. Is. 1. 10.
c xlii. 7. 11. Gen.
xxxii. 27—29.
xlvi. 15, 16. Ex.
iii. 13—15.
* Heb. set thee on
an high place.
xviii. 2. xci. 14.
cxliv. 2.
+ Heb. thy help.
xlvi. 17. 1 Kings
viii. 44, 45. 2 Chr.
xx. 8, 9.
† Heb. support.
e 2 Sam. v. 7. vi.
17. Is. xii. 6. xiv.
32. xxxvii. 34.
35.
f Gen. iv. 4. Is. lx.
7. Eph. v. 2.
1 Pet. ii. 5.
g Heb. turn to
ashes, or make
fat. Lev. ix. 24.
1 Chr. xxi. 26.
2 Chr. vii. 1.
42. xvi. 23. Rom. viii. 27, 28. 1 John v. 14, 15.

Israel prays that her king may be defended, accepted, and prospered, 1—4: and rejoices in confidence of being answered and succeeded, 5—9.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

THE LORD ^ahear thee in the day of trouble: ^bthe name of ^cthe God of Jacob ^{*}defend thee.

2 Send [†]thee help ^dfrom the sanctuary, and [†]strengthen thee ^eout of Zion.

3 ^fRemember all thy offerings, and ^gaccept thy burnt-sacrifice. Selah.

4 ^gGrant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.

frequent self-examination by this faithful mirror, will discover to him innumerable deviations from his perfect rule; and convince him that those, which have escaped his recollection or observation, are equally innumerable. This will induce him to cast himself unreservedly upon the mercy and grace of God, for deliverance from those sins which have been hitherto unnoticed by himself, or vanished from his recollection. He will also grow more jealous of his own heart, and more afraid of temptation, lest he should be drawn into presumptuous sins, and come under the dominion of them: and whilst he longs, more and more, to be preserved from every transgression, and that his thoughts, words, and works, may be acceptable to the Lord; he will feel more sensibly his own insufficiency for every good thing, and learn to depend more entirely upon Christ Jesus, as “made of God unto him, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption;” and he will “rejoice and glory in him alone.” (Note, 1 Cor. i. 26—31.)

NOTES.

PSALM XX. V. 1, 2. This psalm was doubtless composed, and publicly sung, when David was about to engage in some perilous expedition: it is generally thought in that against the Ammonites and Syrians. (Notes, 2 Sam. x. 1 Chr. xix.)—The congregation of Israel thus prayed for the protection and success of their anointed king, to “the God of Jacob,” to that God who heard the patriarch in his distress, and was still the God of his posterity. (Note, Gen. xxxii. 27, 28.) Among them he had fixed his sanctuary, and the ark of the covenant, which had lately been removed to mount Zion; and from him, the great Object of their worship, as manifesting his glory above the mercy-seat, they sought help and victory. David was a type of Christ, in his conflicts and victories: and the psalm may be applied as a prayer of the ancient church for his coming, and of the Christian church, for the completion of his work, and the establishment of his kingdom, and for its enlargement and prosperity.

V. 3. The oblations at the sanctuary, when presented in humble faith and love, were graciously accepted, as typical of the Redeemer’s atoning sacrifice; and the answer, by fire from heaven consuming the victims, was the most

5 ^hWe will rejoice in thy salvation, and ⁱin the name of our God we will set up *our* banners: the LORD fulfil all thy petitions.

6 Now ^kknow I that the LORD saveth his anointed; ^lhe will hear him from ^lhis holy heaven, ^{*}with the saving strength of his right hand.

7 ^mSome *trust* in chariots, and some in horses: ⁿbut we will remember the name of the LORD our God.

8 ^oThey are brought down and fallen: ^pbut we are risen and stand upright.

9 ^qSave, LORD: ^rlet the king hear us when we call.

n xlv. 17. 2 Chr. xlii. 10—12. 16. xiv. 11. xx. 12. 20. xxxii. 8. v. 31. p cxxv. 1. cxlvi. 5—9. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. q cxviii. 25, 26. Matt. xxi. 9. 15. r ii. 6—10. v. 2. xxiv. 7. xlv. 4. lxxiv. 12

h xlii. 5. xxi. 1. xxxv. 9. cxvi. 15. Is. xii. 1—3. xxxv. 9. lxi. 10. Hab. iii. 18. Luke i. 47.
i lx. 4. Ex. xvii. 15. marg. Num. x. 35, 36. 1 Sam. xvii. 45. Is. xi. 10. Mic. iv. 5. k ii. 2. xviii. 50. xxxviii. 8. lxxxix. 20—23. Acts ii. 36. iv. 10. l 1 Kings viii. 30. 43. Matt. vi. 9. Heb. the heaven of his holiness Is. lvii. 15. lxiii. 15.
* Heb. by the strength of the salvation of his right hand. xvii. 7. xviii. 35. Acts ii. 33. v. 31. m xxxiii. 16, 17. 1 Sam. xii. 5. 2 Sam. viii. 4. x. 18. Prov. xxi. 31. Is. xxx. 16. xxxi. 1. Jer. xvii. 5. o xxxiv. 21, 22. Judg. v. 31. p cxxv. 1. cxlvi. 5—9. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. q cxviii. 25, 26. Matt. xxi. 9. 15.

decisive proof of this acceptance. (Marg.—Notes, Gen. iv. 3—5. Lev. ix. 24. 1 Kings xviii. 38, 39. 2 Chr. vii. 1—3.)—David’s burnt-offering, on another occasion, was thus consumed. (Note, 1 Chr. xxi. 26.)

Accept.] תָּשָׁבַע: “turn to ashes.” (marg.)—The verb תָּשָׁבַע (from תָּשָׁבַע ashes) occurs besides only in Ex. xxvii. 3, and Num. iv. 13; in both which places our Translation gives it the sense of removing the ashes.

V. 4. David earnestly desired to promote the honour of God, and the welfare of Israel, by means of his counsels and undertakings; and it was proper for the people to pray for him in this expressive language. In respect of the designs of our great Redeemer, the words may be adopted in the most unreserved manner; but seldom in respect of other kings or princes.

V. 5. The king of Israel was their anointed deliverer; and when they went forth to war under his command, they might properly set up their banners in the name of the LORD, as well as “rejoice in his salvation.”—“In confidence of thy help, we will shout when we set on our enemies: ... for the Lord will not fail to grant the petitions of our sovereign, whose cause is so just, and who hath been so insolently treated by them.” Bp. Patrick.—As the king is immediately addressed, the meaning may be, ‘We shall rejoice in thy preservation, or deliverance (in salute tua);’ or, ‘in the deliverance, which we expect that thou wilt, in answer to our united prayers, accomplish for us.’

V. 6—8. David himself seems here to speak. His past deliverances and victories, and the loyal zeal of his people, assured him of success, from the power of Israel’s God. Comparing the confidence of his enemies in chariots and horses, and in well-appointed and numerous troops, with his own reliance, and that of his people, on the Almighty; he anticipated the triumph, and exulted as if already victorious.

His anointed. (6) “His Messiah.” David, as immediately chosen by God and anointed by Samuel, at his command, to be king of his people Israel, was a type of Christ, more directly than his successors in general were. (Note, John x. 32—39.)

V. 9. ‘Let the king of heaven hear, while we pray

PSALM XXI.

The king and people rejoice in God, and bless him for fully answering their largest prayers, 1—6; expressing the strongest assurance of future success, with the ruin of all enemies, 7—12; and calling upon God to exalt himself, that they might more and more sing his praises, 13.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

^a i. 6. xx. 6. 9.
lxi. 11. lxxii. 1.
2. Is. ix. 6. 7. ^a
Matt. ii. 2.
^b xxviii. 7. lxii. 7.
xcv. 1. xcix. 4.
^c xx. 5. lxxi. 17—
24. cxviii. 14, 15.
Heb. xii. 2.

THE king shall ^b joy in thy strength,
O LORD; and ^c in thy salvation how
greatly shall he rejoice!

for his anointed on earth.'—Or the clause may be rendered,
"O LORD, Save the king: he shall (or let him, i. e. *the*
"LORD) hear us when we call."

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No rank or character can exempt man from trouble; but the Lord will hear the prayers of the afflicted, and will support and deliver them. They who pray most fervently for themselves, put the greatest value on the prayers of others; and are encouraged by them in further calling upon God. His "name," his glorious perfections, (*Notes, Ex. xxxiv. 5—7. Prov. xviii. 10, 11. Matt. xxviii. 18—20,*) will be a sure Defence to all who, like Jacob, trust him and apply to him in their distress: but we should observe, that all our help comes out of Zion, from the mercy-seat, and through the accepted sacrifice of our Emmanuel, which all the legal burnt-offerings shadowed forth.—As far as our desires are spiritual, and our counsels holy, we may hope to have them granted and fulfilled; but it would be ruinous to have our sinful inclinations indulged.—Fervent united prayers tend much to the joyful assurance of faith and hope; and it is the first step to victory, in our spiritual warfare, to renounce all self-dependance and carnal confidence, and to trust only in the mercy and grace of God: thus we shall arise from our depth of misery, and obtain establishment; while all who trust in themselves will soon be brought down.—Happy is it for that people, whose rulers are influenced, in all their measures, by the faith and fear of God, aiming at his glory and the publick good; when they value the prayers of true Christians, and act with such justice, that pious men can unreservedly pray for their success; when they set up their banners in the name of God; and when they place their confidence, not in fleets and armies, but in his powerful protection. "From his holy heaven, with the saving strength of his "right hand," he will defend and prosper such as thus trust in him.—It is our duty to pray for our rulers, that they may be like David: we have great cause for thankfulness for our peculiar advantages in this respect; and we should continually intreat the Lord, that they who are or shall be placed over us, may be directed and prospered in every undertaking, for the honour of God, the peace and welfare of the land, and the common benefit of mankind.—In answer to the hopes and prayers of the old-testament church, the anointed King of God's people came in the appointed season: he was heard in the day of his trouble;

2 Thou hast given him ^d his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips. Selah.

3 For thou ^e preventest him with ^f the blessings of goodness: ^g thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head.

4 ^h He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even ⁱ length of days for ever and ever.

5 ^k His glory is great in thy salvation: ^l honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him.

^l xiii. 1. John xiii. 31, 32. xvii. 1. 5. 22. Phil. ii. 9—11. Heb. viii. 1. Rev. v. 8—13. 1 cx. 1. 1 Chr. xvii. 11—15. 27. Matt. xxviii. 18. Eph. i. 20—22. 1 Pet. iii. 22.

his sacrifice was accepted; his intercessions have prevailed; his kingdom has been set up, and we are called to partake of its blessings. Thanksgivings for these benefits should be constantly rendered. In "his salvation let us rejoice," under him let us enlist, and in his name set up our banners. But we ought to recollect, that we belong to a large army, and we should not only seek and rejoice in hope of personal triumphs, but pray also for the success of the common cause; and look for the accomplishment of the Redeemer's whole counsel, when his dominion over willing subjects shall be extended throughout the earth.

NOTES.

PSALM XXI. V. 1. The former psalm was the prayer of Israel for David, and of the church for the Messiah; and this is a song of praise to God, who had answered those prayers. Several circumstances of the psalm may be accommodated to the case of David. Yet the whole seems more immediately intended for Christ and his kingdom.—"Many of the Hebrews themselves apply it to the 'Messiah. So that it may be called a psalm of triumph 'after the victories which David got over his enemies, 'which were a type of Christ's victory over death, and of 'the triumph that ensued. And truly there are some things 'in it, which are more literally fulfilled in Christ than in 'David.' *Bp. Patrick.*—David had risen to great authority: but he exulted and rejoiced in the strength and power of God, which had wrought many and great deliverances for him; which had made him the deliverer of Israel from all enemies, and was engaged for his eternal salvation.—Thus our Lord, being raised from the dead, entered on the "joy set before him;" which includes the salvation of his people, to the glory of God the Father, as well as his own exaltation to the mediatorial throne. (*Note, Heb. xii. 2, 3.*)

V. 2—5. God had, on all occasions, answered the prayers of his servant David; had *prevented* him, by directing Samuel to anoint him, as king of Israel, before he had thought of such an honour; and had made him successful and distinguished beyond his largest hopes. The Lord had not only very often preserved his life, in answer to his prayers, when in the most imminent danger; but had given him the assurance of continuing the kingdom in his family for many generations, and in Christ, as his Descendant, for ever; and he was encouraged personally to expect everlasting life in heaven. Thus his glory was

6 For thou hast * made him most blessed for ever: ^m thou hast [†] made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.

7 ^a For the king trusteth in the LORD, and, through the mercy of ^o the most High, ^p he shall not be moved.

8 ^q Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies: thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.

9 ^r Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: ^s the LORD shall swallow them up ^t in his wrath, and ^u the fire shall devour them.

10 ^x Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.

11 For they intended evil against thee: they ^y imagined a mischievous device, ^z which ^{aa} they are not able to perform.

12 ^a Therefore shalt thou ^b make them turn their ^c back, ^d when ^e thou shalt make ready ^f thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them.

13 ^g Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: ^h so will we sing and praise thy power.

in all respects "great in God's salvation."—Yet the passage, in its fullest import, can only be accomplished in Christ himself.

Thou preventest. (3) Literally, *Thou shalt prevent*. This may be considered as the language of prophecy.

V. 6, 7. The marginal rendering, "Thou hast set him ^a to be blessings for evermore," is the most literal, and suggests another important thought on the subject. David was *set to be blessings*, not only to his own generation, and to his posterity, and to Israel for many ages; but, by these divine poems, to the whole church, while the world shall endure; and in Christ, his Son, to all eternity. (*Note*, Gen. xii. 1—3.)—David also enjoyed great felicity in the favour of God; and, trusting in his mercy, could not be moved, either in respect of his authority or his personal salvation. But the glory and dominion of Christ, to the praise of the glory of divine grace, are beyond the reach of all his enemies, and those of his church; and he especially "is set for blessings for evermore." (*Note*, lxxii. 17—19.)

V. 8—12. These verses indicate, that the haters and opposers of Israel's anointed king were likewise the enemies of God; who would assuredly take vengeance on them, and their posterity, in the most awful manner, making them the butt of his severest displeasure. (*Notes*, ii. 1—9.) But they may be considered as addressed to the Messiah himself; and no doubt, they receive their fullest accomplishment, in the judgments inflicted on the opposers and despisers of his authority and gospel. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, ex. 1. 5, 6. Luke xix. 11—27. 1 Cor. xv. 20—28. 2 Thes. i. 5—10. Rev. xx. 11—15.)

V. 13. Both the prosperity of the church, and the ruin of its enemies, tend to *exalt* God, or to render his glory conspicuous to his rational creatures. These effects can only be produced by his Omnipotence; which his people unitedly pray to see displayed, that they may joyfully celebrate his praises.—This conclusion greatly resembles the first petitions, and closing doxology, of the Lord's prayer. (*Notes*, Matt. vi. 9, 10, 13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

If David rejoiced greatly in the honour conferred on him, as king of Israel; what is the joy of our Redeemer in his

exaltation to the mediatorial throne, and in the salvation of his people! And if Israel, from love to David and his auspicious government, rejoiced, and praised God for him; how great should be our joy to behold by faith our Brother and Friend thus glorified, and our praises for all the blessings which we may expect from him! The Father was as ready to grant, as his beloved Son to ask, when he desired to be crowned, not with gold, but with glory and honour, and to have all things put under his feet; and to possess an unchangeable kingdom, for the benefit of his church: nay, our God "prevents" us sinners "with the blessings of his goodness;" and if we ask, he will give us "a crown of glory that fadeth not away," and "long life, even for ever and ever;" and the requests of the Saviour's lips are not withheld, while sinners are converted and believers established through his intercession. Words cannot express his glory in God's salvation, the honour and majesty which are laid upon him, and the adoration which is rendered to him by angels and saints above: yet he chiefly delights in his exalted state, as empowering him to confer "an exceeding and eternal weight of glory" on poor sinners, who here trust and love him. For, being made "most blessed himself for ever," he is constituted to be the Source of blessings, and "the Author of eternal salvation, to all them that obey him."—His kingdom is fixed on an immovable basis, upheld by the power of God; and the glorious display of the mercy of the Most High forms its grand object. But how will they escape, who are enemies to this glorious King and Saviour? The Jewish nation soon experienced the dreadful effects of his slighted love: and the condition of their posterity, from the siege and sack of Jerusalem to this day, awfully warns every one, not to entail miseries on his descendants, and bring destruction on himself, by opposing the Redeemer's kingdom, or neglecting his salvation. The discoveries however which will be made, and the vengeance which will be executed, at the day of judgment, on every enemy of Christ, will form the most tremendous comment on this psalm. In that day of his anger, all who hate him will be made as the fiery oven; they will be swallowed up and devoured; their devices will end in everlasting disappointment and despair; and all the arrows of the Almighty will be prepared, to execute his righteous vengeance upon

PSALM XXII.

David, prophetically speaking in the person of Christ, complains grievously, that he was forsaken by his God, and left to the insulting cruelty of his enemies; and he predicts many circumstances of the Messiah's sufferings, 1—21. He proclaims the name and praise of the Lord, calling on the people to trust and glorify him; and foretels the permanent success of the gospel, 22—31.

To the chief Musician upon *Aijeleth Shahaar, a Psalm of David.

MY God, ^a my God, ^b why hast thou forsaken me? ^c why art thou so ^d far from ^e helping me, and from ^f the words of my roaring.

2 O my God, ^e I cry in the day-time, ^f but thou hearest not; and ^g in the night-season, and ^h am not silent.

3 But ⁱ thou art holy, O thou ^j that inhabitest the praises of Israel.

4 ^k Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them.

5 They ^l cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, ^m and were not confounded.

6 But ⁿ I am a worm, and no man; ^o a reproach of men, and despised of the people.

salvation, as regardless of his agonies and prayers. Yet still he used the language of vigorous faith, conflicting with, and prevailing against, all despondency and impatience.—(Notes, Gen. iii. 14, 15. Matt. xxvi. 36—39. Mark xiv. 32—36. xv. 34—39. Luke xxii. 43, 44.) The abruptness of the latter part is remarkable: “Far from my salvation:” (marg.)—“the words of my roaring.”—How can this be?

V. 2. The Lord Jesus continued whole nights in prayer; he arose a great while before day for that purpose; and in the cold dark night he prostrated himself in the garden, and “prayed most earnestly:” yet did not the cup of his sufferings for sinners pass from him! He felt a natural reluctance to such tremendous sorrows, but his zeal and love prevailed; and when he added, “Not my will but thine be done,” he, as it were, retracted or at least qualified his former petition.—The prophecy expresses the feelings of his soul in the extremity of his suffering; yet his supplications were heard, as it soon appeared in his resurrection. (Notes, John xii. 27—33. xvii. 1—3. Heb. v. 7—10.)

V. 3. This verse seems to be admirably expressive of perfect resignation under the severest sufferings, which peculiarly accords with the prophetic meaning.—“Thou hearest not.”—Shall I then murmur, or impeach thy faithfulness? Far from it: “Thou, nevertheless, continuest holy, &c.” Thus our Lord, on the cross, declared the holiness of God in his sharpest sufferings: nay, he declared them to be a demonstration of it; for which he would be continually praised by Israel, more than for all the other deliverances, which they had received in answer to their faith and prayer.—*Thou inhabitest, &c.* In Israel, in the church exclusively, the works and perfections of God are celebrated; and there, on this account especially, he has, so to speak, his earthly residence.

V. 4—6. (Marg. Ref.) A worm, &c. (6) The Saviour here spake of the extremely abject state, to which he was reduced; in which he was treated as a worm, and patiently submitted to it; being humble, silent, and harmless, when oppressed and trodden under foot.—The language is very expressive of the contempt, with which he was treated by all ranks and orders of men, whether Jews or Gentiles. (Notes, Is. xlix. 7, 8. liii. 2, 3. Zech. xi. 7—9. 12—14. Luke xxiii. 6—12.)

* Or, the hind of the morning. 16. xlii. 1, 2. xxxi. 14—16. xliii. 1—5. Matt. xxvii. 46. Mark xv. 34. b xxvi. 9. xxxvii. 28. lxxi. 11. 1 Sam. xii. 22. Heb. xiii. 5. c 11. xvi. 1. † Heb. my salvation. Is. xlv. 13. d xxxii. 3, 4. xxxviii. 8. Job iii. 24. Is. lix. 11. Luke xxii. 44. Heb. v. 7.

e xlii. 3. lv. 16. 17. lxxxviii. 1. Luke xviii. 7. 1 Thes. iii. 10. 2 Tim. i. 3. f lxxx. 4. Lam. iii. 8. 44. g Luke vi. 12. xviii. 7. xxii. 41—46. † Heb. there is no silence to me. Matt. xxvi. 44. h xlv. 17. Is. vi. 3. Rev. iv. 8. i l. 23. lxx. 1. Deut. x. 21. k xlv. 1—7. Gen. xv. 6. xxxii. 9—12. 28. Ex. xiv. 13, 14. 31. 1 Sam. vii. 9—12. Rom. iv. 18—22. Heb. xi. 8—32. l xcix. 6, 7. cvi. 44. Judg. iv. 3. vi. 6. x. 10—16. m xxv. 2, 3. xxxi. 1. lxxi. 6, 7. lxxi. 1. Is. xlv. 17. xlix. 23. Rom. ix. 33. x. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 6. n Job xxv. 6. Is. xli. 14. o xxxi. 11. lxxi. 7—12. 19, 20. lxxxviii. 6. Is. xlix. 7. liii. 3. Zech. xi. 8. Matt. xi. 19. xii. 24. xxvii. 20—23. John vii. 15. 20. 47—49. viii. 48. Rom. xv. 3. Heb. xiii. 13.

NOTES.

PSALM XXII. Title. “Aijeleth Shahaar” signifies *The hind of the morning*; (marg.) and various conjectures have been made concerning the intention of this singular title. Some think it merely a musical term; and others suppose it refers to the time when it was to be sung, rendering it “the first dawn.” Others apply it to Christ, as the Light of the world, whose rising was predicted.—But perhaps it points out the Saviour, marked by Satan from his birth for persecution, as the hind or hart is in the morning for chase; and so hunted down by his enemies, until he was surrounded by them, when he hung upon the cross. (Notes, 16—18. Matt. ii. 13—18. xxvii. 39—44. Luke xi. 53, 54. Acts iv. 23—28.) Of this the persecutions of David in his earlier years were a type.

V. 1. The first clause of this verse is exactly of the same import, with the words used by our Lord on the cross. (Note, Matt. xxvii. 46.) The Hebrew verb indeed is there changed for one supposed to be Syriack; but the Evangelist’s interpretation is given in the very words of the Septuagint. No reasonable doubt can be made, that he should be considered as the Speaker, throughout this whole prophetic psalm. It may even be questioned, whether David had any reference to his own case in it; as every thing is applicable to Christ, and most things utterly inapplicable to David.—While the man Jesus, without any personal transgression or defilement, but bearing our sins, in their guilt and punishment, was wholly deprived of all sensible comfort, and felt that horror in his soul which is the effect of the divine wrath; while the powers of darkness were permitted to assail him with every dreadful temptation; and while wicked men unrestrainedly exercised their cruel malice towards him; his God and Father seemed to have forsaken him, and to stand at a distance from his

^p xxxv. 15, 16. ^q Matt. ix. 24. ^r xxvii. 29. Mark xv. 20. Luke xvi. 14. xxiii. 11. 35—39. 7 All they that see me ^p laugh me to scorn: they ^q shoot out the lip, ^r they shake the head, *saying*,

^s Heb. *open*. xxxi. 18. Job xvi. 4. 10. xxx. 9—11. Is. lvi. 4. Matt. xxvi. 66—68. 8 ^s He ^t trusted on the LORD, *that* he would deliver him; ^u let him deliver him, ^v seeing he delighted in him.

^w q xlv. 14. cix. 25. Is. xxxvii. 22. 23. Matt. xxvii. 39, 40. Mark xv. 29—32. 9 But thou *art* he ^w that took me out of the womb: ^x thou didst ^y make me hope *when I was* upon my mother's breasts.

^z Heb. *rolled himself on*. xxxvii. 5. lv. 22. Prov. xvi. 3. *Marg.* 10 I was ^z cast upon thee from the womb: ^a thou *art* my God ^b from my mother's belly.

^c Or, *if he delight*. xviii. 19. Is. xlii. 1. Matt. iii. 17. xii. 18. xvii. 5. Luke xxiii. 35. 11 ^c Be not far from me; for trouble *is* near; for *there is* ^d none to help.

^e lxxi. 6. cxxxix. 15, 16. Is. xlix. 1, 2. 12 ^e Many bulls have compassed me: ^f strong *bulls* of Bashan have beset me round.

^f Or, *keep me in safety*. Matt. ii. 13—15. Rev. xii. 4, 5. ^g Is. xlv. 3, 4. Luke ii. 40. 52. ^h Jer. i. 5. Gal. i. 15. ⁱ John xx. 17. 12. John xvi. 32. Heb. v. 7. ^j Heb. *not a helper*. lxxii. 12. cxlii. 4—6. Deut. xxxii. 36. Matt. xxvi. 56. 72—74. ^k lxxiii. 30. Jer. i. 11. ^l Deut. xxxii. 14, 15. Is. xxxiv. 7. Ez. xxxix. 18. Am. iv. 1—3. Matt. xxvii. 1. Acts iv. 27.

^m Heb. *opened their mouths against me*. 7. xxxv. 21. Job xvi. 10. Lam. ii. 16. iii. 46. Matt. xxvi. 3, 4. 59—65. 13 They ^m gaped upon me *with* their mouths, ⁿ as a ravening and a roaring lion.

^o 14 ^o I am poured out like water, and ^p all my bones are ^q out of joint: ^r my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.

^s 15 ^s My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and ^t my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me ^u into the dust of death.

^v 16 For ^v dogs have ^w compassed me: ^x the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: ^y they pierced my hands and my feet.

^z 17 ^z I may tell all my bones: ^a they look *and* stare upon me.

^b 18 They ^b part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

^c Heb. *opened their mouths against me*. 7. xxxv. 21. Job xvi. 10. Lam. ii. 16. iii. 46. Matt. xxvi. 3, 4. 59—65. 21. vii. 2. xvii. 12. xxxv. 17. Ez. xxii. 27, 28. 1 Pet. v. 8. Josh. vii. 5. Matt. xxvi. 38. Luke xxii. 44. John xii. 27. 17. Dan. v. 6. Or, *sundered*. lxxiii. 2. Job xxiii. 16. Mark xiv. 33, 34. h xxxii. 3, 4. Prov. xvii. 22. i lxxix. 3. 21. Job xxix. 10. Lam. iv. 4. John xix. 28. k xxx. 9. civ. 29. Gen. iii. 19. lxxiii. 27. Job vii. 21. x. 9. xxxiv. 15. Is. liii. 12. Dan. xii. 2. Matt. xxvii. 50. 1 Cor. xv. 3. Title. 20. lix. 6. 14. Matt. vii. 6. Phil. iii. 2. Rev. xxii. 15. m Luke xi. 53, 54. n lxxxvi. 14. Jer. xii. 6. Matt. xxvi. 57. Mark xv. 16—20. Luke xxii. 63—71. xxiii. 4, 5, 10, 11, 23. o Zech. xii. 10. Matt. xxvii. 35. Mark xv. 24. Luke xxiii. 33. John xix. 23, 37. xx. 25. p cii. 3—5. Job xxxiii. 21. q Matt. xxvii. 36, 39—41. Mark xv. 29—32. Luke xxiii. 27, 35. r Matt. xxvii. 35. Mark xv. 24. Luke xxiii. 34. John xix. 24.

V. 7, 8. The history of our Lord's sufferings is the best comment on this part of the prophecy: the language of the former verse might be thought *historical* of the insults attending his crucifixion; and that of the latter was adopted, without any variation at all affecting the sense, by the chief priests and rulers, to express their contempt of him, when hanging upon the cross. Little did they think, that the Spirit of prophecy, a thousand years before, had foretold that the murderers of the Messiah would speak of him, in this insulting and impious manner. (*Notes*, Job xvi. 4—16. xxx. 1—14. Matt. xxvi. 63—68. xxvii. 27—31. 39—44.)

V. 9, 10. David seems early to have devoted himself to God; but Jesus alone was a "holy child," born without sin. (*Notes*, lxxi. 17, 18. Is. vii. 15. Luke i. 34—38. ii. 41—52.) He was not only the peculiar care of Providence from his birth; but from his earliest infancy he exercised the most perfect faith, hope, and love towards his God and Father.

Thou didst make me hope. (9) מִבְּטִיחִי. "Didst keep me in safety." (*Marg.*) *Confidere faciens me, vel, securum faciens me.*

V. 11—13. A helpless infant, or a harmless lamb, surrounded by furious bulls and hungry lions, aptly represented the Saviour encompassed by his insulting and bloody persecutors; and in his extreme distress forsaken even by his disciples. (*Notes*, 16—18. Matt. xxvi. 40—56. Luke xxiii. 1—5. John xvi. 31—33. xviii. 1—3.)—The bulls, which fed in the fertile pastures of Bashan, were remarkably fat, strong, and furious; and they represented the Jewish rulers, who were rendered insolent by prosperity.—*Gaped...with their mouths.* (13) "Opened their mouths," (*marg.*) as a lion to devour the prey.

V. 14, 15. The dissolution of nature, and the unresisted sufferings of Christ, when "crucified through weakness," (*Note*, 2 Cor. xiii. 1—4,) are expressed, by his being "poured out as water:" the stretching of his body on the cross, and the violent motion with which it was erected, shook his body even to the dislocation of his bones. (*Note*,

Matt. xxvii. 35.) His sense of the divine wrath against our sins, then laid upon him, added to all his other sufferings, made his heart faint and melt within him, as wax by the fire. Thus the vigour and moisture of his body were dried up, as with intense heat; his extreme thirst caused his tongue to cleave to his jaws; and he was brought down into the dust, by his death and burial. (*Notes*, Matt. xxvii. 47—50. 57—61. Luke xxii. 44.)

V. 16—18. The rulers of the Jews were as strong bulls: the multitudes and soldiers were as so many ravenous dogs, who had inclosed this hunted hind, in order to glut themselves with his sufferings and his blood. (*Note*, Title.) "Our Lord...here setteth himself forth...under the image of an hart, or hind, roused early in the morning of his mortal life, hunted and chased all the day, and in the evening pulled down to the ground." *Bp. Horne.*—In nailing him to the cross, they pierced his hands and his feet: and when, emaciated by his labours and sufferings, he was stretched out almost naked on the cross, he might have numbered all his bones. The insulting multitudes stood around, and gratified their malice and curiosity by staring upon him; and the unfeeling soldiers, having shared his other garments, amused themselves with casting lots for his vesture. The manner in which his clothes were disposed of, being very remarkable, and occasioned by the peculiar texture of his coat, was thus circumstantially predicted! (*Notes*, Matt. xxvii. 35—44. John xix. 23, 24.)—Crucifixion, or nailing men to two transverse pieces of wood, by spikes driven through their hands and feet, seems to have been originally a Grecian or Roman punishment for slaves; at least it was not known in Judea, till many ages after this prophecy was delivered. Nothing, at all answering to the literal meaning of these terms, befell David, as far as we know; nothing could have been previously more unlikely, than that the promised and glorious Son of David should be treated in this cruel and ignominious manner: yet the fulfilment was so exact, that the verses seem more like a

^s 1. x. 1. ^t xviii. 1. xxi. 1. ^u xvii. 13. Zech. xiii. 7. ^v Heb. *my only one from the hand.* xxxv. 17. ^x 16. ^y Luke xxii. 53. John xiv. 30. 2 Tim. iv. 17. 1 Pet. v. 8. ^z Num. xxiii. 22. Deut. xxxiii. 17. Job xxxix. 9, 10. John vii. 59. Acts v. 30—32. ^a lxxi. 18, 19. John vii. 25, 26. Heb. ii. 11, 12. ^b Matt. xii. 48, 49. xxv. 40. xxviii. 10. John xx. 17. Rom. viii. 29. ^c 25. xl. 9, 10. ^d cxv. 11. 13. 1 Chr. xvi. 8—13. Luke i. 50. ^e cv. 3—7. cvii. 5. cvii. 1, 2. cxxxv. 19, 20. ^f 1. 23. Is. xxv. 3. Luke ii. 20. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. x. 31. Rev. xv. 4.

19 But ¹be not thou far from me, O LORD: ²O my Strength, haste thee to help me.

20 Deliver ³my soul from the sword: ⁴my darling from the power of ⁵the dog.

21 Save me ⁶from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from ⁷the horns of the unicorns.

22 ¶ ⁸I will declare thy name unto my brethren; ⁹in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

23 ¹⁰Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; ¹¹all ye the seed of Jacob, ¹²glorify him; and fear him, ¹³all ye the seed of Israel.

24 For ¹⁴he hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;

g 30. 1 Chr. xvi. 13. h 6. xxxv. 10. lxix. 29—34. Is. i. 6—9.

¹neither hath he hid his face from him; but ²when he cried unto him, he heard.

25 ³My praise *shall be* of thee in the great congregation: ⁴I will pay my vows before them that fear him.

26 ⁵The meek shall eat and be satisfied: ⁶they shall praise the LORD that seek him: ⁷your heart shall live for ever.

27 ⁸All the ends of the world shall remember and ⁹turn unto the LORD: and ¹⁰all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

28 For ¹¹the kingdom is the LORD's: and he is the Governor among the nations.

ⁱ Luke xxiii. 46. ^k 2. xxxv. 6. cxvi. 3—6. cxviii. 5. Heb. v. 7. ^l 22. xxxv. 18. cxv. 1. ^m lvi. 12. lxx. 1. lxxi. 13. 16. cxvi. 14—19. cxviii. 19, 20. Ec. v. 4. ⁿ lxix. 32. Lev. vii. 11—17. Is. xxv. 6. lxx. 13. John vi. 48—58. ^o cv. 3, 4. ^p lxix. 32. John iv. 14. vi. 51. ^q ii. 8. lxxii. 8. 11. lxxxvi. 9. xcvi. 3. Is. xlv. 22. xlv. 8, 9. xlix. 6, 12. ^r Acts xiv. 15. xx. 21. xxvi. 18—20. Rom. xvi. 26. 1 Thes. i. 9. ^s cxvi. 7. cii. 22. cxvii. 1. Rev. xvi. 9—12. xv. 4. ^t xlviii. 7, 8. Dan. vii. 14. Ob. 21. Zech. xiv. 9. Matt. vi. 13. Rev. xi. 15.

narrative than a prediction!—Let any thinking man recollect, that the Jews, the greatest opposers of Christianity ever since its promulgation, have unanimously allowed, that David wrote this psalm above a thousand years before the birth of Christ; then let him compare it with the history of his crucifixion, and determine, whether it does not stand as an unanswerable argument for the divine inspiration of the scriptures, and for the divine original of the Christian religion.

Pierced. (16) ¹⁶כָּאֵרִי: “as a lion my hands and my feet.” But this contains no clear sense at all. A very trivial change gives the reading of our version (כָּאֵרִי, or כָּרִי). The Septuagint, which is certainly more ancient than the Christian æra, renders it *ῥαβδὸν χειρὸς καὶ ποδὸς*; the Chaldee Paraphrast gives the same meaning; and there seems scarcely the shadow of a doubt, this is the genuine reading: though the general exactness of the Jews in preserving their scriptures, precludes the charge of an intentional alteration.

V. 19—21. In these verses, the Psalmist, (speaking in the person of the suffering Redeemer,) having stated the extremity of his case, renews his supplications; and earnestly prays to be delivered from the sword of divine justice, stretched forth against him, as our Surety; from Satan, the chief of those blood-hounds, or roaring lions, which pursued him; and from the enraged enemies, who like the fiercest wild beasts surrounded him, as if they aimed at his entire and final destruction.—*My darling.* (20) ²⁰יְהִיָּה; *My united one.* (xxxv. 17. Heb.) The feminine of ²⁰יְהִיָּה is rendered *desolate*; xxv. 16: *only son*; Gen. xxii. 2. 12. 16. Zech. xii. 10: *only beloved*; Prov. iv. 3.—*Τὴν μονογενὴν μου.* Sept.—Some think it refers to the human nature of Christ, as united to the Deity.

V. 22. This verse is expressly applied to our Lord by the apostle: (Note, Heb. ii. 10—13:) and the subsequent part of the psalm is as evidently prophetic of his glory and the success of his gospel, as the foregoing part is of his sufferings.—The whole psalm is allowed to be highly poetical; but this transition is peculiarly beautiful. For here the scene at once changes and brightens. The Saviour turns his eyes from his sufferings, to the glory which fol-

lowed: (Notes, John xiii. 1—5. 31—35. xvii. 1—3:) and, anticipating the extensive and permanently blessed effects of his passion and exaltation, he breaks forth into exulting predictions and praises at the prospect. So that what follows seems descriptive of his feelings when he cried, “It is finished,” and, “Father into thy hands I commend my spirit.” (Notes, Luke xxiii. 44—49. John xix. 28—30.)

V. 23, 24. Some expositors think that these verses are the song of praise, which the Messiah declares he will lead in the midst of the congregation. Israel is especially addressed; but all who are favoured with the gospel are equally concerned in the exhortation, as the resurrection and consequent glory of Christ are the common benefit of all that fear and seek God: for had he despised and rejected the Surety's sufferings, and left him in the grave, all the hopes of sinners would have been for ever buried with him. (Notes, 2. Rom. iv. 23—25. viii. 32—34. 1 Cor. xv. 12—18. Heb. xiii. 20, 21.) But, though man despised and abhorred him, and the Father for a time seemed to disregard his sufferings and prayers; and though the character and conduct of those whom he represented, was abominable in the sight of God; he yet accepted the Saviour's atoning sacrifice, raised him from the dead, and made him “the Author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him.” (Note, Heb. v. 7—10.)

V. 25. *Vows, &c.* That is, the Saviour will publicly fulfil all the engagements of his exaltation, for the glory of God, and the benefit of his church; even as the Psalmist offered the various sacrifices, which he had vowed in his distress. (Notes, lvi. 12. lxxvi. 13, 14. cxvi. 14—19.)—The change in the person, from *thee* to *him*, is not uncommon. (27. Prov. i. 26—28.)

V. 26. The death of Christ was the great sacrifice for sin; his “flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed;” the poor in spirit feed on this provision, in their hearts by faith, and are satisfied: thus while they seek the Lord, they praise him also, and their hearts, or souls, are “preserved unto eternal life.” (Notes, John vi. 30—35. 47—58.)—The sacred feasts on the peace-offerings and vows, at the sanctuary, furnished this allusion.

V. 27, 28. The fallen race of Adam in general, all over

^u lxxiii. 7. lxxviii. 31. Is. x. 16. ^x xlv. 12. lxxii. 12. 11. Is. lx. 3. 12. 16. Rev. xxi. 24. ^y cxlii. 7. Is. xxvi. 19. xxix. 4. Phil. ii. 10. Rev. xx. 12-15. ^z Is. xlv. 23. Rom. xiv. 10-12. a xlix. 6-9. Hos. xiii. 9. John iii. 36. xi. 25, 26. b Is. liii. 10. Heb. ii. 13. c xiv. 5. xxiv. 6. lxxiii. 15. lxxxvii. 6. Matt. iii. 9. Gal. iii. 26-29. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

29 All *they* ^u *that be* fat upon earth shall eat and worship: ^y all they that go down to the dust shall ^z bow before him, and ^a none can keep alive his own soul. 30 ^b A seed shall serve him; ^c it shall

be accounted to the LORD for a generation.

31 ^d They shall come, and shall declare ^e his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done *this*.

d lxxviii. 6. lxxxvi. 9. cii. 18. e xlv. 4-7. Is. xlv. 3-5. xlix. 21-23. liv. 1. lx. 4. lxvi. 7-9. Rom. i. 17. iii. 21-25. v. 19-21. 2 Cor. v. 21.

the world, had *forgotten*, through alienation of heart, the one living and true God, and their relations and obligations to him, as their Creator, Governor, and Judge: but, through the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that followed, vast multitudes in the most distant nations, "remembered" God; and, forsaking their idols and iniquities, turned to him, as his worshippers and subjects. Thus the kingdom of God, which always was his by right, began in fact to be established among the nations: but this part of the prophecy has by no means yet received its grand accomplishment. (*Notes, Rev. xi. 15-18. xx. 1-3.*)

V. 29. Even the rich and powerful on earth are invited to this feast, and must feed on this spiritual provision, or they must starve: they must worship, and submit to the exalted Saviour, or perish: they, that persist in their rebellion, must bow as condemned criminals before his tribunal. The most exalted, and the most abased, are in this respect precisely in the same situation: none can preserve his body from death, or raise it again from the dust; none can quicken his own soul, or save it from final condemnation. In both respects, Christ alone is "the Resurrection and the Life;" and at length all that sleep in the dust must *bow* before his tribunal, and all his believing subjects will enter into his joy. (*Notes, John v. 28, 29. xi. 20-27.*)

V. 30, 31. Some in every age will be the servants of Christ: they shall be accounted, or registered, as a chosen generation to the Lord; (*Is. liii. 10. Note, 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10;*) and shall supplant the nation of Israel, though not descended from one common stock, being the children of God by a spiritual birth. (*Notes, Is. lxvi. 7-9. 1 Pet. i. 22-25.*) They shall come from every quarter to enlarge the church; one generation shall declare to another his righteousness and salvation; and his sufferings and death, and subsequent exaltation, shall be their favourite topics. (*Notes, Is. xlv. 20-25. Rom. iii. 21-26. 2 Cor. v. 18-21.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-21.

The stupendous scene here exhibited should attract our most serious and affectionate attention. Let us therefore step aside from worldly trifles, to "behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." Let us contemplate the depth of the Saviour's humiliation in connexion with his personal dignity; and his intense sufferings, contrasted with the infinite delight which the Father had in him, and with the combination of all excellences in his character. Let us hearken to his complaints and groans; let us attend to his strong crying and tears, to his agony and temptations, and to the cruelty and contempt with which he was treated by Jews and gentiles, priests, rulers, people, and soldiers; till ingenuity was exhausted, and malice itself fatigued, with mocking and tormenting him. Let us view this holy Saviour surrounded by bulls,

lions, and ravenous dogs; in the palace of the high priest, and in the judgment-hall of Herod, and of Pilate. Let us next look to him as nailed to the cross, pouring out his blood like water; enquiring in doleful accents, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and complaining, "All my bones are out of joint, my heart is as wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels;" till at length his death closed the awful scene, while nature also seemed expiring in convulsions. (*Note, Matt. xxvii. 51-53.*) What then do we learn from these astonishing events, and this extraordinary prediction of them? Here we behold the eternal justice and holiness of our God; the immutable excellency and obligation of his law; the inconceivable odiousness and guilt of sin; the inestimable worth of our souls; the ruined state of man, the insufficiency of all other expedients for magnifying the law, or satisfying the justice of God. We here learn the vanity of the world, and the misery of its deluded inhabitants; the dire malignity of the human heart, which naturally conceived and expressed such cruel hatred and contempt of him, who was "the Brightness of the Father's glory, and the express Image of his person:" we become acquainted with the infinitely free love and compassion of God the Father, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, for us wretched sinners: we perceive what is the Foundation of every human hope; the Source of all grace and consolation; the Exemplar to which we are to be conformed; together with the treatment that we are to expect from man, and the conduct under it which, as Christians, we are to adopt. In short, the whole system of true religion is here viewed in its central point; and every lesson is learned, with peculiar advantage, by the enlightened and humbled soul. (*1 Cor. i. 23, 24.*)

V. 22-31.

In this part of the psalm, viewed in connexion with the former, we behold the ransom accepted, the Saviour heard, and raised, and exalted to his glorious throne: we view him at the right hand of the Father, receiving inestimable gifts to bestow on sinful man, and not ashamed to call his poor disciples brethren; declaring among them, and by them to the world, the name and truths of God; fulfilling in his exaltation the design of all his sufferings; and calling on all, who fear and seek the Lord, to rejoice in him, and to praise and glorify him. (*Note, Heb. ii. 10-13.*) He now gives us his flesh and blood, to be the life-giving and preserving food of our souls: on this the meek and humble feed with delight, praise the Lord for it, and live for ever: and all, however powerful and honourable, who refuse this provision, and will not worship the exalted Saviour, must perish; for "the kingdom is the LORD's," and the once crucified Jesus is "the Governor among the nations;" and "no man can" by any means "keep alive his own soul." Whilst numbers despise, and wonder, and perish; a seed is, from age to age, raised up to serve the Redeemer, who

PSALM XXIII.

David rejoices in the compassionate care of the Lord his Shepherd, 1—3. He exults in the assurance of being supported by him through life and death, and of spending eternity in his presence, 4—6.

A Psalm of David.

THE LORD is ^a my Shepherd: ^b I shall not want.

² He ^c maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he ^d leadeth me beside the ^e still waters.

³ He ^e restoreth my soul: ^f he lead-

eth me in the paths of righteousness ^g for his name's sake.

⁴ Yea, though I walk ^h through the valley of the shadow of death, ⁱ I will fear no evil: ^k for thou art with me; ^l thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

⁵ Thou ^m preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: ⁿ thou anointest my head with oil; ^o my cup runneth over.

⁶ Surely ^p goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: ^q and I will dwell in the house of the LORD ^r for ever.

a lxxxix. 13. lxxx. 1. Is. xi. 11. Jer. xxxiii. 3, 4. Ez. xxxiv. 11, 12, 23, 24. Mic. v. 2, 4. John x. 11, 14. 27—30. Heb. xiii. 20. 1 Pet. ii. 25. v. 4.

b xxxiv. 9, 10. lxxxiv. 11. Matt. vi. 33. Luke xii. 30—32. Rom. viii. 32. Phil. iv. 19. Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

c Is. xxx. 23. Ez. xxxiv. 13, 14.

* Heb. pastures of tender grass.

d xlv. 4. Is. xlix. 9, 10. Rev. vii. 17. xxi. 6. xxii. 1, 17.

+ Heb. waters of quietness. Job xxxiv. 29. Is. viii. 6.

e Hos. xiv. 4—9. Mic. vii. 8, 9, 18, 19. Luke xxii. 31, 32. Rev. iii. 19. f v. 8. xxxi. 3. cxliii. 8—10. Prov. viii. 20. Is. xlii. 16. Jer. xxxi. 8—10.

are “accounted to the LORD for a chosen generation;” and who declare his righteousness and works of love, to those around them, and to those that shall succeed them. Thus the gentiles have been brought into his church, which is preserved in the midst of opposition: and ere long “all the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn unto the LORD, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before him.”—Let the infidel then study this psalm with serious attention, and no longer object his futile cavils, in opposition to demonstration. Let those, who go about to establish their own righteousness, enquire why the beloved Son of God thus suffered, if *their* performances could atone for sin, or recommend a sinner to his offended God. Let the antinomian consider, whether the Saviour thus honoured the divine law, to purchase him the liberty of despising it. Let the careless take warning to flee from the wrath to come; and the trembling be encouraged, and rest their hopes upon this merciful Redeemer. The tempted and distressed believer should contemplate the scene, and learn to imitate the faith, patience, meekness, constancy, persevering prayers, fervent zeal, and love of the suffering Saviour; and cheerfully expect a happy event of every trial. Finally, let us never be ashamed to profess our faith in him and obligations to him, who condescends to own us as his brethren: but let us instruct our families in the important truths of his gospel, desiring above all things, and praying continually, that “they may be a seed to serve him;” and that all the ends of the earth may hear and receive his gospel, and become his believing and accepted servants and worshippers.

NOTES.

PSALM XXIII. V. 1—3. The preceding psalm represented “the good Shepherd laying down his life for the “sheep,” and assuming his pastoral charge: this describes *their* safety and felicity under his tender care. (Notes, John x. 1—18. 26—31.) For as Christ is “the good,” “the great,” “the chief Shepherd;” we cannot doubt that he is JEHOVAH, and is especially intended. (Notes, lxxx. 1. Is. xl. 9—11. Zech. xiii. 7. Acts xx. 28. Heb. xiii. 20, 21. 1 Pet. v. 1—4.)—A flock of sheep, gentle, harmless, and valuable, feeding in verdant pastures, or reclining, cheerful and satisfied, by gentle rivulets, under the care of a skil-

ful, vigilant, and tender shepherd, forms the emblem of believers, brought back to the Shepherd of their souls, and by him guarded and provided for. (Notes, Luke xii. 32. 1 Pet. ii. 18—25.) He is JEHOVAH, the omnipresent, omniscient, almighty God, One with the Father, and every way able and willing to take care of them. His ordinances are their plenteous pastures, the consolations of his Holy Spirit are their refreshing waters. They are thus guided by their Shepherd into communion with God, and find rest to their souls. If they wander, he restores them by his kind rebukes, and his effectual grace: when their souls are diseased, he, as their Physician, recovers their health and vigour; and for the honour of his gospel, and the glory of his own name, he leads them in the paths of righteousness. (Note, Prov. viii. 20.)

V. 4. Between that part of the flock which is on earth, and that which is gone to heaven, death lies, like a deep valley, that must be passed in going from the one to the other. But this valley cannot hurt believers, and should not alarm them. It is indeed deep and dark, but fruitful. The good Shepherd will accompany his sheep through it, by his gracious presence: his rod, the token of his power, (Note, cx. 2,) will defend them from the assaults of their enemies; his pastoral staff, his word of promise, and Spirit of grace, will support them with inward strength; and thus he will render death safe and comfortable to them. (Notes, John xiv. 2, 3. Acts vii. 54—60.)—*Thou art with me.* Notes, Is. xli. 10—14. xliii. 1, 2. Matt. i. 22, 23. xxviii. 19, 20.

V. 5, 6. The people of God feast at his table on the provisions of his love; (Note, xxii. 26;) nor can Satan and wicked men, who hate and envy them, destroy their comforts, while they are anointed with the unction of the Holy Spirit, and drink of the cup of salvation, ever full and running over. Past experience teaches them to trust, “that the goodness and mercy of God will follow them all the days of their life.” It is their desire, expectation, and determination, to seek their happiness in the service of God here; and they hope to enjoy his love, without enemy or interruption, for length of days, even for ever in heaven hereafter.—The images in these verses are taken from feasts, and the general customs of anointing the guests, and distinguishing such as were most favoured by the

a 1. 12. Ex. ix. 29.
xix. 5. Deut. x.
14. 1 Chr. xxix.
11. Job xli. 11.
Dan. iv. 25.
1 Cor. x. 26. 28.
b lxxxix. 11. xcvi.
7. Nah. i. 5.
c xxxiii. 6, 7. xcv.
4, 5. civ. 5, 6.
cxxxvi. 6. Gen. i.
9, 10. Job xxxviii.
4. Jer. x. 11—16.
2 Pet. iii. 5—7.
d xciii. 1. xcvi. 10.
Gen. viii. 22.
Job xxxviii. 8—
11. Jer. v. 22.
e xv. 1. lxxviii. 18.
John xiii. 36. xx.
17. Eph. iv. 8—
10.
f lxxviii. 15, 16.
lxxviii. 68, 69.
cxxxii. 13, 14.
2 Sam. vi. 12—
17. 1 Chr. xv. 1.
25—28. Heb. xii.
22—24.

PSALM XXIV.

The Creator's dominion over the whole earth, 1, 2.
The subjects of the Redeemer's kingdom, 3—6. En-
trance demanded for the King of glory into his temple,
7—10

A Psalm of David.

THE ^aearth is the LORD's, and the
fulness thereof ^bthe world, and they
that dwell therein.

2 For ^che hath founded it upon
the seas, and ^destablished it upon the
floods.

3 ^eWho shall ascend into ^fthe hill of

largest portions. (*Gen. xliii. 34.*) Under these images both
temporal provisions and spiritual comforts seem to be in-
cluded.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Experimental piety is the source of the purest comforts,
and the most unshaken confidence; and cheerfulness
greatly adorns and recommends it. What can they want,
who have JEHOVAH for their Shepherd? What will that
Saviour withhold from his friends, who shed his blood for
them when enemies, that he might reconcile them to him-
self? Will not he, who ransomed our souls, provide for
our bodies? Alas, our discontent and disconsolation spring
from unbelief; and from a negligent or inconsistent con-
duct, which darkens our prospects and weakens our evi-
dence. Let us then "give diligence to make our calling
"and election sure:" let us simply trust our Shepherd's
care, and listen to his voice: let us cultivate the gentle and
amiable dispositions which these emblems suggest: let us
keep close to his ordinances as the pasture of our souls;
and draw the waters of life "with joy from the wells of
"salvation," seeking no other consolations: and let us
earnestly plead with him "to lead us in the paths of right-
"eousness for his name's sake," to keep us from wander-
ing, and to "restore our souls" from every deviation, by
whatever means he may see good; for peace and happi-
ness can be found in no other way. Thus, walking with
God and trusting in him, we may think of death, as our
appointed passage to eternal life, without fearing any evil:
the outward protection and inward supports of our gracious
Friend will prevent all harm, and he will receive our souls
to the mansion which he has prepared for them. While
he pleases that we should continue here, he can make any
situation pleasant, by the unction of his Spirit, and the
joys of his salvation, in defiance of all our enemies: and
the lively Christian will thankfully acknowledge the Lord's
exuberant kindness, and declare his satisfaction in his care
and love. Let us then thank him for the past and present,
and trust him for the future: let us keep close to his ser-
vice now; and simply repose our confidence in him, that
his goodness will supply our every want, his mercy pardon
all our sins, and relieve all our sorrows: that these shall
follow us all the days of our life; and that we shall "dwell
"in the house of the LORD for ever;" in his presence,

the LORD: ^gor who shall stand in his
holy place?

4 ^hHe that hath ⁱclean hands, and
^ja pure heart; who hath not ^klifted up
his soul unto vanity, nor ^lsworn de-
ceitfully.

5 He shall ^mreceive the blessing
from the LORD, and ⁿrighteousness from
^othe God of his salvation.

6 This is ^pthe generation of them
that seek him, ^qthat seek thy face, ^rO
Jacob. Selah.

v. 3, 4. Mal. iii. 5. 1 Tim. i. 10. m l. 23. lxxvii. 6, 7. lxxii. 17. cxv. 1—5.
Num. vi. 24—27. Matt. v. 3—12. John vii. 17. Rom. iv. 6—9. Gal. iii. 9, 14. Eph. i. 3.
1 Pet. iii. 9. n Is. xlv. 13. li. 5, 6. 8. liv. 17. lxi. 10. Rom. iii. 22. v. 17, 18. 1 Cor. i.
30. 2 Cor. v. 21. Gal. v. 5. Phil. iii. 9. o lxxviii. 19, 20. lxxxviii. 1. Is. xii. 2. xlv.
17. Tit. ii. 10—14. iii. 4—6. p xxii. 30. lxxiii. 15. Is. liii. 10. Rom. iv. 16. 1 Pet.
ii. 9. q xxvii. 8. cv. 4. John i. 47—49. r Or, O God of Jacob.

g Lev. x. 3. Mal.
iii. 1, 2. Heb. xii.
28, 29.
* Heb. The clean
of hands. xviii.
20
h xxvi. 6. Job ix.
30. xvii. 9. Is.
i. 15, 16. xxxiii.
15. 1 Tim. ii. 8.
Jam. iv. 8.
i li. 10. lxxiii. 1.
Gen. vi. 5. Prov.
xx. 9. Jer. iv.
14. Matt. v. 8.
Acts xv. 9.
2 Cor. vii. 1.
Rev. xxi. 1—4.
27. xxii. 14, 15.
k xxv. 1. cxliii. 8.
Deut. iv. 19. Ez.
xviii. 6. 15. Acts
xiv. 15
l xv. 4. Jer. v. 2.
vii. 9, 10. Zech.
i. 13. cxxviii. 1—5.

where "is fulness of joy, and at his right hand, where
"are pleasures for evermore."

NOTES.

PSALM XXIV. V. 1, 2. This psalm is supposed to
have been written and sung, with some others, when David
removed the ark to Jerusalem; and perhaps it might also
be used when the ark was carried into Solomon's temple.
But the ascension of Christ into heaven seems to have been
sublimely prefigured under those typical events.—The
Psalmist introduced his subject by declaring the sovereignty
of God over the whole world. (1 Cor. x. 26. 28.) He
had formed both the earth and its inhabitants, and sepa-
rated the dry land from the waters; by which it arose out
of the floods, and seemed to have its foundation upon
them. (*Notes*, xxxiii. 7, 8. xcv. 4, 5. Gen. i. 9, 10. Job
xxxviii. 8—11. Prov. viii. 22—30. Jer. x. 11. 2 Pet. iii.
5—7.) The whole belonged to the great Creator, to be
disposed of as he pleased: and he might most justly have cut
off all the apostate race; or he might have taken another
part of it instead of Israel. This introduction, therefore,
seems to have been intended to excite the people's admir-
ing gratitude, for the Lord's distinguishing kindness to
them.

V. 3—6. External privileges were granted to Israel as
a nation; but the character of the true Israelite was here
enquired after. (*Notes* and *P. O. Ps.* xv.) A holy life,
springing from a sanctified heart, free from external and
mental idolatry, and all corrupt affections and carnal con-
fidences, united with watchfulness against all hypocrisy
and dissimulation; an exact punctuality and fidelity to
every vow, profession, or engagement, to God or man;
—these things distinguished the acceptable worshippers
from the rest of the congregation at the sanctuary, as they
now do real from nominal Christians. This character ori-
ginates from regeneration; and is gradually formed by the
divine Spirit, through faith: and while others derive no
benefit from divine ordinances, persons of this description
"receive the blessing from the LORD" continually; even
"righteousness from the God of salvation." For "by the
"Spirit they wait for the hope of righteousness through
"faith." (*Marg. Ref.* n.) Thus it is very clearly stated,
that while separation from sin, and a pious, conscientious

7 ^r Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and ^s the King of glory shall come in.

8 Who is this King of glory? ^u The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates;

even lift *them* up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

10 Who is this King of glory? ^x The LORD of hosts, ^y he is the King of glory. Selah.

PSALM XXV.

David, trusting in God and waiting on him, prays for protection and guidance, 1—5. Pleading the

conduct, prepare a man's heart for receiving divine blessings, and evidence his interest in them; they do not constitute his justifying righteousness, or merit the favour of God; in whom he must trust as the "God of his salvation," and from whom he must receive "the gift of righteousness by faith." (*Notes*, *Is.* liv. 15—17. *Rom.* iv. 14—22. *x.* 1—4. *Gal.* v. 1—6.) They, who thus trust and serve God, constitute the generation of those who seek him, as Jacob did, and so enjoy his favour, as "the God of Jacob." (*Marg.*) The clause is rendered in the old translation, "*This is Jacob*," the true seed of Abraham, the true Israel.—To interpret this of Christ exclusively, or at all, except as our example, supposes him to "receive righteousness from the God of his Salvation," instead of our being "made the righteousness of God in him."

V. 7—10. It is supposed, that the priests who bare the ark, and the Levites who attended them, demanded entrance into the tabernacle from those who kept the gates. The expression "Lift up your heads, O ye gates," may allude to the form in which the gates were made, the upper part lifting up, to render the entrance more spacious: the gates might be called "everlasting," because the ark was to have an abiding residence on mount Zion, where a durable temple was about to be erected. To this demand, the porters within answered in solemn strains, "Who is this King of glory?" and were again answered, that it was "the LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle;" that is, Israel's Protector and Friend, by whose power they were made victorious over all their enemies. The demand being then repeated, and a similar answer returned, the gates, we may suppose, were thrown open, and the symbol of the divine presence was carried into the holy of holies. (*Notes*, *lxviii.* 1—3. *2 Sam.* vi. 14, 15. *1 Chr.* xvi. 7. 34—36. *2 Chr.* v. 12, 13.)—This may represent the Saviour at his ascension, demanding by his attendant angels admission into heaven, as Man and Mediator; yet at the same time as "the King of glory, and "the LORD strong and mighty." In human nature, and even on the cross, he had overcome and triumphed over the powers of darkness; and, ascending up on high, he led them captive at his chariot-wheels. To him the everlasting portals were lifted up, who was at the same time a Man, and "the LORD of hosts:" and as our Forerunner he entered heaven amidst the admiring acclamations of the whole angelick choir. And thus the gates of heavenly happiness were opened to every sinner, who receives Christ as his Lord and Saviour, assured that indeed he is "the LORD of hosts and the King of glory." (*Notes*, *Eph.* i. 15—23. *Phil.* ii. 9—11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As the earth, with its fulness and all its inhabitants, be-

longs to the great Creator, whose glorious wisdom, power, and goodness appear on every side; we should continually remember our obligations to love and serve him with all our powers, to receive all our comforts as his gifts, and to employ all which we possess, according to his will. This must also remind us of our need of his mercy, and lead us to continual humiliation before him: for which of his gifts have we not abused? which of our powers have we not employed in rebellion? (*Note*, *Luke* vii. 40—43.) If we had done all that was commanded us, we ought to say, "We are unprofitable servants." How absurd then for *sinners* to boast of their scanty and defective services! It is of the Lord's mercy, that any of us worship with acceptance, or may hope to enter into heaven.—We should be thankful for outward privileges: yet let us be careful not to trust in them; but seriously enquire, whether his word and ordinances have indeed been sanctifying to our hearts, and have taught us to "walk in newness of life;" whether we are weaned from the vanities of the world, and delivered from hypocrisy and deceit in our professions and engagements. The generation of those who seek and serve the God of Jacob, are formed to a peculiar character; the blessings of salvation and the crown of righteousness must be waited for, in the way of conscientious obedience; and they who expect them in any other way will find themselves awfully deluded. (*Notes*, *Tit.* ii. 11—14. *Heb.* x. 35—39. *Jude* 20, 21.)—The incarnate Word and Son of God, having completed his obedience and sufferings on earth as our Surety, has, in human nature, ascended up on high as a triumphant conqueror. The everlasting portals have been thrown open to receive him. He alone in human nature ascended thither by the merit of his own righteousness: but it is of infinite value, and merits for us also, if we believe in him. While angels adore, in the man Christ Jesus, "the King of glory and the LORD of hosts," and welcome him "as Head over all things to his church:" surely *we* cannot refuse him our thankful acclamations, or neglect to honour him, as we ought to honour the Father that sent him! (*Note*, *John* v. 20—23.) Let all remember that he is able to save and to destroy: "the LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle." If we refuse now to open our hearts to welcome him, he will at length refuse to open the gates of heaven to us; both at the hour of death, and when after the final judgment, he shall re-enter the heavenly palace with all the millions of his redeemed people. Then all unbelievers shall go "away into everlasting punishment."—Lord, open the everlasting doors of our souls by thy grace, that we may most thankfully receive thee as our Lord and Saviour, and be willingly and wholly thine; and that at length we may be 'numbered with thy saints in glory everlasting!'

^a xxiv. 4. lxxxvi. 4. cxi. 1. 1 Sam. i. 15. forgiveness; and shews the Lord's readiness to teach Lam. iii. 41.
^b vii. 1. xviii. 2. the meek and upright, 6—11. He states the privileges of the godly, and blends his complaints with earnest prayers for himself, and for Israel, 12—22.

A Psalm of David.

^c xiii. 2—4. xxxv. 19—25. xli. 11. lvi. 1. 2. xciv. 3. 4. cxlii. 6. Is. xxxvii. 14—20. xxxvii. 10. 20. 35. 20. xxxvii. 34. xl. 1—3. lxii. 1. 5. cxliii. 2. cxxx. 5. Gen. xlix. 19. Is. xxv. 9. xl. 31. Lam. iii. 25. 26. Mic. vii. 7. Rom. viii. 25. lxix. 6. vi. 10. xxxi. 17. xxxv. 26. xl. 14. 15. lxx. 2. 3. lxxi. 13. cxxxii. 18. Jer. xx. 11. vii. 4. 5. lix. 2—5. lxix. 4. cix. 3. 5. cix. 78. John xv. 25. h v. 8. xxvii. 11. lxxxvi. 11. cxix. 27. 135. cxliii. 8. 10. Ex. xxxiii. 13. Prov. viii. 20. Is. ii. 3. Jer. vi. 16. 1. 5. i. 8. 10. xlii. 3. 4. cvii. 7. Is. xxxv. 8. xlii. 16. xlix. 10. Jer. xxxi. 9. John viii. 31. 32. xiv. 26. xvi. 13. Rom. viii. 14. Eph. iv. 21. 1 John ii. 27. Rev. vii. 17. k cxix. 26. 33. 66. Neh. ix. 20. Job xxxvi. 22. Is. liv. 13. Jer. xxxi. 33. 34. John vi. 45. Eph. iv. 20. 21.

^d **U**NTO thee, O LORD, ^a do I lift up my soul.
^e 2 ^b O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, ^c let not mine enemies triumph over me.

3 Yea, let none that ^d wait on thee ^e be ashamed: ^f let them be ashamed which transgress ^g without cause.

4 ^h Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.

5 ⁱ Lead me in thy truth, and ^k teach me: for thou ^l art ^m the God of my salvation; ⁿ on thee do I wait all the day.
6 ^o Remember, O LORD, ^p thy ^q tender mercies and thy loving kindnesses; ^r for they *have been* ever of old.
7 ^s Remember not ^t the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: ^u according to thy mercy remember thou me ^v for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.
8 ¶ ^w Good and ^x upright is the LORD: therefore will he ^y teach sinners in the way.
9 ^z The meek will he ^a guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach ^b his way.

me: for thou *art* ^l the God of my salvation; ^m on thee do I wait all the day.

6 ^o Remember, O LORD, ^p thy ^q tender mercies and thy loving kindnesses; ^r for they *have been* ever of old.

7 ^s Remember not ^t the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: ^u according to thy mercy remember thou me ^v for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.

8 ¶ ^w Good and ^x upright is the LORD: therefore will he ^y teach sinners in the way.

9 ^z The meek will he ^a guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach ^b his way.

27, 28. Jer. xxxiii. 11. Mic. vii. 18—20. Luke i. 50. xxxviii. 17. xliii. 25. lxiv. 9. Heb. viii. 12. x. 16—18. v. 7—14. Jer. iii. 25. John v. 5. 14. s li. i. cix. 26. cxix. 124. t vi. 4. xxxi. 16. Eph. i. 6. 7. ii. 4—8. u cxix. 68. x cxii. 15. Is. xxvi. 7. y Prov. i. 20—23. ii. 1—6. ix. 4—6. Mic. iv. 2. Matt. ix. 13. xi. 29. 30. Luke xi. 13. John vi. 44. 45. 2 Cor. iv. 6. Eph. i. 17, 18. Jam. i. 5. z xxii. 26. lxxvi. 9. cxlvii. 6. cxlix. 4. Is. xi. 4. lxi. 1. Zeph. ii. 3. Matt. v. 5. Gal. v. 23. Jam. i. 21. 1 Pet. iii. 4. 15. a xxxiii. 3. xxxii. 8, 9. lxxiii. 24. cxix. 66. cxliii. 10. Prov. iii. 5, 6. viii. 20. Is. xlii. 1—3. Ez. xi. 19, 20. xxxvi. 27. b cxix. 35. John xiv. 6. Acts ix. 2. xlii. 10. Heb. x. 20.

NOTES.

PSALM XXV. V. 1. The repeated and deep confessions of sin, which are blended with the petitions and complaints throughout this psalm, favour the opinion of those, who think it was written during Absalom's rebellion, by which David's atrocious crimes in the matter of Uriah, as well as the sins of his youth, were brought to his remembrance.—The expression, "Unto thee do I lift up my soul," emphatically describes the nature of fervent prayer, when all dependence on creatures, and expectation from them, are sensibly renounced; and the earnest desires of the soul accompany the voice, but are indeed too large for utterance. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, lxii. 8—10. 1 Sam. i. 12—16. Rom. viii. 24—27.)

V. 2, 3. These verses are rendered, in most versions, merely as a prayer throughout. Yet the third verse may be rendered more literally, "Yea, none who wait on thee shall be ashamed: they shall be ashamed who *act perfidiously* without cause."—David had given Saul and his adherents no just cause to hate and persecute him; nor had Absalom, or the rebellious Israelites, any cause for their treason and perfidy. Their hatred was not only unmerited, but directly contrary to his deserts. It was wholly *free*, or *gratuitous*. The Jews hated Christ without a cause, or *freely*: the same word being employed, as the apostle uses in respect of a sinner's justification before God, "Being justified freely." (*Comp. John xv. 25. Rom. iii. 24. Gr.*)

Yea let none, &c. (3) לֹא יִשְׁתָּחֶוּ. As if the Psalmist had subjoined to his foregoing request, 'Yea, I know that my prayer will be answered, as I am one who wait upon God, and none who do so shall be ashamed.' It is peculiarly animated and beautiful.

V. 4, 5. 'It is hard to know what to do in these difficult times, especially in this great agitation of thoughts, wherein my troubled mind is tossed up and down. Therefore do thou be pleased, O LORD, to shew me the course thou wouldst have me take, and govern my actions so, that they may be pleasing unto thee. I

'have as much need of thy guidance, as a little child has of its parents, and I cry as earnestly unto thee, that thou wilt direct me in every step.' *Bp. Patrick*.—To be guided in the path of faithfulness to men, of faith in God, and of inviolable adherence to truth and duty in such circumstances, was peculiarly desirable. For this blessing, more than for victory, David waited continually, all the day, and every day, on God his Saviour. (*Notes*, lxxxvi. 3—5. lxxxviii. 1, 2.)—The term, *wait*, implies a simple, dependent, expecting, attentive state of heart; which leads to frequency and perseverance in the use of proper means, notwithstanding delays and discouragements, with a determined rejection of all other confidences, and all inconsistent measures. (*Notes*, cxxx. 5, 6. Gen. xlix. 18. Lam. iii. 24—30. Jam. v. 7—11.)

V. 6, 7. The contrast between the Lord's "remembering his tender mercies, and loving kindnesses," which had always been exercised to his worshippers, and sprang from his everlasting love; and his not "remembering" the Psalmist's transgressions, is very expressive. When God thus remembers his mercies, he ceases to remember our sins; that is, he does not punish us for them. (*Note*, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34.)—The language also is peculiarly emphatical. The distinction between the sins of youth, thus brought afresh to remembrance, and later transgressions of which David was conscious, seems to fix the occasion of the psalm to have been as above stated. (*Note*, 1.) He could find no reason, in himself, why God should remember him in mercy; but he pleads with him to do it for his own goodness' sake. (*Marg. Ref.* s, t.)—Most of the verses in this Psalm begin with the Hebrew letters, in alphabetical order; (of which there are several instances in the Psalms;) but a few omissions and variations are found, which some ascribe to the perturbation of David's mind.

V. 8, 9. The goodness and mercy of God dispose him to be kind even to sinners; and instead of inflicting immediate vengeance, to use various methods of bringing them to repentance. He is "upright" and sincere in all his declarations and invitations, and he loves truth and

c xviii. 25, 26. 10 All ^c the paths of the LORD are
xxiii. 4—6. d mercy and truth, unto such as ^c keep
xxxvii. 23, 24 his covenant and his testimonies.
xci. 14. cxix. 75, 76. cxxxviii. 7.
Gen. v. 24. xvii. 1. xlviii. 15, 16
Is. xliii. 2. Rom. viii. 28.

d xxxiii. 4. lvii. 3. 11 For ^f thy name's sake, O LORD,
lxxxv. 10. pardon mine iniquity; ^g for it is great.

lxxxix. 14. xcvi. 2. 12 ¶ ^h What man is he that feareth
2. Gen. xxiv. 27 the LORD? ⁱ him shall he teach in the
2 Sam. xv. 20. way *that* he shall choose.
Is. xxv. 1. John i. 14, 17. Jam. v. 11.

e xxiv. 4, 5. 1. 23. 13 ^k His soul shall ^{*} dwell at ease;
ciii. 17, 18. Is. and ^l his seed shall ^m inherit the earth.
lvi. 1—6. Zeph. ii. 3. Acts x. 35.

Rom. ii. 13. Heb. viii. 8—12. xii. 14. xiii. 20, 21. f xxxi. 3. lxxix. 9. cxliii. 11. Is. xliii. 25. xlviii. 9. Ez. xx. 9. xxxvi. 31, 32. g Num. xiv. 17—19. Rom. v. 20, 21. h cxi. 10. Prov. i. 7. ii. 5. xv. 33. xvi. 6. Ec. xii. 13. Is. l. 10. Acts x. 2. 22. xiii. 26. i xxxvii. 23. Is. xxxv. 8. John iii. 20, 21. vii. 17. viii. 31, 32. Acts xi. 14. 2 Thes. ii. 10—12. 1 John ii. 27. k Deut. xxxiii. 12. 26—29. Prov. i. 33. xxix. 25. Ez. xxxiv. 25—28. Mai. xi. 28, 29. * Heb. lodge in goodness. xxxi. 19. xxxvi. 8. lxxiii. 5. Is. lxxv. 10—14. Jer. xxxi. 12—14. Zeph. iii. 17. Zech. ix. 17. Phil. iv. 19. l xxxvii. 26. lxxix. 36. cxii. 2. Gen. xvii. 7—10. Prov. xx. 7. Is. lxxv. 23. Jer. xxxii. 39. Acts ii. 39. m xxxvii. 11. 22. 29. Ez. xxxiii. 24—26. Matt. v. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 10. 2 Pet. iii. 13.

14 The ⁿ secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and [†] he will shew them his covenant.

15 ^o Mine eyes are ever toward the LORD; for he shall [†] pluck my feet ^p out of the net.

16 ^q Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me; ^r for I am desolate and afflicted.

17 ^s The troubles of my heart are enlarged: O bring thou me out of my distresses.

18 ^t Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and ^u forgive all my sins.

33—35. s xxxiv. 19. xxxviii. 1—8. xlii. 7. lxxvii. 2—4. 1 Cor. iv. 11—13. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10. iv. 8, 9. t cxix. 132. 153. 1 Sam. i. 11. 2 Sam. xvi. 12. Lam. v. 1. Luke i. 25. u xxxii 1—5. li. 8, 9. Matt. ix. 2.

justice; he is therefore ever ready to teach his ways of peace and holiness to all those, however sinful, who are humbly willing to learn them, that they may enter on them and walk in them. But the proud and obstinate, who feel no need of such instructions, or desires after them, and are not disposed to practise what they know, do not properly apply for divine teaching. And as the Master in this school is "meek and lowly in heart," and teaches with gentleness and wisdom; the scholars should surely be teachable, and learn in meekness and humility. (*Notes, Matt. xi. 28—30. Jam. i. 19—21. P. O. Mark x. 1—16.*)

V. 10. All the dealings of God with those who accept of his salvation according to his covenant of grace, and "walk with him," by faith in his truths and promises, and in obedience to his commandments, are the result of his wisdom, and consistent with his mercy and faithfulness; and therefore they will all eventually do them good, whatever present appearances may be. (*Notes, ciii. 15—18. Is. lv. 1—3. lvi. 3—7. Rom. viii. 28—31.*) Or the passage may mean, that all the commands and counsels of God, the paths in which he calls his people to walk with him, are good in themselves, and do good to the upright; and lead them to experience the fulfilment of his merciful and faithful promises.

V. 11. Had David's iniquity been great, and he had thought it but little, his plea would have been inadmissible: but his argument was, that "where sin had abounded, "grace might much more abound." (*Notes, Rom. v. 20, 21. Eph. i. 3—8.*) Thus the name, or perfections, of God would be displayed and glorified: and on this ground he hoped for pardon of his most atrocious sins, and on this alone; so that, if this plea did not prevail, he must sink in hopeless misery.—Some would render the clause "though it be great:" but certainly this is not the most obvious interpretation; and probably would not have been adduced, except either out of dislike to the doctrine implied in our version, or a fear of its being perverted. (*Note, Rom. vi. 1, 2.*)

V. 12, 13. It is said of all unconverted men, that "there is no fear of God before their eyes;" and that "the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom." (*Notes, xxxvi. 1. cxi. 9, 10. Rom. iii. 9—18.*)—Where then is that man, in this evil world, who truly reverences the authority of God, who fears his displeasure, and seeks his favour, as

the main concern of his life? How disadvantageously soever he may be circumstanced; how great soever his past guilt, or his present darkness and discouragement; the God of all grace, who has excited this fear by his own preventing grace, will assuredly afford him the means of instruction, and enable him to profit by them: so that eventually, he "shall dwell at ease," or lodge in goodness (*marg.*); and shall find a never-failing source of comfort in the divine love, while he expects the complete felicity of heaven at last.—The inheritance of Canaan was a type of heaven: but indeed that man inherits the earth as far as it can profit him, who has food and raiment, and lives contented and in peace: and the man who "lives godly in "Christ Jesus," is also warranted to hope for the same blessings in behalf of his children, when about to leave them.

V. 14. The knowledge of the glory and harmony of the divine perfections, which encourages a sinner to trust and love a holy God; that sweet communion, which the believer enjoys with God his Saviour; and that peace and joy, which springs from the earnest of the Spirit, may be well called "The secret of the LORD:" and they lead the soul into a conciliating and satisfactory acquaintance with his purposes, and the wisdom and equity of them; and with the security and blessings of the new covenant, and the assurance of an interest in it. (*Notes, Prov. iii. 32. Matt. xiii. 10—13. John xiv. 21—24. Col. iii. 1—4. Rev. ii. 17.*) But none, except those who fear God, can possibly enjoy this satisfaction, which must still remain a secret to all ungodly men.—Several other discoveries of the secret plan and purposes of God, may also be intended, which none but the pious Christian can receive. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 15, 16. (*Notes, cxxi. 1, 2. cxxiii. 1, 2. cxxiv. 4—8. cxli. 8—10.*) The word rendered "desolate" is the masculine of the noun, which, when feminine, is translated "my darling." (*Note, xxii. 19—21.*)—The Septuagint here render it, "only begotten;" as it certainly means in some places: but in this connexion it seems rather to imply the destitute condition of the Psalmist, when left alone, or forsaken by his former adherents and friends; and a fit type of Christ, as deserted by his disciples, and surrounded by his insulting enemies.

V. 17—20. Every occurrence during Absalom's rebellion tended to augment the distress of David; especially in

x iii. 1, 2. xxvii.
2. 12. xxxviii.
19. lvi. 2. lviii.
4. cxxxviii. 7.
cxliii. 3. 2 Sam.
xvi. 11. xvii. 2—
4. Luke xxii. 2.
xxiii. 5. 21—23.
• Heb. *hatred of
violence.* xi. 5.
xviii. 48. *marg.*
lii. 2. lxxxvi.
14. cxi. 1. 4. 11.
z lxxi. 1, 2. Joel ii. 26, 27.

19 * Consider mine enemies; for they are many; and they hate me with cruel hatred.
20 y O keep my soul, and deliver me: let me not be ashamed: for I put my trust in thee.
y xvii. 8. xxii. 20, 21. cxxi. 7 Luke xxiii. 46. Acts vii. 59.

reminding him of his sins, which were thus visited on him, as Nathan had foretold. (*Notes*, 2 Sam. xii. 10—12.) He therefore united reiterated prayers for pardon, with his earnest requests for deliverance.—He was aware, that even his own son, and his bosom-counsellor, and a large part of the nation, thirsted for his blood; and would decline no violence, treachery, or cruelty, to destroy him: so that his *life* could be preserved only by the same divine power and mercy, in which he trusted for the salvation of his soul. (*Notes*, 2 Sam. xv—xviii.)

V. 21. In the sight of God, David pleaded guilty of great and many sins; but he had acted an upright part towards his unnatural son, and treacherous subjects. As a penitent likewise, he was “without guile,” and was determined to adopt no sinful measures for his preservation. And thus waiting on God, he trusted that he should be preserved.—“Integrity and uprightness shall preserve me.”

V. 22. The cause of the royal sufferer was that of his nation, and of true religion. While he was banished from Jerusalem, the people were oppressed, the wicked triumphed, and piety languished: and if the traitors succeeded, the event would exceedingly tend to obstruct the best interests of Israel. David therefore, in this prayer for the redemption of Israel from oppression, was a type of Christ interceding, amidst his personal sufferings, for his church; and for his own exaltation, as indispensably necessary to her interests, and to the salvation of his elect people. (*Notes*, li. 18, 19. cxxx. 7, 8. *John* xvii.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—7.

In vain will our *voice* be lifted up in prayer, unless our *souls* be lifted up to God, in fervent desires and believing expectations.—They who trust in the Lord, will never be ashamed of their hope; nor shall any boasting or menacing enemies triumph over them. They will wait continually upon the Lord with their humble desires, and wait his time of granting them: and while others have the benefit of their prayers, thousands are praying for them, by character, if not by name. Their heavenly Advocate also presents his effectual intercessions: and a cause so pleaded cannot but prevail; as they who injure or hate them, without cause or provocation, will at length experience to their unspeakable shame and confusion. But we must be careful not to give our enemies so much as a plausible pretext for their malice; and for that reason should above all things be instant in praying, to be guided in the ways of truth and holiness. The most wise and experienced feel most their need of this continual teaching, and are most desirous of it; not only lest they should be wholly deceived, but lest they should be seduced into any paths of error or iniquity. They will therefore “*wait all the day*” on “the God of their salvation.” And his tender mercies, and his love to his people of old, will encourage them to

a vii. 8. xvii. 20—
24. xxvi. 1. 11.
xli. 12. 1 Sam.
xxiv. 11—13.
xxvi. 23. Prov.
xi. 3. xx. 7. Dan
vi. 22. Acts xxiv.
16. xxv. 10, 11.
b xiv. 7. li. 18, 19.
cxxxii. 6. cxxx.
8. cxxxvii. 5, 6.

21 a Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.
22 b Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

PSALM XXVI.

David professes his integrity, and his delight in the people and ordinances of God, with a solemn appeal

come to him, that they may be remembered in the same gracious manner.—Recent transgressions followed by chastisements, if they have a proper effect, must lead most of us to recollect, and with shame confess, the sins of our youth, which are thus remembered against us: and thus we may humbly hope that the Lord will remember us according to his mercy, and blot them out “for his goodness’ sake.”

V. 8—22.

The most ignorant or atrocious sinner may properly be encouraged to trust in our gracious God, who in perfect sincerity invites all who hear to come to him. He delights in directing the sinner in the way of acceptance, and the believer in the paths of holiness: and when the heart is humbled, and the rebellious will subdued, the understanding shall be further enlightened to perceive the truths of God. He who has learned, in meek and humble teachableness, to sit at the Saviour’s feet and hear his word, shall soon be made acquainted with the secret comforts of true godliness, and shewn the nature and excellency of his everlasting covenant: and having acceded to it, and learned to walk with him in faith and obedience, according to its tenour; he shall find every one of the Lord’s dispensations towards him to be unmingled truth and mercy; not excepting his sharpest trials and severest corrections. The sudden recollection of the greatness of his iniquity may often assail his confidence; but faith in the Lord’s more abundant mercy can even convert that into an argument, why he should pardon.—Pride, obstinacy, and the love of sin, dictate all the complaints which are made of difficulty and uncertainty, in discovering the truth and will of God: for wherever there is a man who truly fears the Lord, he shall certainly be taught by the Holy Spirit the safe and happy way. He will surely be directed to the Saviour, and there find rest to his soul; and reposing his care and confidence upon his reconciled God, he will cheerfully wait for more complete joys in heaven; and commit his children also to the Lord, desiring his blessing for their inheritance. That we come short of this serene and happy life, is the effect of remaining unbelief and disobedience; and because we are so often heedlessly running into the snares of the world, and are thus caught by Satan’s wiles. Let us then look more entirely to God, that he would pluck our feet out of every net, and preserve us from every entangling care. Let us pray more earnestly, when we are most desolate of earthly comforts and comforters, or oppressed with sorrows; for the Lord is able to support and deliver us. He considers the number and cruel hatred of our enemies; and if either the injuries of man, or the temptations of Satan, render our prayers more frequent and fervent, they will eventually prove of great service to us. Let us especially pray for “integrity and uprightness of heart,” which will be our best preservative from dangers, delusions, and temptations; and secure

a vii. 8 xxxv. 24. to him, 1—8. He deprecates the doom of the wicked, and unites earnest prayers with pious purposes and believing confidence in God, 9—12.

A Psalm of David.

JUDGE me, O LORD; ^b for I have walked in mine integrity. ^c I have trusted also in the LORD; *therefore* ^d I shall not slide.

2 ^e Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

3 For ^f thy loving kindness is before mine eyes; and ^g I have walked in thy truth.

4 I have not ^h sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.

5 I have ⁱ hated the congregation of evil doers; and ^k will not sit with the wicked.

^l I have not sat with vain persons, neither will I go in with dissemblers.

to us purer comforts and more solid advantages, than the friendship, or even the possession, of the whole world. And, while we wait on the Lord about our own concerns, let us remember our brethren in tribulation, and pray for them also, that they may be redeemed from all their sins, enemies, temptations, and troubles; and that the church of God may be enlarged and prospered, and fill the whole earth.

NOTES.

PSALM XXVI. V. 1. It is the general opinion, and indeed it seems very probable, that this psalm was written by David, in Philistia. (*Notes*, cxli. title. 1 Sam. xxvii.)—Exposed to envenomed slanders and cruel persecutions, he had been driven from the ordinances of God, into the society of idolaters: but he appealed to him who searched all hearts, to judge between him and his enemies. He was conscious of having uniformly and perseveringly acted an upright part towards Saul, and in all other respects; and he had also trusted in God alone. (*Notes*, Ps. vii. 1—5. xxv. 1—3. xliii. 1. cxliii. 1, 2.) He therefore was confident, that he should not be left to fall into any of the snares which were laid for him; or in any future season of temptation.

V. 2. Try.] The original word (פָּרָה) is derived from the fire, with which metals are tried and purified: and it shews the earnest desire of the Psalmist, even by sharp trials, to have his character ascertained, and his holiness improved. (*Notes*, xvii. 1—3. cxxxix. 23, 24. Job xxiii. 8—12. Zech. xiii. 8, 9. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. iv. 12—16.)

V. 3. By meditating on the kindness, mercy, and faithfulness of God, David had learned to copy them in his habitual conduct. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18.)

V. 4. (*Note*, i. 1—3. cxxxix. 19—22. Jer. xv. 15—18.) “Dissemblers,” here denote hypocrites, or those who under specious pretensions cloked their unjust and mali-

6 I will ¹ wash mine hands in innocency: ^m so will I compass thine altar, O LORD:

7 ⁿ That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and ^o tell of all thy wondrous works.

8 LORD, ^p I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place ^q where thine honour dwelleth.

9 ^r Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with ^s bloody men:

10 ^t In whose hands is mischief, and their right hand is ^u full of ^v bribes.

11 But as for me, ^w I will walk in mine integrity: ^x redeem me, ^y and be merciful unto me.

*John ii. 14—17. * Heb. of the tabernacle of thine honour. lxiii. 2, 3. Ex. xxv. 21. 22. xl. 34, 35. 2 Chr. v. 14. vi. 1, 2. + Or, Take not away. xxviii. 1—3. 1 Sam. xxv. 29. Mal. iii. 18. Matt. xxiv. 51. xxv. 32. 41. 46. Rev. xxii. 14, 15. † Heb. men of blood. li. 14. lv. 23. cxxxix. 19. 1 Sam. xxii. 18, 19. 2 Sam. xvi. 7. xxi. 1. q x. 14. xi. 2. xxxvi. 4. lii. 2. lv. 9—11. Prov. i. 16. iv. 16. Mic. ii. 1—3. Matt. xxvi. 3, 4. Acts xxiii. 12. ‡ Heb. filled with. r Ex. xxiii. 8. Deut. xvi. 19. 1 Sam. viii. 3. Is. xxxiii. 15. Ez. xxii. 12, 13. Am. v. 12. Mic. vii. 3. s 1 Sam. xii. 2—5. 2 Chr. xxxii. 20, 21. Neh. v. 15. Job i. 1. Is. xxxviii. 3. Luke i. 6. 1 Thes. ii. 10. t xlix. 7. 15. lxix. 18. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19 u cxxx. 3, 4. 7, 8. Neh. xiii. 24. 22. 31.*

cious designs.—Persons who are *hidden* (סְתוּרִים), artfully concealing their real characters and designs.

V. 5. Evil doers meet together for various purposes: but whether treacherous policy, or malignant enmity, or sensual and festive indulgence, formed the bond of their union, David hated their company, and shunned their assemblies. (*Notes*, Gen. xlix. 5—7. Prov. xiii. 20. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18.)

V. 6—8. By repentance and conscientious obedience, as well as by faith, expressed in attending on the typical purifications, the Psalmist purposed to prepare for offering those sacrifices, which prefigured the atonement of Christ; and especially for presenting his thank-offerings for deliverance, which he anticipated with cheerful hope. (*Notes*, xxiv. 3—6. l. 16—21. lxxiii. 12—14. Prov. xv. 8, 9. Is. i. 10—20. Matt. v. 23, 24. 1 Cor. xi. 29—34.) He trusted, that he should soon be restored to the land of Israel, and to the courts of God in which he greatly delighted; and while the worshippers compassed the altar, he purposed to celebrate the wonderful works of God in his behalf. (*Notes*, xxvii. 4—6. xlii. 1—3. lxiii. 1—4. lxxxiv. 1—3. 10. cxvi. 17—19.)—The glory of God was manifested at the sanctuary, from above the mercy-seat; and in those ordinances which typified the Redeemer. Thus the *tent*, where the ark was placed, might be considered as “the house of God,” in which his honour dwelt; where he met his worshippers and blessed them, and was glorified by them. (*Marg. Ref.* p.)

V. 9—11. As the Psalmist had thus by choice separated from the wicked, he prayed in faith and confidence that God would distinguish between him and them; especially referring to Saul, Doeg, and others who gave or received bribes, in order to murder him and his pious adherents. (*Notes*, lii. 1 Sam. xxii. 6—19.) In this conduct they resembled, and in some respects prefigured, Caiaphas, Judas, and the false witnesses and wicked priests, who

x xxvii. 17. xl. 2.
1 Sam. ii. 9.
Prov. x. 9.
y 7. xxii. 22—25.
cvi. 32. cxi. 1.
cxix. 4. Heb. ii.
12.
a xviii. 28. lxxxiv.
11. Job xxix. 3.
Is. ii. 5. lx. 1—
3. 19. 20. Mic.
vii. 8. Mal. iv.
2. John i. 1—5.
9. viii. 12. Rev.
xxi. 23. xxii. 5.
b iii. 8. xviii. 2.
lxii. 2. 6. lxxviii.
19. 20. cxviii. 14.
15. Ex. xv. 2.
Is. xii. 2. li. 6—
8. lxi. 10. Luke
ii. 30. iii. 6. Rev.
vii. 10.
c xviii. 1. 2. 46.
xix. 14. xxviii.
7. 8. xliii. 2. Is.
xlv. 24. 2 Cor.
xii. 9. Phil. iv.
13.
d xi. 1. xlv. 1. 2.
vi. 2—4. cxviii.
6. Matt. viii. 26.

12 *My foot standeth in an even place: ^vin the congregations will I bless the LORD.

PSALM XXVII.

David by strong faith rises above the fear of his enemies, 1—3. He chooses the courts and service of God, as his felicity, 4—6. He prays for guidance and assistance, and encourages his brethren, 7—14.

A Psalm of David.

THE LORD is ^amy Light and ^bmy Salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is ^cthe Strength of my life; ^dof whom shall I be afraid?

2 When ^ethe wicked, even mine

Rom. viii. 31. Heb. xiii. 6. e iii. 7. xviii. 4. xxii. 16. lxii. 3, 4.

enemies and my foes, ^fcame upon me ^gto eat up my flesh, ^hthey stumbled and fell.

3 Though ⁱan host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though ^jwar should rise against me, ^kin this will I be confident.

4 ^lOne thing have I desired of the LORD, ^mthat will I seek after; ⁿthat I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, ^oto behold the ^pbeauty of the LORD, and to ^qenquire in his temple.

24. xviii. 1. Heb. xi. 6. n xxiii. 6. xxvi. 6. lxxv. 4. lxxxiv. 4. 10. 1 Sam. i. 11. Luke ii. 37. 1 Tim. v. 5. o l. 2. lxiii. 2. xc. 17. Zech. ix. 17. 2 Cor. iii. 18. iv. 6. † Or, delight. lxiii. 2—5. p 1 Sam. xxii. 10. xxx. 8. 2 Sam. xxi. 1. 1 Chr. x. 13, 14.

* Heb. approached agari-mi
f xiv. 4. liii. 4. Job xix. 22
xxxi. 31.
g xviii. 33—42. cxviii. 12. Is. viii. 9. 15. John xviii. 3—6.
h lii. 6. 2 Kings vi. 15—17. 2 Chr. xx. 15. Phil. i. 28. 1 Pet. iii. 14
i 1 Sam. xxviii. 15, 16. Is. xli. 11, 12. liv. 16, 17. Rom. viii. 35—37. Rev. ii. 10. xii. 7—11.
k 2 Cor. v. 6—8. l Luke x. 42. Phil. iii. 13.
m 8. Jer. xxix. 13. Dan. ix. 3. Matt. vi. 33. vii. 7, 8. Luke xi. 9, 10. xiii.

combined to murder the Prince of life.—David, though conscious of integrity, and determined to persist in it, trusted only in the redeeming mercy and grace of God. (Note, iv. 3—5.)

V. 12. He, who confides in the gracious promises and providence of God, and cleaves stedfastly to him in upright and unreserved obedience, stands on firm and even ground, and may cheerfully bless and praise the Lord. (Notes, xxv. 21. xl. 1—5. Prov. x. 9. 1. Pet. i. 3—5.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

According to that covenant which Jesus mediated, the man who “walketh in his integrity,” yet wholly trusts in mercy and grace, is evidenced to be in a state of acceptance: the Lord may be appealed to, to plead his cause: and he shall not slide, but “be kept by a divine power, “through faith unto salvation.” This man desires to have his inmost soul searched and proved to the uttermost. He is aware of the deceitfulness of his own heart, and desires to detect and mortify every sin; and he longs to be fully satisfied that he is a true believer. He examines himself; and is willing to be examined by the penetrating and distinguishing word of truth: but, lest after all he should be deceived, he appeals to the great Searcher of hearts; and in his better judgment, welcomes even those fiery trials, by which his graces may be manifested and improved, as gold and silver in the furnace. While he hopes in the loving-kindness and faithfulness of God, he sets them before him as his example, and seeks to be conformed to the holy truths which he believes. He is conscious that the society of profane, licentious, deceitful, or dissipated persons is become irksome to him. He does not frequent the haunts of evil-doers; and will stay no longer in worldly company than he can help. But he rejoices in the opportunity of attending on the ordinances of God, and meeting with his people. With serious preparation of heart, and in the exercise of repentance, faith, and a good conscience, he approaches the table of the Lord, to enjoy fellowship with him and his disciples; and to publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and to tell of all the wonders of redeeming love. Having loved the courts of the Lord, and every place and company, where his praises were displayed, and his glorious truths discoursed on; he would dread above all things the final doom of wicked men. A few hours

with the covetous, malicious, and deceitful are very painful: eternity in such company would form a hell to him. This antipathy gives just confidence that his soul shall never be gathered with them, and animates him still to walk in his integrity, and to cry for mercy and complete redemption. Thus he feels his ground firm under him: and, as he delights in blessing God with his congregations on earth, he trusts that shortly he shall join the great assembly in heaven, in “singing praises to God and to “the Lamb for evermore.”

NOTES.

PSALM XXVII. V. 1—3. It is probable, that this psalm was composed by David, in the extremity of his danger from Saul, in order to silence the fears of his companions, by shewing them the strength and reasonableness of his confidence. (Note, xi. 1—3.) Some however, think it relates to his subsequent conflicts and dangers.—JEHOVAH himself was David's LIGHT, his Teacher, Guide, Comforter; “and his SALVATION,” both from temporal dangers and eternal misery: he was “the Strength of his “life,” his powerful Protector and Upholder; and therefore he had no reason to fear any enemies. (Note, 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3.) When, in former instances, his wicked persecutors had come against him in force and rage, as if they meant to devour him, (Note, Job xxxi. 29—32,) they stumbled and fell; and he was assured they would do so again: and, being confident that God was on his side, he was determined that he would not yield to fear, even if a whole army should march in battle-array, to wage the most desperate war against him. (iii. 6.) Compare this with the complaint of Saul. (1 Sam. xxviii. 15.)—When the malignant enemies of Christ came to seize him in his deepest humiliation, at one word of his they went backward and fell to the ground. (Note, John xviii. 4—9.)

V. 4—6. David was conscious, that the service of God was his choice, and, as it were, his element. (Note, xxvi. 6—8.) Though a brave soldier, a renowned commander and conqueror, and an anointed king; yet it was his *one desire* above all others, and his constant prayer and persevering endeavour, to dwell in, or at, the tabernacle of the Lord, where his ordinances were administered; which were types of the promised Messiah and his salvation, means of grace to believers, and acts of worship to God.

q x. xxxii. 6, 7. xvi. 1. l. 15. lxxvii. 2. xci. 15. cxxxviii. 7. Prov. i. 24—28. Is. xxvi. 16. Jer. ii. 27, 28. lvi. 1. lxxxiii. 3. cxix. 114. Prov. xviii. 10. Is. iv. 6. xxvi. 20. xxxii. 2. Matt. xxiii. 37. Col. iii. 3. xxxi. 20. xci. 1. 2 Chr. xxii. 12. Neh. vi. 10, 11. lxxviii. 33. xl. 2. lxi. 2. Hab. iii. 18, 19. Matt. vii. 24, 25. xvi. 16—18. u iii. 3. cx. 7. Gen. xl. 13, 20. 2 Kings xxv. 27. x 2 Sam. vii. 9. xxii. 1. 49. 1 Chr. xxii. 18. y xvi. 22—25. xxvii. 6, 7. xliii. 3, 4. lxxvi. 13—16. cvii. 22. cxvi. 17—19. 2 Chr. xxx. 21—26. Jer. xxxiii. 11. Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 5.

5 For ^ain the time of trouble ^rhe shall hide me in his pavilion: ^sin the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall ^tset me upon a rock. 6 And ^unow shall mine head be lifted up ^xabove mine enemies round about me: ^ytherefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of ^zjoy; ^aI will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the LORD.

7 ¶ ^aHear, O LORD, *when* I cry with my voice: have mercy also upon me; and answer me.

8 [†]When thou saidst, ^bSeek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, ^cThy face, LORD, will I seek.

9 ^dHide not thy face *far* from me; ^eput not thy servant away in anger: ^fthou hast been my Help:

10 [†]Or, *My heart said unto thee, Let my face seek thy face, &c.* b xxiv. 6. cv. 4. Is. xlv. 19. lv. 6, 7. Hos. v. 15. c lxiii. 1, 2. cxix. 58. marg. Jer. xxix. 12, 13. d xlii. 1. xlv. 24. lxix. 17. cii. 2. cxliii. 7. Is. lix. 2. e li. 11. Is. l. 1. f lxxi. 5, 6, 17, 18. 1 Sam. vii. 12. Is. xlvi. 3, 4. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10. 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18.

If he might choose for himself, he would spend all the days of his life in the courts of the Lord; that he might meditate with joy upon the *beauty* and glory of the divine perfections there displayed, (*Notes*, l. 1, 2. lxiii. 1—4,) and have constant opportunity of enquiring the will of God, by the high priest, and from his word; and that he might take shelter, as in the pavilion or royal tent of his heavenly King, where no enemy could find him, or would dare to approach him. Thus he hoped to be fixed as on a rock, immovable by changes or assaults. Indeed, though now driven from the courts of God, he was assured that he should at length be exalted above all his enemies, and be brought back again to the Sanctuary; when he would offer sacrifices of joy and thanksgiving, with animated and triumphant songs of praise and gratitude.

V. 8. This verse may be literally rendered, “My heart *said* unto thee, Seek ye my face: Thy face LORD will I *seek*.” In retired meditation, the exhortations of God to the sons of men to seek his face or favour, were recollected by the Psalmist: and his heart answered, ‘Dost thou deign thus to invite us? Then without delay or hesitation, I will seek thy face.’

V. 9. ‘Do not in anger reject my suits, because I am a *sinner*; but accept them, because I am thy servant; *whom* in former times thou hast so often relieved, that *from* thence also I am emboldened to beseech thee not to *desert* me; ... but ... continue to give me deliverance *and* safety.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—David expected eternal salvation from the tried mercy and truth of the God of his salvation; and this gave him confidence as to temporal deliverances. (*Note*, Ps. cxix. 121, 122.)

V. 10. Perhaps David’s parents died about this time, or he was deprived of the solace of their company: or he meant in general, that the favour of God would compensate the loss of all earthly friends, and of the nearest and most endeared relations; that the Lord would surely prove

leave me not, neither forsake me, ^aO God of my salvation.

10 When ⁱmy father and my mother forsake me, then ^kthe LORD will ^ttake me up.

11 [†]Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in ^aa plain path, because of ^bmine enemies.

12 Deliver me not over unto ^mthe will of mine enemies: for ⁿfalse witnesses are risen up against me, and such as ^obreathe out cruelty.

13 *I had ^pfainted*, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD ^qin the land of the living.

14 ^rWait on the LORD: ^sbe of good courage, and ^the shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

xx. 16. 1 Sam. xxii. 9, 10. xxvi. 19. 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8. Matt. xxvi. 59, 60. Acts vi. 11—13. o xxv. 19. Acts ix. 1. xxvi. 11. p xlii. 5. lvi. 3. cxvi. 9—11. 2 Cor. iv. 1. 8—14. 16. q lii. 5. lvi. 13. cxlii. 5. Job xxxiii. 30. Is. xxxviii. 11, 19. Jer. xi. 19. Ez. xxvi. 20. r xxv. 3. 21. xxxiii. 20. lxii. 1. 5. cxxx. 5. Gen. xlix. 18. Is. viii. 17. xxv. 9. xxvi. 8. xxx. 18. Lam. iii. 26. Hab. ii. 3. Luke ii. 25. 38. Rom. viii. 25. s xxxi. 24. Acts xxviii. 15. 1 Cor. xvi. 13. 2 Tim. iv. 5—8. t cxxxviii. 3. Is. xli. 31. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. Eph. iii. 16. vi. 10. Phil. iv. 13. Col. i. 11.

faithful, though they should prove cruel and treacherous; and that he was determined to stay his mind on God alone.

V. 11, 12. The Psalmist knew himself to be constantly beset with spies and false witnesses, who pried into all his actions, in order to find some handle against him; that they might gratify their cruel malice, under the pretence of justice: and this led him to pray frequently for heavenly wisdom, and that God would lead him in the path of uprightness, and at a distance from the “appearance of evil,” that so his *observers* (*marg.*) might be disappointed.—Thus the Son of David also was continually watched, that some accusation might be found against him; but his perfect holiness and wisdom completely frustrated and confounded his implacable foes, who thirsted for his blood. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13. “Unless I had believed,”—the consequences must have been dreadful. The broken form of the sentence, adds greatly to the effect. Perhaps some person had asked David, how he kept up his spirits under his manifold trials and dangers: and he gave him this answer, as comprising the whole secret of his cheerful confidence.—“The land of the living,” in this connexion, seems to imply a prospect beyond this present dying world. (*Marg. Ref. q.*)

V. 14. Some understand this verse, as the Psalmist’s apostrophe to his own soul: but perhaps it was chiefly intended as an exhortation to his discouraged companions in tribulation; and also as a pious counsel to every one, who might at any future time read this admirable psalm. (*Notes*, xxv. 4, 5. lxii. 1, 2. 5—10. Mic. vii. 5—7. Hab. ii. 1—3.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

He, who is “the Light of the world, is the eternal JEHOVAH: and whosoever “followeth him shall not abide “in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” (*Notes*, John viii. 12. ix. 4—7. xii. 44—50.) He will guide every believer into the knowledge of his truth and the comforts of

PSALM XXVIII.

David earnestly prays for deliverance, and denounces the righteous doom of the wicked, 1—5. He exults in God, and prays for his people, 6—9.

A Psalm of David.

^a iiii. 4. v. 2. xxii.
2. lxxvii. 1. cxlii
1.
^b xviii. 2. xliii 9.
Is. xxvi. 4.
Marg.

UNTO thee, ^a will I cry, ^b O LORD

his salvation; and into an acquaintance with the dangers, snares, and enemies, which beset his path, and the manner in which they are to be avoided and overcome. He will uphold and protect their souls, and their lives also, as long as that is good for them; and he will keep them by his power through faith unto complete salvation. Happy are they, whose faith and hope are as vigorous as the security is valid. They need not fear armies of hostile assailants, or legions of infernal spirits, united for their destruction, with rage equal to their force. "In this they may be confident;" for "the eternal God is their Refuge." (*Notes, Deut. xxxiii. 27—29.*)—The temporary success of the wicked is only an introduction to their deeper disgrace and misery: they shall soon stumble, and fall, and rise no more: but the trials of believers will terminate in everlasting honour and felicity. Let us then in-treat the Lord to "give us faith, and to "increase our "faith;" that we may be delivered from tormenting fears, and honour our Protector by cheerful composure, when the hearts of others are shaken, as the trees of the wood are moved by the tempestuous wind. (*Is. vii. 2.*)—But the believer's confidence should be carefully distinguished from the hypocrite's presumption. Whatever be the Christian's rank, expectations, reputation, or employment; he considers the salvation and service of God, as his "one thing needful." (*Note, Luke x. 38—42.*) This he prays for and seeks after; for what is heartily desired will be diligently sought. He devises how he may dwell near the ordinances of God, that he may have constant access to them; for they are the rest of his soul, to which he returns with pleasure, when he has necessarily been called from them. He delights in contemplating the beauty and glory of the Lord, in the person of Jesus Christ; and he enquires his will, by studying his word, and praying for his teaching Spirit: he hides himself, from cares, and fears, and foes, in the presence-chamber of his King and Father, where no pursuer can discover him, or will venture to assault him; and while he drinks the waters, which flow from the Rock of ages, he fixes his hope and soul upon the Rock itself, for stability and support.—With such desires and experiences, we may triumph amidst conflicts, and "rejoice in tribulation." The Saviour, who suffered and conquered for us, will conquer by us: and, in hope of rendering eternal songs of praise in the temple above, we may now celebrate every mercy, with sacrifices of exulting joy and thanksgiving here on earth. But we should all be far more joyful and thankful, if we were more instant and fervent in prayer.—To the blessings of salvation the word of God invites sinners at large: yet, instead of attending to this call to seek his face, men turn their backs on him and his ways; for the heart of him alone, who is "born of God," echoes to the invitation, and says, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek:" he fears nothing so much as the hiding of his face, and

my Rock, ^c be not silent ^d to me: lest, ^e if thou be silent to me, ^f I become like them that go down into the pit.

2 Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee; ^g when I lift up my hands toward ^h thy holy oracle.

thy sanctuary. v. 7. cxxxviii. 2. 1 Kings vi. 19. ciii. 6—8. 30. 38. Dan. vi. 10.

being excluded from his service, or left to come short of his salvation: every token of his displeasure grieves him; and this renders him watchful and jealous of his own heart, and animates his supplications.—The loss of earthly friends, or their unkindness, or his anxiety about them, leads him more diligently to seek, and more highly to value, a relation to his heavenly Friend: and should his attachment to the Lord forfeit the favour of all his relatives, that loss would prove his richest gain. Let then the destitute, the orphan, and the widow, seek to the LORD, who is "a Father of the fatherless," and he will take them up; let us all seek to be taught and led in his ways, and in a plain path, that we may neither wander, nor stumble, nor cause our enemies to rejoice: and if we meet with the envenomed tongue of slander, or with cruel persecutions, let us remember "the man after God's own heart;" or rather let us look unto the suffering Saviour, and pray in faith not to be delivered up into the hands of our enemies. Having found the supports and comforts of the Lord's favour in times past; let us not faint, but "verily hope to see his goodness in the land of the living." Let us encourage others to "wait for the LORD," and not to yield to fear in the midst of dangers and enemies; for his grace will be sufficient for their support and deliverance. And whatever we may meet with in this dying world, he will strengthen our hearts; and we shall see and enjoy his goodness, "in the land of the living," in heaven, where sin and death never entered. Let us then, I say, encourage each other to "wait on the LORD," with patient expectation and with fervent prayer.

NOTES.

PSALM XXVIII. V. 1. It is not agreed, whether this psalm was written during David's persecutions from Saul, or at a later period of his life.—"Be not silent to me." "Treat not my humble requests with silent neglect."—The word (בֹּרַח) rendered "the pit" generally means *the grave*, when used in this manner: yet when the death of the wicked is thus expressed, it seems also to denote the place of future punishment; for all men go down into the grave, but the wicked into the pit of destruction. (lv. 23: נָאֵר שְׁחָה.)—If God did not shew, by some visible interposition, that he heard and answered David's prayers; he must soon be cut off and laid in the grave, never more to glorify God on earth; and it would appear, as if he died under the divine wrath, as the wicked do. (*Marg. Ref. d.*)—Had Christ continued in the grave, it might have been concluded, that he had been justly put to death: but he was justified and proved to be the Son of God by his resurrection. (*Notes, Rom. i. 1—4. iv. 23—25. 1 Cor. xv. 12—18.*)

V. 2. *Holy oracle.*] "The oracle of thy sanctuary." (*Marg.*) The place of the ark of the covenant, and the

3 ^f Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity, which ^g speak peace to their neighbours, but ^h mischief is in their hearts.

4 ⁱ Give them according to their deeds, and ^k according to the wickedness of their endeavours: ^l give them after the work of their hands: ^m render to them their desert.

5 Because ⁿ they regard not the works of the LORD, nor ^o the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and ^p not build them up.

6 ^q Blessed be the LORD, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications.

7 The LORD is ^r my Strength and ^s my Shield; ^t my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: ^u therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and ^v with my song will I praise him.

8 The LORD is ^w their Strength, and he is the ^x saving Strength of ^y his anointed.

9 ^z Save thy people, and ^a bless thine inheritance: ^b feed them also, and ^c lift them up for ever.

mercy-seat. (Notes, 1 Kings, vi. 15—22. viii. 28—30. Dan. vi. 10, 11.)

V. 3. "Draw me not away," as criminals are violently carried to the place of execution.—David deprecated the doom which awaited his deceitful persecutors, or that of Saul in particular. (Notes, xxvi. 9—11. xxxvi. 3, 4. lii. 1—5. Prov. xxvi. 23—27.)

V. 4, 5. The first of these verses is the language of prayer; the latter, that of prediction. In the one the Psalmist calls on God to "deliver" him, and plead the cause of true religion, by executing deserved punishment on his implacable enemies: in the other he assigns the reason, why he used this language; namely, because he foresaw this doom coming on them, and because their conduct shewed them to be given up to final hardness of heart.—In general we may and ought to pray, for the just punishment of all impenitent enemies of the church: but with particular application to individuals, such prayers can only be proper for inspired persons.—To be dealt with according to their deservings, must be most tremendous to every sinner. (Note, Jam. ii. 8—13.)—Regard not, &c. (5) Marg. Ref. n.—Notes, xcii. 4—7. Rom. i. 18—20.

V. 6, 7. This sudden transition from earnest prayers and the language of distress, to exulting joy and praise, accords so much to the method of those psalms, which are evidently prophetic of Christ, that some expositors interpret this of him; and suppose these verses to be spoken as an anticipation of the triumphs and glory, which followed his deep humiliation and sufferings. (Notes, xxii. 22—31.)—David himself, however, seems frequently to have anticipated the answer of his prayers in a similar manner: or perhaps after his deliverances, while leading the praises of his people, he contrasted the joyful scene with the dangers and sorrows, the prayers and tears, which preceded it.

V. 8. Some render this, "The LORD is Strength to 'them:'" (that is, to his people:) "and his Messiah, 'the strength of salvations is He.'"—It is not clear, that the original can bear this construction: but no doubt David had reference to Christ, whom he typified both in his conflicts and victories; and to the blessings of God conferred on his people through him.

V. 9. David's prayer for Israel was in some respects

typical of Christ's intercession for his church.—The authority of a good prince resembles the care of a tender shepherd over his flock. The word rendered *feed*, therefore, means also *rule*: and is applied to JEHOVAH, to the Messiah, and to David, and others. (Marg. Ref. †—Notes, 2 Sam. v. 1, 2. Is. xl. 9—11. Jer. xxiii. 3, 4. Mic. v. 3, 4. vii. 4—17.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

While others are troubling their fellow creatures with unavailing complaints; believers should, under distresses, cry the more earnestly to "the Rock of their salvation:" and they should not rest, till they have received some satisfactory token that their prayers are heard; for if the Lord could refuse to answer them, their case would resemble that of those, who have perished in their sins, to whose agonizing cries no gracious answer will be made for ever. But this can never befall those, who come to the mercy-seat of a reconciled God, in "the holy place not made 'with hands,'" through the intercession of our great High Priest; sincerely desiring and humbly hoping for those blessings, which he purchased by his meritorious sacrifice, and is now exalted to bestow. They will not however, merely deprecate the punishment which awaits the wicked, and the effects of their persecuting malice; but they will likewise earnestly pray, that they may not be drawn away by their enticements, to adopt their errors and imitate their sins; for the ungodly are more to be dreaded, when they "speak peace to their neighbours," than when they avow the mischief which is in their hearts. We may without hesitation predict, that impenitent sinners will ere long be recompensed according to their endeavours to do evil; and we cannot desire that the obstinate enemies of Christ should escape condign punishment. Indeed, if men duly regarded the works of the Lord, the displays of his power and majesty would intimidate them from rebellion, and "his goodness would lead them to repentance:" but alienation of heart from God causes men to neglect all his operations, and to despise even his redeeming love. He will however surely destroy such sinners, and not build them up, though for a time they prosper.—The servant of God is often encouraged to anticipate the answers of his prayers, while he is yet asking. When praising him for

PSALM XXIX.

David calls on the mighty to give glory to God, 1,
2. He shews the majesty and power of his voice, 3—
9: and that, as the eternal King, he will strengthen
and bless his people, 10, 11.

A Psalm of David.

GIVE unto the LORD, O ye *mighty,
give unto the LORD glory and strength.

2 ^b Give unto the LORD the [†] glory
due unto his name; ^c worship the LORD
in [†] the beauty of holiness.

3 ^d The voice of the LORD is upon
the waters: ^e the God of glory [†] thun-
dereth: the LORD is upon [†] many wa-
ters.

4 The voice of the LORD is [†] power-
ful; the voice of the LORD is [†] full of
majesty.

5 The voice of the LORD [†] breaketh

the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the
cedars of Lebanon.

6 He maketh them also to ^h skip like
a calf: ⁱ Lebanon and ^k Sirion like a
young [†] unicorn.

7 The voice of the LORD [†] divideth
^m the flames of fire.

8 The voice of the LORD ⁿ shaketh
the wilderness; the LORD shaketh the
wilderness of ^o Kadesh.

9 The voice of the LORD ^p maketh
the hinds to [†] calve, and [†] discovereth
the forests: and [†] in his temple [†] doth
every one speak of [†] his glory.

10 The LORD [†] sitteth upon the
flood; yea, the LORD sitteth [†] King for
ever.

11 The LORD will [†] give strength
unto his people; the LORD will [†] bless
his people with peace.

^h cxiv. 4—7. ⁱ Jer. iv. 23—25. ^k Hab. iii. 6—11. ^m Rev. xx. 11. ⁿ Deut. iii. 9. ^o xii. 10. Num. xxiii. 22. ^p Heb. cutteth out. ^q lxxvii. 18. cxliv. 5, 6. Ex. ix. 23. ^r Lev. x. 2. Num. xvi. 35. 2 Kings i. 10—12. Job xxxvii. 3. ^s xxxviii. 35. ^t xxxviii. 7. xlv. 3. ^u Job ix. 6. Is. xiii. 13. Joel iii. 16. Hag. ii. 6. 21. Heb. xii. 26. ^v Num. xiii. 26. ^w Job xxxix. 1—3. ^x Or, be in pain. ^y Is. ix. 18. x. 18. ^z 19. Ez. xx. 46—48. ^{aa} xlv. 2—5. xlviii. 9. cxxxiv. 1, 2. cxxxv. 1, 2. ^{ab} Or, every whit of it uttereth, &c. ^{ac} s. lxxv. 7. civ. 6—9. Gen. vi. 17. Job xxxviii. 8—11. 25. Mark iv. 41. ^{ad} x. 16. xciii. 1. xcix. 1. Dan. ii. 44. Matt. vi. 13. 1 Tim. i. 17. ^{ae} u. xxviii. 8, 9. lxxviii. 35. ^{af} lxxxi. 7. cxxxviii. 3. Is. xl. 29. 31. xli. 10. Zech. x. 6. 12. Eph. iii. 16. 2 Tim. iv. 17. ^{ag} x. lxxii. 3. 7. Num. vi. 24—27. Is. ix. 6, 7. John xiv. 27. xvi. 33. Rom. xiv. 17. 1 Cor. i. 3. Eph. ii. 17. 2 Thes. iii. 16. Rev. i. 4.

NOTES.

PSALM XXIX. V. 1, 2. The Psalmist here calls on the mightiest princes of the earth, who demand homage, and sometimes worship, from men, to render glory to the universal Sovereign and Judge; and to come and pay their tribute of adoration at his sanctuary, in which he displayed the beauty and excellency of his holy character and perfections. (Notes, ii. 10—12. xcvi. 7—9. cxxxviii. 4, 5. cxlv. 3—7. cxlviii. 11—13.)—*Beauty of holiness.* (2) Or, his glorious sanctuary. (marg.) Note, 2 Chr. xx. 20, 21.

V. 3—11. It is probable that this psalm was composed during a violent storm of thunder and lightning, which reminded David, and led him earnestly to remind others, how mean and feeble the most mighty and honourable of the earth, were in comparison of the God of "glory and strength." (Notes, Job xxxvi. 22—33. xxxvii. 1—13. xl. 9—14. P. O. xxxvii. 1—13.)—'You,' (princes of the earth,)

'think there is great power in your words: but, as they
'can be heard but a little way, so they are of little force,
'in comparison with this mighty voice; wherein the Lord
'expresses how potent he is, and strikes a dread and hor-
'ror into all that hear it.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Thunder is often
called the voice of God. (Ex. ix. 28. marg. Notes, 2 Sam.
xxii. 7—16. Rev. iv. 4, 5.) During a violent storm, he
seems in glorious majesty to ride upon the many waters
which form the clouds; and he shakes the ocean, as well
as the earth. The power of the lightning equals the terror
of the thunder: enormous cedars are shivered and scat-
tered by it in a moment; the very mountains shake, and
seem to move with agility, like a calf or a young rhino-
ceros, by means of tempests, or the earthquakes with
which they are sometimes accompanied. The flames of
the electrical fire, at the direction of the Almighty, are
divided with inconceivable swiftness, and irresistible force;
and even the wilderness is thrown into a trepidation. The
hinds affrighted cast forth their young: and the forests are
stripped, and their dark recesses laid open; the trees being
shivered, their branches torn off, and the wild beasts
affrighted in their dens.—But the people who worshipped
God at his sanctuary, heard his voice from his word,
which, though replete with encouragement, was more ma-
jestick and powerful than the thunder and lightning; and
being secure under his protection, they spake of his glory,
as displayed in all these terriffick events. For HE, who
once directed the rising, continuance, and conclusion of
the deluge, in the time of Noah; and who always bounds
and directs the boisterous ocean; rules every tempest, and
is established "King for ever:" and he will give protec-
tion, support, and peace with every blessing to all his
faithful people. (Notes, xlv. 1—4. civ. 6—9. Gen. i. 9.
viii. 1—3. Job xxxviii. 8—11.)

The hinds to calve, &c. (9) 'The oaks to tremble.'
Bp. Horne. Bp. Lowth. This rendering requires a need

PSALM XXX.

David praises God for deliverance, and calls on the saints to join him, 1—5. He shews that undue confidence had preceded his troubles, and fervent prayers his deliverance, 6—10. He renews his animated praises, 11, 12.

a Deut. xx. 5.
2 Sam. v. 11. vi.
20. vii. 2. xx. 3.
b xxxiv. 3. 4.
lxvi. 17. cxlv. 1.
Dan. iv. 37.
c xxvii. 6. xxviii.
9.

A Psalm and Song, at ^a the dedication of the house of David.

I WILL ^b extol thee, O LORD, ^c for

less alteration of the original, from אֵלֶיךָ *hinds*, to אֵלֶיךָ or אֵלֶיךָ *oaks*.—הָיָה or הָיָה seldom if ever means *to tremble*. The change leaves out one of the most interesting points in this truly sublime description of a thunder-storm; namely, its effects on the inhabitants of the forest: and the clause becomes little more than a repetition of what went before.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The mighty and honourable of the earth derive all their power and splendour from the eternal JEHOVAH: but, alas! few of them attempt to render to him the honour of his name, or “to worship him in the beauty of holiness.” They should, however, be reminded, that this is their highest privilege, interest, and happiness. The most exalted creatures indeed cannot render to the infinite God, their Creator and constant Benefactor, all “the glory which is due to him;” much less can any sinner: but when we come before him, as “in Christ reconciling the world unto himself,” adoring his majesty, submitting to his authority and righteousness, in genuine repentance and faith, and offering our spiritual sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, and willing obedience; he will pardon and accept our defective services though infinitely beneath his majesty and excellency.—The majestick terror and destructive effects of thunders, lightnings, hurricanes, and earthquakes, with the consternation which they occasion; while they impress on us a sense of God’s omnipotence, and of man’s impotency, should lead us to think of the defenceless and desperate condition, to which the wicked will be reduced in the day of judgment. For the voice of the divine law, if duly attended to, would fill the consciences of sinners with more terror and amazement, than all the convulsions in nature; (*Notes, Ex. xix. 16—20. xx. 18—20. Deut. v. 22—27. Heb. xii. 18—21;*) and the effects of the word of God, when attended by the operations of his Holy Spirit, are far greater upon the souls of men, than that of thunder in the material world. (*Heb. iv. 12.*) By its energy the stoutest are made to tremble, the proudest are abased, the secrets of the heart are detected, sinners are converted; and the savage, the sensual, and the unclean, become harmless, gentle, and pure, resembling doves and lambs. If we have heard his voice, and fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us; if we have welcomed Christ as a Saviour, and submitted to him as our King for ever; if, relying on his merits, we are no longer terrified by “the ministration of death,” yet have learned to love him and keep his commandments: let us remember that it is the same glorious God our Saviour who causes the thunder; and the children need not fear their Father’s voice, when he speaks in anger to his enemies. While

thou hast lifted me up, and ^d hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.

2 O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, ^e and thou hast healed me.

3 O LORD, thou hast ^f brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go ^g down to the pit.

4 ^h Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints

28. Is. xxxviii. 17, 18. Jon. ii. 4—6. g xxviii. 1. h xxxii. 11. xxxiii. 1—3. ciii. 20—22. cxxxii. 9. cxxxv. 19—21. cxlviii. 14. cxlix. 1. Rev. xix. 5, 6.

d xiii. 4. xxv. 2. xxxv. 19. 25. xli. 11. lxxix. 4. 10. lxxxix. 41—46. cxi. 8. Lam. ii. 15. e vi. 2. li. 8. ciii. 3. 4. cvii. 17—22. cxviii. 18. cxlviii. 3. Gen. xx. 26. Ex. xv. 17. 2 Kings xx. 5. Jam. v. 14, 15. f xvi. 10. xl. 1, 2. lvi. 13. lxxi. 20. lxxxvi. 13. Marg. cxvi. 8. Job xxxiii. 19—22.

they justly tremble, who are exposed without shelter to his vengeance: let us in his temple, his appointed refuge, (safe as Noah in the ark,) thank him for our security, and speak of his honour. “Let us give diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end;” and continually plead his promises, expecting that he will give us strength to resist temptation, to bear trials, to conquer enemies, and to perform every duty; and that he will bless us with a quiet conscience, a contented mind, and the “peace of God, which passeth all understanding;” that he will give us sweet composure even in the solemn hour of death, and exulting boldness amidst the dissolution of this visible creation, and in the “day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men:” knowing that our Saviour and King will rule even that flood of vengeance, and those tremendous convulsions; and that he hath prepared for us “new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” (*Note, 2 Pet. iii. 10—13.*)

NOTES

PSALM XXX. *Title.* This title may be rendered, “A Psalm: a song at the dedication of the house for David.” When advanced to the throne, and possessed of mount Zion, the Psalmist built himself a house, which no doubt he dedicated to God, by fervent prayer and joyful thanksgivings; and perhaps by making a religious feast for his friends. (*Note, Deut. xx. 5—9.*) But there is nothing in this Psalm peculiarly appropriate to that occasion; and it was evidently composed either after a dangerous illness, or when he had experienced some extraordinary deliverance.—Many think, that it was used after Absalom’s rebellion, when David returned to Jerusalem; and, having purified his house from the defilement which had polluted it, he solemnly dedicated both it and himself to God. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 1, 2. (*Notes, xxxv. 17—19. 25—28. xli. 11—13.*) *Healed.* (2) If this word be literally understood, a dangerous illness and an unexpected recovery, gave occasion to the Psalm. But some think the expression to be used figuratively, as no doubt it frequently is; and to denote a forlorn and homeless condition, like that of a sick man given over by physicians, and unable to help himself. The expectation of his death, formed by David’s enemies, and the joy and triumph which that event would have given them, peculiarly suit the state of things during Absalom’s rebellion. (*Notes, xli. 1—8.*)

V. 3. *Notes, xvi. 8—11. xxviii. 1. lxxxvi. 12, 13. cxvi. 8—12. cxviii. 17, 18.*

V. 4. ‘The word’ (הַסְדִּירִים rendered saints) ‘signifieth them that have received mercy, and shew mercy liberally

* Or, to the memorial xcvi. 12. marg.
i Ex. xv. 11. Is. vi. 3. Rev. iv. 8.
k ciii. 9. 17. Is. xxvi. 20. liv. 7. 8. lvii. 15. 16. 2 Cor. iv. 17.
† Heb. there is but a moment in his anger.
l xvi. 11. xxxvi. 7. —9. lxiii. 3. Rev. xxii. 1. 17. m vi. 6—9. lvi. 8. —11. cxxvi. 5, 6. Is. xxxviii. 3—5. Matt. v. 4. John xvi. 20—22. 2 Cor. vii. 9, 10.
‡ Heb. in the evening.
§ Heb. singing.
|| xvi. 5. marg. lx. 16. cxlii. 8. Gen. xxxii. 24. marg. Hos. vi. 3. Job xxix. 18—20. Is. xlvii. 7. lvi. 12. Dan. iv. 30. Luke xii. 19. 2 Cor. xii. 7. p xv. 5. xvi. 8. cxix. 117. q 5. v. 12. xlv. 3. lxxxix. 17. Job x. 12. || Heb. settled strength for my mountain. xl. 2. 1 Chr. xvii. 26, 27. r x. 1. xiii. 1, 2. cii. 10. civ. 29. cxliii. 7. Job xxx. 26—31. Is. xxxviii. 17. s lxxvii. 1, 2. cxxx. 1, 2. 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9. Phil. iv. 6, 7.

of his, and give thanks * at the remembrance of his holiness.

5 ^k For [†] his anger endureth but a moment; ^l in his favour is life: ^m weeping may endure [†] for a night, but [†] joy cometh ⁿ in the morning.

6 And ^o in my prosperity I said, ^p I shall never be moved.

7 LORD, ^q by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: ^r thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.

8 I cried to thee, O LORD; and ^s unto the LORD I made supplication.

9 ^t What profit is there in my blood, when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee: shall it declare thy truth?

10 ^u Hear, O LORD, and have mercy upon me: LORD, ^v be thou my Helper.

11 Thou ^w hast turned for me my mourning into ^x dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and ^y girded me with gladness;

12 To the end that ^z my glory may sing praise to thee, ^a and not be silent. O LORD my God, ^b I will give thanks unto thee for ever.

23, 24. cxlv. 2. cxlvi. 1, 2. Rev. iv. 8, 9. vii. 12.

t vi. 5. lxxxviii. 10—12. cxv. 17. 18. cxviii. 17. Ec. ix. 10. Is. xxxviii. 18. u li. 1, 2. cxliii. 1. 7—9. x xxviii. 7. liv. 4. y 5. Gen. xxxvii. 35. xlv. 28. 2 Chr. xx. 3. 9. 12. 27, 28. Esth. ix. 22. Is. xxv. 8. lxvi. 10, 11. John xvi. 20. Rev. vii. 14—17. z cxlix. 3. cl. 4. 2 Sam. vi. 14. Ec. iii. 4. Jer. xxxi. 4. 13, 14. a Neh. viii. 10. Is. lxi. 3. 10. Luke xv. 22. * That is, my tongue, or, my soul. xvi. 9. lvii. 8. Gen. xlix. 6. b Luke xix. 40. Acts iv. 20. c xiii. 6. lxxi. 14. Rev. iv. 8, 9. vii. 12.

‘unto others.’ Several words, varying in meaning, but all implying genuine piety and holiness, are translated “saints” in different parts of Scripture. By persons of this character, the holiness of God, (or his moral excellencies, as displayed in his word, and by his works,) is reflected on with admiring and grateful love, and celebrated with joyful praises. (Notes, Ex. xv. 11. Is. vi. 1—4. xxx. 8—11. Rev. iv. 6—8.)

V. 5. The concise manner in the original of this verse is very expressive. “For a moment in his anger; life in his favour: weeping may lodge in the evening; but singing in the morning.” No doubt this is meant exclusively of weeping penitents, or submissive suffering believers; and not of the ungodly or hypocritical. (Notes, ciii. 9. cxxvi. 5, 6. Matt. v. 4.)—We may here ‘see his clemency to his faithful servants: whom he may correct very sharply for a little time; but is soon reconciled, and then extends his favour to them without any end: and sends deliverance to them so unexpectedly and suddenly, as well as seasonably, that where nothing but lamentations were heard over night, there nothing but shouts of joy are heard in the morning.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 6—8. When the Psalmist had been delivered from Saul’s persecuting malice, and was settled peaceably in his kingdom, and rendered victorious over the enemies of Israel; he seems to have concluded, that his trials and dangers were over, and that he should thenceforth have uninterrupted peace. (Notes, 2 Sam. vii. 1—3. 18, 19. 26—29.) But while he ascribed his great prosperity, and the firm establishment of his authority, to the faithfulness, power, and love of God; he seems to have given way to unwarranted confidence, and to have remitted his vigilance and activity, and probably the fervency of his devotion. (Note, 2 Sam. xi. 1—5.) Thus he was gradually drawn into a course of inexpedient indulgence; and at length into most aggravated guilt, in the matter of Uriah, which threatened the final ruin of his comfort, reputation, authority, and family; and actually exposed him to sharp rebukes, anguish of spirit, and overwhelming domestick afflictions: till Absalom’s rebellion formed a sort of crisis in his case; and reduced him to such a humble, submissive, believing, and devout, state of mind, as prepared him for returning peace and comfort. (Notes, 2 Sam. xi—xx.) The Lord “hid his

“face and he was troubled:” (Notes, x. 1. xiii. 1—4:) his deepest trouble, however, was but for a moment: his weeping, when both sins and sufferings combined to render him inconsolable, continued for a night, and joy came in the morning. God, in answer to his prayers, “restored to him the joy of his salvation;” (Note, li. 12, 13:) and he spent the rest of his days in a degree of prosperity, honour, and comfort, which, in so dreadful a case as his had been, was beyond what could at all have been expected.

V. 9, 10. If God had permitted his offending servant to be slain, or to die of disease; he could no more have served the cause of religion, or glorified him in his church on earth: but, if spared, he purposed to celebrate the mercy and truth of God among his people, and hoped thus to do essential service to Israel. (Notes, lxxi. 17, 18. lxxxviii. 10—12. Is. xxxviii. 17—22.) The concluding part of the first book of Chronicles, shews that his purposes and expectations were fully accomplished.

V. 11, 12. These verses illustrate the doctrine of the fifth verse, by the Psalmist’s own experience; whose case seemed as likely to form an exception to the general rule, as any that could well be conceived. The figurative language, used on the occasion, is highly descriptive of the most exulting gladness, and most animated, constant, and unmingled praises; such as are found in the six concluding Psalms. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2.)—The tongue, when thus employed, is the distinguishing honour of our animal frame; and seems to be meant by “my glory.” (Comp. xvi. 9, with Acts ii. 26.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought to dedicate all our possessions to him, who gave them to us: and our habitations should be daily entrusted to his care, and consecrated to his service, by the word of God and prayer; and by excluding from them, as far as we can, whatever is displeasing in his sight. And when our comforts have been interrupted, and are again restored; we should renew our dedication of them to the service of our God. But alas! how many houses, even of men called Christians, are not only destitute of religion, but are also scenes of such impiety and wickedness, that one might almost be led to conclude, they had been set apart to the

PSALM XXXI.

David avows his confidence in God, craves his help, and rejoices in his mercy, 1—8. He states his various trials, and blends his complaints with prayers, 9—18. He admires the goodness of God to those who fear him, and excites the saints to love and trust him, 19—24.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

IN ^a thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: ^b deliver me in thy righteousness.

² ^c Bow down thine ear to me; ^d de-

liver me speedily: be thou ^e my strong Rock, for ^e an house of defence to save me.

³ For thou *art* my Rock and my Fortress; therefore, ^f for thy name's sake, ^g lead me, and guide me.

⁴ ^h Pull me out of the net, that they have laid privily for me: for thou *art* my Strength.

⁵ ^k Into thine hand I 'commit my spirit: ^l thou hast redeemed me, O LORD ^m God of truth.

^h xxv. 15. xxxv. 7. lvii. 6. cxiv. 7. cxi. 5. Prov. xxix. 5. 2 Tim. ii. 26. 2 Cor. xii. 9. k Luke xxiii. 46. Acts vi. 59. 2 Tim. i. 12. i xix. 14. Gen. xlviii. 16. Lev. xxv. 48. Is. i. 2. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. Rev. v. 9. m Deut. xxxii. 4. 2 Tim. ii. 13. Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi. 18.

service of the devil!—In this militant state it calls for our admiring gratitude, when the Lord lifts us up out of one difficulty after another, and does not suffer our foes to rejoice over us. Returning health, or deliverance from imminent dangers, is peculiarly pleasant, when given in answer to fervent prayers. But the redemption of our souls from “the pit of destruction” calls for our greatest thankfulness; and he, who heard the Saviour in the depth of his distresses and raised him from the dead, will thus save and bless all his true disciples. Let us then praise God for that earnest and pledge of all our mercies and hopes, and call upon all the saints to join us in our hallelujahs. *These* may “rejoice at the remembrance of his holiness:” for as the Lord hates sin, and has taught them to hate it, his purity assures them, that he will wholly sanctify them; and all his perfections, according to his covenant of grace and mercy, afford security for their eternal salvation. His anger, which is everlasting against the impenitent, in respect of his offending children “endureth but for a moment.” He will frown, rebuke, and correct them, and they will mourn and repent; this may continue for a night, but joy will speedily return: and the renewed sense of his favour, which is their life and comfort, like the rising sun, will make it morning with their souls.—But let all beware of unwarranted confidence and carnal security: neither outward prosperity nor inward peace is here immovable: the Lord in his favour has fixed the believer's *safety* firm as the deep-rooted mountains; but in every thing else he may expect to be shaken, and to meet with temptations and afflictions. When we grow unwatchful, we fall into sin; and the Lord hides his face, our comforts droop, troubles assail, and perhaps our enemies insult over us. And to arise from such depths requires redoubled earnestness and diligence, renewed humble confessions, and fervent, importunate prayers. We should intreat the Lord, that we may not close our lives under his frown, in a way dishonourable to his name, or unprofitable to our brethren; and we may properly pray to have our lives spared, that we may yet praise him on earth and declare his truth. In this way our comforts will be again restored; the penitent's sackcloth will in due time be changed for the robe of salvation, and the garments of praise; (*Note, Is. lxi. 10, 11*;) and our tongues will be our glory, being employed to the glory of our God. But indeed the continuance of life, and even that of our bodies in the grave, will be but as a moment, compared with eternity; and

whatever may befall us by the way, or however we come to the end of our course; if we have learned to love and praise God on earth, we shall exult in his favour and give him thanks for ever and ever.

NOTES.

PSALM XXXI. V. 1. It may be supposed that David wrote this Psalm, to encourage himself and his friends, during his extreme danger of being seized on by Saul, when he fled from Keilah: (*Notes, 1 Sam. xxiii. 22—28*;) or that he recollected his prayers, and meditations, and confidence, after his extraordinary deliverance, and thus recorded them, for the honour of God and the encouragement of his people: and we should realize these circumstances, which precluded all hope of escape by ordinary means, if we would enter into the spirit of the Psalmist, and perceive the strength of his faith and confidence in God. But David, in his greatest dangers and trials, expecting deliverance from God, was only a feeble type of the Saviour, in his extreme sufferings, his deep humiliation, and his prospect of the joy set before him.—The clause, rendered “Let me never be ashamed,” may signify “I shall by no means be ashamed for ever.” (*Note, Is. xlv. 15—17*.)

V. 2—4. David and his men had taken shelter in some natural strong-hold formed by a rock; but he was fully aware, that this hiding place “or house of defence,” now it was surrounded by Saul's army, must rather prevent than aid his escape. As, however, he had been used to make “the name of the LORD his strong Tower;” and as he considered the honour of the divine power, righteousness, and truth engaged on his side; he felt a confidence that he should be rescued by some extraordinary interposition of God. (*Notes, xci. 1, 2. 9, 10. cxliv. 1, 2. Deut. xxxii. 3, 4. 30, 31. 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3.*) Yet the case was urgent; and therefore he earnestly prayed to be answered *speedily*: and to be guided out of the intricacy, in which he was inclosed by his persecutors. For they had, as it were, caught him in a net by stratagem; and he had neither sagacity nor power sufficient to rescue himself out of their hands. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5. Our blessed Saviour adopted the first clause of this verse, when expiring on the cross; and many things in the psalm may be applied to him. David evidently perceived himself to be in such constant danger, that he could have no security either to his life or soul, but by thus, day

ⁱ xvi. 1, 2. xviii. 2. xxii. 1, 2. xliii. 5. lvi. 3, 4. lxxii. 1. lxxi. 12. 22. Matt. xxvi. 39. 42. xxvii. 46. John xx. 17. k cxvi. 15. 1 Sam. xxvi. 10. 2 Sam. vii. 12. Job xxiv. 1. Ec. iii. 1—8. Luke ix. 51. John vii. 6. 30. xii. 27. xiii. 1. xvii. 1. Acts i. 7. xxiii. 11. xxvii. 24. 2 Tim. iv. 6. 2 Pet. i. 14. l xvii. 8, 9. 13. lxxi. 10—12. cxlii. 6. cxliii. 3. 12. Jer. xv. 20. 21. m iv. 6. xxx. 7. lxxvii. 1. lxxx. 3. 7. 19. Num. vi. 25, 26. Dan. ix. 17. n vi. 4. li. 1. cvi. 45. Dan. ix. 9. 18. Rom. ix. 15. 23. Eph. i. 6, 7. ii. 4—7. o 1. xxv. 2, 3. xxxiv. 5. lxxix. 6, 7. Is. i. 6, 7. Joel ii. 26, 27. p vi. 10. xxxv. 4. 26. xl. 14, 15. lxx. 2, 3. lxxi. 24. lxxxiii. 16. 17. Is. xli. 11. 12. xlv. 16, 17. lxxviii. 13, 14. Jer. xx. 11. Dan. xii. 2. xxii. 12, 13. * Or, cut off for the grave. r xii. 3. lix. 12. lxxii. 11. cxi. 9—11. Prov. xii. 19. Is. liv. 17. John viii. 44. Rev. xxi. 8. xxii. 15. s lxiv. 3, 4. cxxiii. 3, 4. 1 Sam. ii. 3. 2 Chr. xxxii. 16. Is. xxxvii. 22—24. Matt. x. 25. xii. 24. John viii. 48. Acts xxv. 7. † Heb. a hard thing. xciv. 4. Jude 15. t xxxvi. 7—10. lxxiii. 1. 24—26. cxlv. 7—9. Is. lxiv. 4. Lam. iii. 23—25. 1 Cor. ii. 9. 1 John iii. 1, 2. u xvi. 11. Is. xxxv. 10. Col. iii. 2—4. Heb. x. 34. Jam. ii. 5. 1 Pet. i. 4, 5. x lxxvii. 28. cxxvi. 2, 3. Num. xxiii. 23. Is. xxvi. 12. John iii. 21. Acts xv. 12. 2 Cor. v. 5.

14 But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, 'Thou art my God.

15 ^k My times are in thy hand: ^l deliver me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me.

16 ^m Make thy face to shine upon thy servant: ⁿ save me for thy mercy's sake.

17 ^o Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: ^p let the wicked be ashamed, and ^q let them be silent in the grave.

18 Let ^r the lying lips be put to silence; which ^s speak ^t grievous things, proudly and contemptuously, against the righteous.

19 Oh, 'how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; ^u which thou hast wrought

for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men!

for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men!

20 ^v Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence ^w from the pride of man: thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from ^x the strife of tongues.

21 Blessed be the LORD: for he hath shewed me his ^y marvellous kindness in a ^z strong city.

22 For ^a I said in my haste, ^b I am cut off from before thine eyes: ^c nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto thee.

23 ^d O love the LORD, all ye ^e his saints: for ^f the LORD preserveth the faithful, and ^g plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

24 ^h Be of good courage, and ⁱ he shall strengthen your heart, ^j all ye that hope in the LORD.

h Deut. xxxiii. 3. 1 Sam. ii. 9. John x. 27—30. Jude 1. xviii. 6. k xxvii. 14. Is. xxxv. 3, 4. Luke xxii. 31, 32. v. 10, 11. l xxix. 11. cxxxviii. 3. Col. i. 11. m cxlvi. 5. Rom. xv. 12, 13. 1 Pet. i. 21.

proaches, Ahithophel's counsel, and the other particulars of that eventful period. (Notes, 2 Sam. xv—xvii.)

V. 14. "I have said, Thou art my God;" that is, 'I have determined to seek all my salvation, my present security and comfort, and my eternal happiness, entirely from thy omnipotence and all-sufficiency, and in thy mercy, truth, and unchangeable love, as revealed in thy word.' (Notes, xvi. 2, 3. xxii. 1. lxxii. 1—4.)

V. 15. The Psalmist well knew, that the time of his troubles and deliverance, and the continuance and period of his life, were entirely at God's disposal: and, as he would not attempt to anticipate his appointed time by killing Saul, he was persuaded that Saul could not succeed in his attempts to slay him; and that infinite wisdom and love would bring about his deliverance, and advancement to the throne, when the proper season was arrived.—Thus the counsels and decrees of the Jewish rulers against our Lord were continually disappointed for several years, because "his time was not yet come." (Marg. Ref.—Notes, cxvi. 15. 1 Sam. xxvi. 8—12.)

V. 16. 'Till my time of deliverance, let thy manifested presence and favour cheer my heart and protect me, for the honour of thine abundant mercy.' (Note, Num. vi. 24—26.)

V. 17, 18. (Note, 1.) The language implies both prayer and prediction: it is that of triumphant confidence in God; and of assurance, that however closely dangers, or powerful enemies, or temptations may press, the event shall be happy and glorious: and, thus considered, it is perfectly justified from the charge of malevolent imprecation; unless foreseeing and predicting the destruction of the wicked be malevolence. (Notes, v. 10, 11. xxxv. 25—28. lxxvii. 1—3.)—The word *righteous* is singular: it especially marks David's strict integrity, while grievously slandered with

insolent contempt; as typical of the Just and Holy One of God, who was reviled far more haughtily and despitefully. (Note, Jam. v. 1—6, end. 1 Pet. ii. 18—25.)—In the grave. (17) Note, xvi. 8—11.

V. 19, 20. David, in the midst of his troubles and imminent perils, found encouragement in admiring the goodness of God to those whom he had taught to fear and trust in him. Many effects of this goodness are openly shewn "before the sons of men," in the deliverances wrought for his servants on earth: immensely more are "laid up" for them in heaven for their eternal happiness; but which will be at last conferred on them before the assembled world. (Notes, Is. lxiv. 4. Col. i. 3—8. iii. 1—4. 1 Pet. i. 3—5.) Here the Lord preserves them by his powerful presence from their proud and envious foes, as in a "secret hiding place;" and he will keep them, as in a royal pavilion, (Note, xxvii. 4—6,) from all the effects of those slanderous reproaches which are cast on them, by those who contend with them and persecute them. (Notes, 17 Is. liv. 15—17.)

V. 21. Probably, David here referred to his deliverance, when Saul intended to besiege him in Keilah. (Notes, 1 Sam. xxiii. 7—13. Is. xxvi. 1.)

V. 22. In my haste.] This seems especially suited to the hurry and agitation of the Psalmist's mind, and the imperfection of his faith, when he found himself environed by his powerful foes in the cave, to which he had fled for shelter. (Notes, cxvi. 10, 11. 1 Sam. xxiii. 22—28.) Before he had time for reflection and prayer, he hastily gave up all for lost. But meditation on the promises which God had made to him, with earnest supplication, calmed his soul; and eventually his prayers were fully answered.

V. 23, 24. The deliverance of David, so far exceeding

PSALM XXXII.

David shews the happiness of a pardoned sinner,

all human probability, might well encourage the saints of the Lord to cleave to him in thankful, admiring love: for it was evident that the Lord preserved *believers* in every danger, and decidedly and awfully punished all their proud and ungodly persecutors. No circumstances of danger or temptation, therefore, should deject them or drive them from the path of duty: and in adhering to God, and relying on him, they would find their hearts supported and comforted with inward strength. (*Notes*, xxvii. 14. *Luke* xxii. 31—34. *2 Cor.* i. 1—7.)—*Saints.* (23) *Notes*, iv. 3—5. xxx. 4.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

The consciousness of trusting in God for every thing, on the warrant of his word, inspires confidence in danger, and suggests pleas in prayer: for it would not be honourable for the Lord, to leave those who thus rely on him to be ashamed of their hope. His *justice* induces him to deliver them from their unrighteous persecutors; his *mercy*, through the Redeemer's righteousness, will rescue them from final condemnation; and their earnest prayers will draw down promised blessings from their reconciled Father, as they stand in need of them. The Lord will protect and support all, who flee to him as their "Fortress," and build upon him as their "Rock of salvation:" for the honour of his own name he will guide such as desire to be led in his holy ways: and he will extricate from perplexities, and deliver out of temptations, those that call upon him, to pluck their feet out of every net and snare, which Satan and wicked men have privily laid in their path.—Every true Christian, having learned the worth of his soul, and the dangers to which it is exposed, has been led to entrust it as a sacred deposit to the care of the Almighty: but, considering the holiness and justice of God, and his own guilt and pollution, he would not dare to do so; did he not behold him as in Christ, his Redeemer, ready to forgive, and true to his covenant and promises. Thus encouraged, he continually commits his spirit into his hands, and, by daily experience, obtains a more firm persuasion of his power and willingness to save: and therefore, when death either seems to be at hand, or actually comes, he has confidence, in renewing this often-repeated transaction; and he desires to die resigning his spirit into the hands of his redeeming God. (*Note*, *2 Tim.* i. 11, 12.) But those who desire this comfortable assurance, must abhor the fellowship of all such as regard lying vanities; and renounce all idolatrous, superstitious, and carnal confidences, on which such immense numbers depend. They must rejoice in the mercy of God alone; and in every affliction remember, that he considers their trouble. They should treasure up, for future use, their experiences of his having noticed, supported, and comforted their souls in adversity; and having delivered them, when they thought they had been "shut up in the hands of their enemy:" for every deliverance is an earnest of the complete salvation and felicity of the heavenly world. (*Note*, *2 Cor.* i. 8—11.)

1, 2; and that penitent confessions alone can relieve the misery of the guilty conscience, and make way for comfort, 3—7. He instructs and warns sinners to repent, and believers to rejoice in God, 8—11.

V. 9—24.

In this present world, we may expect heavy trials one succeeding to another: yet it is our infirmity, "if our life" be spent with grief, and our years with sighing." Should pain, sickness, poverty, reproach, contempt, and persecution, come upon us, with combined force;—should our foes prevail, and our friends prove unfaithful, or afraid of owning or regarding us;—should any be so degraded from honourable or useful stations, as to be "forgotten like a "dead man," or "thrown aside as a broken vessel;"—should enmity unite with contempt, and slanderous accusation give countenance to conspiracy against our lives;—still we ought to remember that we have deserved more than all this, and to be thankful for deliverance from the wrath to come. We should also consider the man after God's own heart, and the treatment which he experienced: and especially we should "look unto Jesus," who was divinely wise, holy, and merciful; yet was more hated, despised, slandered, and afflicted, than we can be. Let us then follow the example of his resignation; remembering "that our times are in his hand;" and that support, comfort and deliverance will be vouchsafed whenever he pleases: nor can any suffering befall us otherwise, than our heavenly Father has appointed. Whilst we therefore give ourselves to meditation and prayer, we may profitably observe how the lying lips of Saul, Doeg, Ahithophel, and Judas, were put to silence in the grave: and thus will all be confounded, who menace, slander, or speak grievous things, with arrogance and contempt, against the righteous. Instead of yielding to impatience or despondency under our troubles; we should turn our thoughts to the surprising goodness of the Lord, towards those who fear and trust in him. For while their treasure is laid up for them out of the reach of all their enemies, their bodies, souls, reputations, and comforts, are under the protection of the Almighty; and they are "kept as in a strong city" (*φρασεμενοι*, *1 Pet.* i. 5), through faith unto salvation." We should not therefore yield to unbelief, or hastily conclude, under discouraging circumstances, that we are cut off from before the eyes of the Lord; but we should ask, in humble confidence that he will hear and deliver. He will preserve his faithful people through life; and when they meet the stroke of death, and yield their bodies to the grave, Jesus will receive their souls, and at length raise their bodies, and bring them to be for ever with him in glory. Let all his saints therefore pray to be enabled patiently to suffer, and courageously to venture, for his sake; for he will comfort and strengthen the hearts of all, who hope in him: whilst the proud despiser of his gospel, and persecutor of his people, shall meet with an abundant recompense of his evil deeds; and be for ever shut up, without possibility of release, in the hand of his cruel enemy, and in the unquenchable fire.—Lord, pardon our complaints and fears; increase our faith, patience, love, and gratitude; and teach us to rejoice in tribulation, and in hope of thine eternal glory.

* Or, A psalm of David giving instruction. xlii. xlv. lii. liii. lv. titles.

* A Psalm of David, Maschil.

a i. 1, 2. xl. 4. lxxxiv. 12. lxxxix. 15. cvi. 3. cxix. 1, 2. cxxviii. 1. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. Matt. v. 3—12. xvi. 17. Luke xi. 28. Rev. xxii. 14. b Is. i. 18. xliii. 25. xlv. 22. Mic. vii. 18, 19. Acts xiii. 38, 39. Rom. iv. 6—8. c lxxxv. 2. Neh. iv. 5. d Lev. xvii. 4. Rom. v. 13. 2 Cor. v. 19—21. i. 12. 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. Rev. xiv. 5. f Gen. iii. 8—19. 2 Sam. xi. 27. xii. 1—12. Prov. xxi. 13. Is. lvi. 17. Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. Luke xv. 15, 16. g vi. 2. xxxi. 9, 10. xxxviii. 3. li. 8. cii. 3—5. Job xxx. 17, 30. Lam. i. 13. iii. 4. h xxii. 1. xxxviii. 8. Job iii. 24. Is. li. 20. lix. 11. Lam. iii. 8. Hos. vii. 14.

BLESSED is he ^b whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is ^c covered.

2 Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and ^e in whose spirit *there is* no guile.

3 ^f When I kept silence, ^g my bones waxed old through ^h my roaring all the day long.

4 For day and night ⁱ thy hand was heavy upon me: ^k my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

5 ^l I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity ^m have I not hid. ⁿ I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and ^o thou forgavest ^p the iniquity of my sin. Selah.

6 ^q For this shall every one that is

xxxviii. 2—8. xxxix. 10, 11. 1 Sam. v. 6, 7. 9. vi. 9. Job xix. 21. xxxiii. 7. k xxii. 15. xc. 6, 7. cii. 3, 4. Job xxx. 30. Lam. iv. 8. v. 10. l xxxviii. 18. li. 3—5. Lev. xxvi. 39, 40. Josh. vii. 10. 2 Sam. xii. 13. xxiv. 10. Job xxxiii. 27. Prov. xxviii. 13. Jer. iii. 13. 1 John i. 8—10. m Job xxxi. 33. n Hos. vi. 1. Luke xv. 17—19. o xxx. 5. lxxxvi. 5. 15. ciii. 3. 2 Sam. xii. 13. Is. lxxv. 24. Jer. xxxi. 20. Luke vii. 47. xv. 20—23. Eph. iv. 32. p li. 4. 2 Sam. xii. 9. 13. Mal. iii. 8. q xxxiv. 2—5. xl. 3. li. 12, 13. 2 Cor. i. 4. 1 Tim. i. 16.

NOTES.

PSALM XXXII. *Maschil*. (מַשְׁכִּיל, אֶפְסָל; in high. *intellexit*, vel *intelligere fecit*.) This title seems to imply, that the Psalm contains peculiarly important instruction: and indeed it teaches the way by which miserable sinners become happy, and the nature and effects of true repentance. Twelve other psalms have the same title, the subjects of which are various; but all replete with instruction. Some have thought, that the word *maschil* shewed the musick to which the psalm was set; but this is by no means satisfactory.—This is one of the seven penitential psalms: and though the special occasion of it is not mentioned, it is generally supposed to refer to David's sin in the matter of Uriah, and his subsequent repentance. It seems to have been written some time after the fifty-first, and when God had “restored to him the joy of his salvation.” (Note, li. 12, 13.)

V. 1, 2. (Note, i. 1—3.) Sin is the only cause of misery; and forgiveness is the commencement of a sinner's happiness: as he that had obtained the king's pardon would be allowed to be the happiest, even though the poorest, in a company of condemned malefactors. The believer's transgressions of the divine law are all forgiven, being *covered* with the atonement. Christ bare his iniquities, and therefore they are not *imputed* to the believer, as to any of their *penal* consequences: nay, “righteousness without works” is *imputed*, and as a righteous person, the reward is adjudged to him: hence all his present comforts, and hopes of future felicity. (Notes, Rom. iv. 4—8.) But his character, as well as his privilege, is emphatically marked: “in his spirit there is no guile.” His professed repentance, faith, and love are undissembled: he means all that his words express, when he humbly confesses his sins and earnestly prays to be delivered from them. He is no hypocrite or formalist in his worship; but is indeed the same before God as he appears to be before men; a sinner trusting in his mercy through the atoning blood, and seeking sanctification by the power of the Holy Spirit. He does not profess to repent, with intention to sin again; nor does he indulge in sin because God is ready to forgive. Others will thus abuse the doctrine of free grace; but he cannot: he is “an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile.” (Notes, John i. 47—51. 1 Pet. ii. 1—3. Rev. xiv. 1—5.)—“Happy is that man, thrice happy, to whom ‘God will be pleased, out of his own free grace and mercy, ‘(for no man can merit such a favour by any services that ‘we can do him,) to remit not only his common errors,

“... but also his grosser sins. ... Who doth not only ‘seem, by his sorrowful confessions to hate and abhor ‘them; but is unfeignedly resolved to forsake them.’ *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 3—5. It seems that David, before Nathan came to him, had often been exceedingly tortured in his conscience, on account of the atrocious crimes which he had committed; (Notes, 2 Sam. xi. 27. xii. 1—6;) yet reluctance to humble himself before God, or to be considered as a criminal by men, led him to “keep silence,” or only to give vent to his anguish by solitary bemoanings, “roaring as a ‘lion which has received a deadly wound;’ and endeavouring, no doubt at the same time, by one sophistical excuse or other, to palliate his guilt to himself, and to be on better terms with his conscience. But this stubborn and rebellious conduct served only to prolong and enhance his misery. His secret remorse and conflict, not only preyed on his spirit, but impaired his health, and rendered him infirm in his bones or limbs, as through old age. Neither business nor pleasure during the day, nor his couch by night, could relieve his inward anguish; which was rendered more exquisite by the pains taken to conceal it. Thus the hand of God was “heavy upon him:” (*Marg. Ref. i.*;) and it is probable, some additional distressing malady was superadded to the natural effects of his inward conflicts; so that he, who was before vigorous and healthy, wasted away, till he resembled the parched land in the drought of summer. (Notes, xxx. 1, 2. xxxviii. 1—10. xli. 1—8.) But at length, being brought to a more proper frame of mind, he resolved humbly to submit himself to God; and to make full and ingenuous confession of his aggravated crimes, without attempting any excuse, or palliation. Having done this, the “iniquity,” or *injustice*, of his sin was pardoned, his burden was speedily removed, and at length his comforts were restored; and he recorded these things with a mark of peculiar emphasis, *Selah*, that others might profit by his painful and by his joyful experience (Notes, Jer. xxxi. 18—20. Luke xv. 13—24. 1 John i. 8—10.)

Hid. (5) נָסָה, *covered*: 1. Job xxxi. 33. Prov. xxviii. 13.—The impenitent *covers* his sin, in vain; but God *covers* the sin of the penitent believer, effectually.

V. 6, 7. The word rendered “godly” is frequently translated “a saint,” and seems to mean one whom God favours. All that fear him, and in humble submission desire his mercy, shew so far that right state of heart which springs from special grace: and such persons, hear-

^r iv. 3. 2 Cor. vii. ^r godly ^s pray unto thee in ^a a time when thou mayest be found: surely ^t in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

⁷ Thou *art* ^u my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt ^x compass me about with ^y songs of deliverance. Selah.

⁸ ¶ I will ^z instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: ^x I will guide thee with mine eye.

¹ Ex. v. 1—3. Judg. v. 1. 2 Sam. xxii. 1. Rev. vii. 10. xv. 3. z xxxiv. 11. Prov. iii. 1. iv. 1—13. viii. 10. 11. Matt. xi. 29. [†] Heb. *I will counsel thee, mine eye shall be upon thee.* xxv. 9, 10. xxxiii. 18. Prov. iii. 5, 6. Is. xlix. 10.

⁹ ^a Be ye not as the horse, *or* as the mule, *which* have ^b no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

¹⁰ ^c Many sorrows *shall be* to the wicked: ^d but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about.

¹¹ ^e Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and ^f shout for joy, all *ye that are* ^g upright in heart.

xii. 12. 1 Sam. ii. 1. Rom. v. 11. Phil. iii. 1. 3. iv. 4. Ezra iii. 11—13. Zech. iv. 7. g 2. cxxv. 4.

a Prov. xxvi. 3. Jer. xxxi. 18. Jam. iii. 3. iv. 7. -10. b Job xxxv. 11. Jer. iv. 22. viii. 6, 7. c xvi. 4. xxxiv. 19—21. cxi. 11. Prov. xiii. 21. Ec. viii. 12, 13. Is. iii. 11. lvii. 21. Rom. ii. 8, 9. d ii. 12. v. 12. xxxiv. 8. xl. 4. lxxxiv. 12. cxlvi. 5. cxlvii. 11. Prov. xvi. 20. Is. xii. 2, 3. Jer. xvii. 7. e xxxiii. 1. lxiv. 10. lxxviii. 3. xcvi. 12. Deut. f v. 11. xcvi. 1. xcvi. 4.

ing how readily God forgave the heinous guilt of David, when he was brought to ingenuous confession and deep repentance; would be encouraged to copy his example, and learn to pray in faith and hope, “in a time when God might be found.”—While his word is brought home to the conscience, and the Holy Spirit strives with the sinner, by painful convictions and terrors, or draws him to hope for mercy; it is especially “a time of finding,” (*marg.*) “an acceptable time,” “a day of visitation,” a critical season in his experience. In some respects, this life is a “time of finding,” except to such as are judicially hardened: but in another world, God will no more be found on a mercy-seat, waiting to be gracious; but as an avenging Judge to all the impenitent. (*Notes, Is. xlix. 7, 8. lv. 6, 7. Luke xiii. 22—30. xix. 41—44. John xii. 34—36. 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2. Heb. iii. 7—13.*)—They however, who, as David supposed, might by his example be animated to seize the invaluable opportunity, would be received into favour; and, secure of protection, (like Noah in the ark, during the deluge,) could be approached by no overwhelming troubles, temptations, or enemies; or by those judgments and that vengeance, which overtook the wicked and hurried them into destruction. (*Notes, Matt. vii. 24—27. Luke vi. 46—49.*)—In this happiness the Psalmist rejoiced: and he daily received so many mercies, which he celebrated with songs of deliverance, that he was wholly compassed about with them.

V. 8—11. David, in the name of God, here offered to instruct those who would regard him; and, by his experience and attention, to shew them the way of happiness; keeping his eye still upon them and counselling them. Or, the Lord himself, by his prophet, promises to be the Teacher and watchful Guide of all, who desire to walk in his ways. Some understand it, as the word of God to David, inducing him to repentance.—When horses or mules prove refractory and mischievous, force and skill are used to subdue and restrain them: and they are exposed to much severe discipline, to render them tractable, and to prevent them from doing mischief, instead of service, to their possessors.—Thus obstinate sinners, in as irrational a manner, render sharp usage necessary, either to preserve them from ruin, or to restrain them from injuring others. So that their sorrows are multiplied, as the deliverances and praises of the righteous are enhanced.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

All men would be happy: but they vainly expect that

riches, pleasures, and worldly honours can confer satisfaction; and when disappointed, they change one vanity for another: so that he, and he alone, who attends to the word of God, seeks felicity successfully. His mercy, through the great Redeemer, revealed in the scriptures, brings the first report of the *sinner's* happiness; faith receives this report, renounces worldly idols and false confidences, and seeks forgiveness and righteousness in the Saviour's name. But pride and stoutness of heart; aversion to God and his holy character and spiritual worship; and unbelief, either absolutely, or to a considerable degree, prevailing in the heart; keep back from unreserved submission, ingenuous confession, and fervent prayer, numbers who are deeply distressed with a sense of guilt. They “keep silence,” and brood in secret over their terrors and sorrows, which they endeavour to conceal under an assumed and hypocritical cheerfulness: while in solitude they feel, and sometimes mourn over, their misery, with horror and remorse, in the most doleful lamentations and fruitless wishes. In this way many are at length driven to despair and suicide: but far more seek relief from a condemning conscience, by having recourse to infidelity, or some corrupt system, which excuses or explains away the evil of sin; and so enables them to keep up a delusive hope of being happy, or at least of escaping misery, without “repentance and works meet for repentance.” When, however, God is pleased to visit the soul with his special grace, he sends his word, not only by a Nathan to the outward ear, with “Thou art the man;” but by his Holy Spirit to the inmost soul: (*Note, 2 Sam. xii. 7:*) and then godly sorrow, unfeigned submission, ingenuous confessions, and believing prayers for mercy and forgiveness through the atoning blood of Christ, soon make way for hope, and peace, and joy: and the justified believer tastes a happiness, of which before he had no conception; while he expatiates in praise of his present consolations, as contrasted with his preceding anguish, in a strain not unlike the encomiums on health of one recovering from a dangerous disease. Now he would have all his fellow sinners hear of his happiness, that they may come and share it; and therefore he freely declares his own sentiments and experiences for their instruction: and his character is equally distant from that of the self-confident Pharisee, and the licentious Antinomian. Yet even this man may relax his vigilance, and fall into grievous sins, nay, be led to “keep silence,” in the same perverse and foolish manner, as he did before: so deceitful is the heart of man, and so powerful,

PSALM XXXIII.

The righteous are called on to rejoice in God, and to praise his perfections as displayed in his word and works; and all men, to fear the great Creator and Governor of the world, 1—12. His providential kindness to his chosen people, in ordering all things for their good, 13—19. Their confidence and prayer, 20—22.

REJOICE in the LORD, O ye righteous; *for* praise is comely for the upright.

2 Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery, *and* an instrument of ten strings.

3 Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

a xxxii. 11. xcvi. 12. 1 Cor. i. 30, 31.
b cxviii. 15. Rom. iii. 10. v. 19.
c i. 14—16. lxxviii. 36, 37. cxxxv. 3. cxlvii. 1. Prov. xv. 8.
d lxxxvi. 2, 3. xcii. 3. xcvi. 4, 5. cxliv. 9. cxlix. 3. cl. 3—6. Ex. xv. 20. 2 Sam. vi. 5. 1 Chr. xv. 16. 28. xxv. 3. 6. Rev. v. 8. xiv. 2.
e xcvi. 1. xcvi. 1. cxlix. 1. Is. xlii. 10. Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16. Rev. v. 9. xiv. 3.
f 1 Chr. xiii. 8. xv. 22. xxv. 7. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 12.

the influence of temptation operating on human depravity!—But lengthened and multiplied miseries here, or eternal ruin hereafter, must be the inevitable consequence of this mad contest of a helpless worm against Omnipotence. Our God is indeed far more ready to forgive, than we are humbly to seek his mercy: but he will continue to frown, to rebuke, and to correct, till his children kiss the rod, confess their sins, and implore forgiveness. Then he will rejoice in pardoning and comforting them; that they may feel, and so declare to others, the difference between a humble and an unhumbled frame of mind. His “goodness” should “lead men to repentance:” but this is not the case in general; for numbers despise the riches of his mercy; and even his offending children are often kept from humble prayer, by unbelieving discouragements. But the examples of those who have found mercy again excite their hopes. Then they pray, and the Lord hears from his mercy-seat: and they will be safe from the floods of vengeance, which await those who will not “seek the LORD while he may be found.” All who come to him in this way, shall be preserved from their enemies, and rescued from their troubles; and their tears of godly sorrow shall be turned into abundant songs of joyful praise. Having tasted the bitterness of sin, and the comfort of forgiveness, they can warn and instruct their fellow sinners, and teach them by their experience: and the Lord himself will guide with his eye every humble penitent. But, with his powerful hand he will restrain, and with his “heavy hand” he will punish, the obstinate and refractory; while all the sorrows, which can be endured on earth, are as nothing, compared with the misery of the wicked in the world to come. Happy then are they, who trust in the Lord, and uprightly walk with him: mercy surrounds them, and joy is their portion; the ways, in which they are called to walk, are ways of pleasantness and peace; and the end is eternal life. “This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and their righteousness is of me, saith the LORD.” (Is. liv. 17.)

NOTES.

PSALM XXXIII. V. 1. Neither the writer nor the

4 For ^s the word of the LORD is right; and ^a all his works are done in truth.

5 ⁱ He loveth righteousness and judgment: ^k the earth is full of the ^{*} goodness of the LORD.

6 By ^l the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all ^m the host of them by ⁿ the breath of his mouth.

7 He ^o gathereth the waters of the sea together ^p as an heap: he layeth up the depth in store-houses.

8 ^q Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him:

9 For ^r he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

i. 9, 10. Job xxvi. 10. xxxviii. 8—11. Prov. viii. 29. Jer. v. 22. iii. 13. 16. Hab. iii. 15. q xxii. 27. xvi. 9, 10. Jer. x. 7—12. Dan. vi. 25, 26. Rev. xiv. 6, 7. xv. 4. r lxxvi. 7. Heb. xii. 29. s 6. cxlviii. 5, 6. Heb. xi. 3. t xciii. 5. cxix. 90, 91. Col. i. 16, 17. Heb. i. 3. Rev. iv. 11.

occasion of this Psalm is mentioned: but it is generally ascribed to David; and may perhaps be considered as a continuation of the subject, begun in the preceding Psalm; as it opens with the very same sentiment, with which that closes.—“God, and not the world, is the fountain of joy, which sinners talk of, but the righteous only possess.” Bp. Horne.—Joy and praise are becoming and beautiful, when united with piety and integrity; but the appearance of them, without soundness of character, is inconsistent and disgusting.

V. 2, 3. Instrumental, as well as vocal musick, in the worship of God, preceded the ceremonial law: not being explicitly there appointed, it can be no part of it; and if properly conducted, it may be rendered greatly subservient to devotion. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xv. 1. 20, 21. 1 Sam. x. 5, 6. 1 Chr. xv. 16. 20, 21. xvi. 4—6.)—“Let not the ancient songs of praise suffice you; but endite a new hymn, to testify your singular love and gratitude; employ your best skill to make the sweetest musick; and sing as cheerfully as you are wont to do at your most solemn feasts.” Bp. Patrick. (Notes, xcvi. 1. Rev. v. 8—10. xiv. 1—5, 2 col.)

V. 4—6. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xii. 5, 6. xxv. 10. xxxvi. 5—9. xlv. 6, 7. lxxxix. 13, 14. xcix. 4. civ. 24. 27—30. cxxxviii. 2. Ex. xxxiv. 5—7. Deut. xxxii. 3, 4. Mic. vii. 18—20. Rev. xv. 1—4.)—The word, &c. (6) Most of the ancient expositors, by the “Word of the LORD,” and “the breath,” or Spirit, “of his mouth;” understand the Son of God, the personal Word, and the Holy Spirit, as proceeding from the Father and the Son, (Notes, Gen. i. 1, 2. John i. 1—3.)

V. 7, 8. The waters, which at first covered the earth, were, by the Creator’s power, confined within their prescribed bounds, as if laid on a heap; or reserved in store-houses, to be dispersed, as required, to supply the want of all that dwell on earth, by various methods of communication. (Notes, xxiv. 1, 2. civ. 6—9. Gen. i. 9. vii. 10—12. Ex. xiv. 21—23. Job xxxviii. 8—11. Jer. v. 20—25. Am. ix. 5, 6.)

V. 9. The sublimity of this verse is admirable: “He spake, and it was; he commanded, and it stood.”

u ii. 1—4 ix. 15
Ex. i. 10—12
2 Sam. xv. 31.
34. xvii. 14, 23
Job v. 12, 13.
Prov. xxi. 30
Is. vii. 5—7.
viii. 9, 10. xix.
3. 11—14.
* Heb. *maketh*
frustrate. Is.
xlii. 25.
x xxi. 11. cxi. 8.
y Job xxiii. 13.
Prov. xix. 21.
Is. xiv. 24. 27.
xlvii. 10. Lam.
iii. 37. Ez.
xxxviii. 10, &c.
Dan. iv. 37.
Acts iv. 27, 28.
Eph. i. 11.
z xcii. 5. Is. lv. 8.
9. Jer. xxix. 11.
Mic. iv. 12.
† Heb. *generation*
and generation.
Acts xv. 18.
a cxliv. 15. cxlvii.
19, 20. Ex. xix.
5, 6. Deut. xxxiii.
29.
b lxv. 4. cxxxv. 4.
Deut. vii. 6—8.
John xv. 16.
Eph. i. 4. 1 Pet.
ii. 9.
c xxviii. 9. Jer. x. 16. Tit. ii. 14.
d xi. 4 xiv. 2. cii. 19. Gen. vi. 12. 2 Chr.
xvi. 9. Job xxviii. 24. Prov. xv. 3. Lam. iii. 50.
e liii. 2. Jer. xxxii. 23, 24. Heb. iv. 13.
f cxliii. 1. 1 Kings viii. 27, 30. Is. lvii. 15. lxxvi. 1. Luke xi. 2. 1 Tim. vi. 16.
g Prov.
xxii. 2. xxvii. 19. Ec. vii. 29. Is. lxiv. 8. Acts xvii. 26.
h xlii. 21. Job xi. 11.
xxxiv. 21, 22. Prov. xxiv. 12. Jer. xxxii. 19. Hos. vii. 2. 1 Cor. iv. 5.

10 "The LORD *bringeth the counsel
of the heathen to nought: *he maketh
the devices of the people of none ef-
fect.

11 "The counsel of the LORD stand-
eth for ever; "the thoughts of his heart
to †all generations.

12 "Blessed is the nation whose God
is the LORD; and "the people *whom* he
hath chosen for "his own inheritance.

13 The LORD "looketh from heaven;
"he beholdeth all the sons of men.

14 From "the place of his habitation
he looketh upon all the inhabitants of
the earth.

15 He "fashioneth their hearts alike;
"he considereth all their works.

The translation cannot equal the original; the emphatical pronoun (הוא) rendered *he*, twice repeated, giving much additional energy. JEHOVAH did but signify his pleasure, and the thing was done, and each of his creatures took the station allotted to it. (Notes, Gen. i. 3—5. Matt. viii. 1—4, end.)

V. 10—12. The sovereignty of God, in providence, accomplishing his purposes, whether of mercy or of judgment, without the least impediment from the politick counsels of idolaters, or persecutors, or of all nations combined; nay, in over-ruling all their plans to fulfil his designs, which extend through all generations of men, from the creation to the end of the world; shews his omnipotence and omniscience, as much as the first creation of the world did. (Notes, Is. xiv. 24—27. xlvii. 10, 11; Dan. iv. 34—37. Acts iv. 23—28. Eph. i. 9—12. iii. 9—12.) "The counsels of states and empires are either directed to the accomplishment of the great counsel of "heaven; or, if they attempt to thwart it, are blasted "and brought to nothing. History will force all who read "it with this view, to acknowledge thus much. And with "this view indeed it should always be read." Bp. Horne. The nation, therefore, which was distinguished as the chosen inheritance of this almighty Creator and universal Sovereign, possessed inestimable advantages above the worshippers of idols, and should rejoice in them and improve them. (Notes, cxlvii. 19, 20. Rom. iii. 1, 2.)

V. 13—15. The Lord, who "fashioneth all hearts as "one," and impartially decides concerning the works of all; is the Witness, as well as the Judge, of every man's conduct, throughout the whole earth. "He formed their "souls as well as their bodies; and therefore must needs "see into their very hearts, and be perfectly acquainted "with every one of their thoughts." Bp. Patrick. He also made the human species originally of the same nature; all are derived from the same stock, and all receive that nature impaired through the fall. The hearts of men, like their faces, have the same grand outlines, which are diversified through a variety of concurring circumstances:

xliv. 6. Ex. xiv. 17, 18. 28. Josh. xi. 4—8. Judg. vii. 2. 12, &c. 1 Sam. xiv. 8—16. 1 Kings xx. 10. 27—29. 2 Chr. xiv. 9—13. xx. 12. 23. xxxii. 8, 9, 21. J Josh. xiv. 12. 1 Sam. xvii. 4. 45—49. 2 Sam. xxi. 16—22. Jer. ix. 23. xx. 7. Judg. iv. 15. 2 Kings vii. 6, 7. Prov. xxi. 31. Ec. ix. 11. Is. xxx. 16. m cxlvii. 10. Job xxxix. 19—25. n xxxiv. 15—20. cxlvii. 11. Job xxxvi. 7. 1 Pet. iii. 12. o xlii. 5. lii. 8. Rom. iv. 4—8. Heb. vi. 18. p xci. 3—7. 10 John x. 28—30. q xxxvii. 3. 19 Job v. 19—22. Prov. x. 3. Is. xxxiii. 16. Matt. vi. 31—33. r xxvii. 14. lxii. 1. 2. 5, 6. cxxx. 5. t xxviii. 7. xxx. 10—12. u 1 Chr. xvi. 10. 35. Luke i. 47—50. Rev. iv. 8. x v. 11, 12. xiii. 5. xxxii. 10. cxix. 49, 76. Matt. ix. 29.

16 There is "no king saved by the
multitude of an host: "a mighty man
is not delivered by much strength.

17 "An horse is a vain thing for
safety: neither shall he deliver *any* by
"his great strength.

18 Behold, "the eye of the LORD is
upon them that fear him, upon them
that "hope in his mercy;

19 "To deliver their soul from death,
and "to keep them alive in famine.

20 "Our soul waiteth for the LORD;
"he is our Help and our Shield.

21 "For our heart shall rejoice in
him, because we have trusted in "his
holy name.

22 "Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon
us, according as we hope in thee.

and one heart (the same views, judgment, disposition, and affections,) is given to all, who are renewed by the Holy Spirit, with merely circumstantial differences, in things of smaller consequence. (Note, Jer. xxxii. 39—41.)

V. 16—19. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xlv. 5—7. cxlvii. 10, 11. 1 Kings xx. 20, 21. 2 Chr. xiv. 9—15.)—God continues the same, in every age; and effects the same things, by ordinary means, as he did in former times by miracles, both against his powerful and haughty enemies, and for his humble believing children.

V. 20—22. Marg. Ref.—Notes, xlii. 5, 6. 2 Sam. xxxii. 2, 3.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Rejoicing in the Lord, as our Father and Friend, is the genuine effect of humiliation and mourning for sin: for being justified by faith, and walking uprightly before him, joy is our privilege and duty. It becomes us to abound in cheerful praises; it is suited to our character, and ornamental to our profession, and honourable to God. But the joy of the hypocrite springs from presumption, and his praises are an offence and affront to the Lord.—Every endowment which we possess should be employed, with all our skill and earnestness, in the service of the Giver; and we should be avowed in our worship: but well regulated and heavenly affections are most harmonious and acceptable. (Notes, Eph. v. 15—20. Col. iii. 16, 17.)—Every part of his word is holy, just, and good, and very useful to the upright; (Note, Mic. ii. 6, 7;) and all his works are done in truth, correspond to the prophecies and promises of the Scripture, and are, in one way or other, a fulfilment of them.—Though the Lord delights in righteousness and judgment, yet the earth, which is full of man's wickedness, is filled also with his goodness: yea, his most abundant mercy consists perfectly with his most awful justice.—The formation of the earth, and the separation of the waters in the ocean, as a vast reservoir for the use of man, proclaim the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Creator: and, as they encourage the believer to expect the largest blessings from his almighty Friend, they call

PSALM XXXIV.

David praises God, and exhorts others, from his own experience, to bless and trust in him, 1—10. He teaches the fear of God; and contrasts the privileges of the righteous with the miseries of the wicked, 11—22.

* Or. Achish. Gen. xx. 2. xxvi. 1. 1 Sam. xxi. 13—15. Prov. xxix. 25.
 a lxxi. 8. 14, 15. cxlv. 1, 2. Is. xxiv. 15, 16. Acts v. 41. xvi. 25. Eph. v. 20. Col. iii. 17. 1 Thes. v. 18. 2 Thes. i. 3. ii. 13.
 b xlv. 8. cv. 3. Is. xlv. 25. Jer. ix. 24. 1 Cor. i. 31. 2 Cor. x. 17.
 c xxii. 22—24. xxxii. 5, 6. cxix. 74. cxlii. 7. 1 Tim. i. 15, 16.

A Psalm of David, when he changed his behaviour before * Abimelech; who drove him away, and he departed.

I WILL ^a bless the LORD at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

2 My soul shall ^b make her boast in the LORD: ^c the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad.

3 ^d O magnify the LORD with me, and ^e let us exalt his name together.

4 ^f I sought the LORD, and he heard ^e me, and delivered me ^g from all my fears.

5 ^h They looked unto him, ⁱ and were ^f lightened; and ^k their faces were not ashamed.

6 ^l This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and ^m saved him out of all his troubles.

7 ⁿ The angel of the LORD ^o encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

† Or, flowed unto him.
 xxxiii. 30. Mic. vii. 8, 9. John viii. 12.
 16. 2 Sam. xix. 5. 1 iii. 4. x. 17. xl. 17. lxxvi. 16—20.
 16. Rev. vii. 14—17. n xci. 11. 2 Kings vi. 17. xix. 35. Dan. vi. 22. Matt. xviii. 10. Luke xvi. 22. Heb. i. 14. o Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. Zech. ix. 8.

on all the inhabitants of the earth to stand in awe of him, and to fear his tremendous indignation. For, as “He spake, and it was done,” when the world was made; his mandate will be equally efficacious, when he shall command the destruction of his enemies: and such are all, who will not have the Saviour to reign over them. (Note, Matt. xxv. 41—46. Luke xix. 11—27.) All human power and policy are ineffectual against his omnipotent will: “his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure;” and his vengeance against the ungodly will be everlasting. —But blessed are his people, who have him for their Portion, and are his chosen inheritance: who worship and serve him, live under his protection, and enjoy his favour! We possess the outward means of this blessing: may he visit our souls with salvation, and new create us unto holiness! For he who formed man’s heart, cannot be imposed upon by any appearances.—All confidence, except in his mercy, is vain. Powerful armies, personal strength and valour, or the force and speed of a horse, are unavailing for outward safety, without his protection. The event of battles, and the fate of kingdoms, are determined by his sovereign will, who considers the works of men, and acts with perfect wisdom and justice. All human devices are ineffectual for the salvation of our souls: but the Lord’s watchful eye is over those, who unite the conscientious fear of his name, with a believing hope in his mercy through the great Redeemer. He will preserve their lives, and supply their temporal wants, as far as is good for them; and he will feed their souls and preserve them from eternal death. May he teach us to say from our hearts, “Our soul waiteth for the LORD, he is our Help and Shield.” Then shall “we rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name:” for “his mercy will surely be upon us, according as we hope in him.”

NOTES.

PSALM XXXIV. Title. (Note, 1 Sam. xxi. 10—15.) Achish was the name of the king of Gath; and “Abimelech,” which signifies, *My father the king*, seems to have been a general title given to all the kings of Philistia; as Pharaoh, and afterwards Ptolemy, was of the Egyptian kings.—This Psalm is curiously composed, according to

‘the number and order of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, in the beginning of every verse; which shews that it was contrived, when he’ (David) ‘reflected on his escape, in some place of safety.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Is. xxxviii. 9—13. Jon. ii. 1, 2.)

V. 1, 2. (Notes, cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2. Phil. iv. 5—7. Col. iii. 16, 17. 1 Thes. v. 16—22. Heb. xiii. 15, 16.) While the Psalmist publicly declared the power and goodness of God, in delivering him from extreme danger, and gloried in him as his omnipotent Father and Friend; he rejoiced to think, that other pious persons in distress, would be raised above discouragement and filled with cheerful hope, by this record of his experience. The event, during almost three thousand years, has fully verified this expectation.—The word (עָנִי) rendered *humble*, is afterwards translated *poor* (6). It seems applicable either to poverty and affliction borne with meek submission; or to the lowly sense, which true believers have of their unworthiness; and the poverty in spiritual things, which renders them teachable, dependent, and thankful. (Notes, Is. lxvi. 1, 2. Matt. v. 3.)

V. 4—6. When the Psalmist understood, that he was considered, in the court of Achish, as the enemy of the Philistines who was now in their power, his fears were very great; as the method by which he sought to extricate himself clearly shews. He was however delivered; and he ascribed his escape to a peculiar interposition of God, which eventually still more encouraged his faith and hope. And he realizes to himself the effects of these events on others, who would look to God, in distress and danger, and “be lightened,” or *flow unto him* (marg.), and find comfort and safety, while they conversed together on the case of David: and he calls on all, to join him in extolling the name and celebrating the praises of his gracious Deliverer; as unable to do it adequately himself.

V. 7. (Note, Gen. xxiv. 2—9.) ‘Though God’s power be all-sufficient, yet for man’s infirmity, he appointeth his angels to watch over us.’ (Marg. Ref.) The singular number being here used, many think, with great probability, that Christ “the great Angel of the covenant” was intended. (Notes, Gen. xxxii. 30. xlviii. 16. Ex. iii. 2. Hos. xii. 3—6. Mal. iii. 1—4.)

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p xxxv. 10. xci.
12. Dan. vi. 22
—24. John xix.
36.

7 xxxvii. 30—40.
xciv. 23. Is. iii
11.

r xxxvii. 12—15.
xl. 15. lxxxix.
23. 1 Sam. xix.

4. 5. xxxi. 4.
1 Kings xxii. 8.
37. Luke xix. 14.

27. 41—44. John
vii. 7. xv. 18—
23. 1 Thes. ii.
15. 16. 2 Thes. i.

6—9.
xlvi. 16. 2 Sam. iv. 9.
9. 10. John x. 27—29.

20 ^p He keepeth all his bones: not
one of them is broken.

21 ^q Evil shall slay the wicked; and
they ^r that hate the righteous shall be
* desolate.

22 The LORD ^s redeemeth the soul
of his servants; and ^t none of them
that trust in him shall be desolate.

* Or, guilty. Ex. xx. 7. s xxxi. 5. lxxi. 23. ciii. 4. cxxx. 8. Gen.
t ix.
9. 10. John x. 27—29. Rom. viii. 31—39. 1 Pet. i. 5.

xvi. 31—33. 1 Thes. iii. 1—5. 2 Tim. iv. 16—18. 1 Pet.
v. 8—11. Rev. vii. 13—17.)—God so preserves the be-
liever, in the most perilous circumstances, that not a bone
is broken without his wise and merciful appointment; nay,
“the hairs of his head are all numbered,” and not “one
falleth to the ground, without his Father.” (Note, Matt.
x. 29—31.) Every thing subserves his final good; and both
soul and body will be preserved, and perfected for glory.
(Notes, xxxv. 10. Rom. viii. 28—31. Phil. iii. 20, 21.)—
Not a bone of the Saviour was broken at his crucifixion;
though the two thieves who suffered at the same time, had
their legs broken. (Notes, John xix. 31—37.)

V. 21, 22. “Desolation” means *utter destruction*, whe-
ther of nations as such, or of individuals. The desolation
of the several kingdoms, which have persecuted the church,
and that of the Jews who crucified the Saviour, “hating
“that righteous One,” with the preservation ensured to
true Christians, form a striking exposition of these verses.
(Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxxvii. 10—15. xl. 13—16. Rom.
viii. 28—37. 1 Thes. ii. 13—16. 2 Thes. i. 5—12. Rev.
xx. 11—15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is our duty to “bless the Lord at all times,” in pain,
sickness, poverty, persecution, and even in the agonies of
death. He is always worthy of our love and praise; we
are always receiving more good from him than we have
deserved; and the more unworthy we are, the more cause
have we to adore his condescending goodness to us.—It
encourages the humble believer, and silences the proud
Pharisee, when the servants of God are enabled to rejoice,
and make their boast in him, under circumstances of the
most extreme danger, and the deepest distress: and if our
faith were strong, we might thus call on all around us to
magnify and exalt our God with us, extolling his glorious
excellencies, and celebrating the praises of his abundant
mercy.—Whilst others consider, how one poor tempted
soul has been comforted and delivered, they too are en-
couraged to look unto the Lord; and their hearts grow
cheerful, and their faith gathers strength. But we should
especially look to Him, “who, though he was rich, for
“our sakes became poor;” and remember how he suffered,
and how he is glorified, in order to save all that trust in
him.—They must be safe and happy, “who fear the
“LORD.” The holy angels minister to them, yea, the
great Angel of the covenant encampeth continually around
them, to protect and deliver them. Oh, that sinners would
but make trial of his love! Their own experience would
convince them, that the blessings of salvation are sweeter
than all the pleasures upon earth. But even the saints
need exhortations to the reverential fear of God: the more

PSALM XXXV.

David prays that God would fight against his ene-
mies; and anticipates their confusion, and his triumph
over them, 1—10. He complains of their calumny,
malice, and ingratitude; blending supplications and
appeals to God, 11—22. He renews his prayers and
predictions, 23—28.

A Psalm of David.

^a PLEAD my cause, O LORD, with

a xliii. 1. cxix. 154.
1 Sam. xxiv. 15.
Prov. xxii. 23.
xxiii. 11. Jer. ii.
36. Lam. iii. 58.
Mic. vii. 9.

humbly and obediently they walk with him, the happier
they are: and they, who “seek first the kingdom of God,
“and his righteousness,” shall never want any good thing;
whilst the covetous and rapacious, who resemble ravenous
beasts, shall at length be left utterly destitute. Let then
all, who have themselves “tasted that the Lord is gracious,”
take delight in leading others, and especially the young,
into these happy ways: by no means thinking the instruc-
tion even of little children beneath them. Let young per-
sons set out in life with learning the fear of the Lord, if
they desire true comfort here, and eternal happiness here-
after; for they are the happiest, who begin the soonest to
serve so good a Master. But let them attend to him, who
“speaketh unto them as unto children,” that they may
learn the true fear of God, and beware of counterfeits.
That religion promises best, which begins with the con-
science, and creates a watchfulness over the heart and
tongue, a dread and hatred of hypocrisy and all sin, and
a love of peace and universal holiness. Such a state of
heart prepares the way for the proper understanding and
reception of divine truth; and those who thus receive,
will “adorn, the doctrine of God our Saviour.” He will
peculiarly regard them and attend to their prayers: whilst
he fights against the evil doer, whatever be his profession;
and oblivion or infamy will be his present and eternal
portion.—Nothing is more essential to true godliness, than
a *contrite* heart, broken off from every kind of self-confi-
dence and self-preference, and crushed down into the dust
of self-abasement: in this soil every grace flourishes; and to
this contrite person nothing can give encouragement, but
the free mercy of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Such cha-
racters meet with many afflictions, and are often harassed
by grievous temptations, for their trial and profit; “but
“the LORD will deliver them out of them all:” whilst
the ungodly will sink under one trouble after another to
rise no more; for “evil shall slay the wicked.”—He that
accomplished the prophecies concerning the Saviour, so
that “not a bone of him was broken” by all his furious
enemies, will take equal care of all his faithful servants,
and destroy all their persecutors. He will redeem his
people from hell and from the grave, and will not forsake
those who trust in him, till they possess a happiness large
as their capacities, durable as their immortality, and sur-
passing their most sanguine expectations.

NOTES.

PSALM XXXV. V. 1—3. ‘This psalm, we are suffi-
‘ciently informed by the matter of it, was penned by
‘David, when he was fiercely persecuted by Saul; whose
‘forces, which were unjustly raised against him, he be-
‘seches the Lord to dissipate; and especially to stop the

^b *Ex.* xiv. 25. ^b fight them that strive with me; ^b fight against them that fight against me.

^c *vii.* 12, 13. *Ex.* xv. 3. *Deut.* xxxii. 41, 42. *Is.* xiii. 5. *xlii.* 13. 2 ^c Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help.

^d *xxvii.* 2. *lxxxvi.* 10. *1 Sam.* xxiii. 26, 27. *Job* i. 10. *Is.* viii. 9, 10. *x.* 12. *Acts* iv. 28. 3 Draw out also the spear, and ^d stop the way against them that persecute me: ^e say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation.

^f *li.* 12. *lxii.* 7. *xc.* 16. *Gen.* xlix. 18. *Is.* xii. 2. *Luke* ii. 30. 4 ^f Let them be confounded and put to shame ^g that seek after my soul: let them be ^h turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt.

^h *xxxviii.* 12. *1 Sam.* xxiii. 23. *1 Kings* xix. 10. *Ez.* xiii. 19. *Matt.* xxvii. 1. 5 Let them be ⁱ as chaff before the wind; ^k and let the angel of the LORD chase them.

^j *xxxix.* 5. *Is.* xxxvii. 29. *John* xlvii. 5. *John* xviii. 6. 6 ^j Let their way be ^l dark and slippery; and let the angel of the LORD persecute them.

^k *Ex.* xiv. 19. *Is.* xxxvii. 36. *Acts* xii. 23. *Heb.* xi. 28. ^l *lxxiii.* 18. *Prov.* iv. 19. *Jer.* xiii. 16. *xxiii.* 12. * Heb. darkness and slipperiness.

7 For ^m without cause have they ⁿ hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause they have digged for my soul.

8 ^o Let destruction come upon him [†] at unawares; and ^p let his net that he hath hid catch himself: ^q into that very destruction let him fall.

9 And ^r my soul shall be joyful in the LORD: it shall rejoice in his salvation.

10 ^r All my bones shall say, LORD, [†] who is like unto thee, ^u which deliverest the poor from him that is ^x too strong for him, yea, the poor and the needy from him that spoileth him?

^t *lxxi.* 19. *lxxxvi.* 8. *lxxxix.* 6—8. *Ex.* xv. 11. *Is.* xl. 18, 25. *Jer.* x. 7. *xxii.* 24. *xxxiv.* 6. *lxix.* 33. *cii.* 17—20. *cix.* 31. *cxl.* 12. *Job* v. 15, 16. *xviii.* 17. ^u *x.* 14. *Prov.* xxii. 22, 23.

‘mouth of his false accusers, such as Doeg and the Ziphites.’ *Bp. Patrick.* ‘So long as Saul was enemy to David, all that had any authority under him, to flatter their king, (as is the course of the world,) did also most cruelly persecute David.’ (*Notes*, *1 Sam.* xxii, xxiii.)—It is likewise evident, that the Psalmist was led by the Holy Spirit, to speak of his own case in language, which was more emphatically applicable to the divine Saviour, and to his sufferings.—‘Albeit God can with his breath destroy all his enemies; yet the Holy Ghost attributeth unto him these outward weapons, to assure us of his present power.’—*Draw out the spear*, &c. (3) *Notes*, *Ex.* xv. 3. *Num.* xxii. 23—27. *Josh.* v. 13—15.—*Say*, &c.] ‘Assure me against these temptations, that thou art the author of my salvation.’

4—9. All the verbs, in these verses, in the original, are in the future as a prediction; though they stand in most translations and paraphrases, ancient and modern, in the imperative as an imprecation. No doubt, there are many instances, in which such denunciations stand in the form of petitions; and, considered as the language of inspired men, respecting the inveterate enemies of God, and Christ, and religion, no reasonable objection can be made against them.—It is not however desirable, to understand any passages in this sense, which more obviously express one of more general application. The verses under consideration are simply a prediction, that David’s enemies would, by their unprovoked, assiduous, and crafty devices to take away his life, bring on themselves the deepest infamy, along with unexpected and inevitable ruin; and that his trials would terminate in thanksgiving and rejoicing. (*Notes*, 25—28. v. 10, 11.)—As light chaff cannot resist the force of the wind, so the Psalmist’s persecutors would not be able to withstand the power and justice of God; whose angel encamped around the righteous to protect them, and would drive their dismayed and bewildered assailants headlong into the pit of destruction. (*Notes*, i. 4—6. xxxiv. 7. *Ex.* xiv. 19. 24, 25.) One in particular, (probably Saul,) would perish in that very destruction, which he had, without any cause, nay contrary to his deserts, in-

tended for David. (*Notes*, 11, 12. *John* xv. 22—25.) He took counsel to take off David in battle against the Philistines, and he himself died in battle against them; which made way for the Psalmist’s complete deliverance. (*Note*, vii. 14—16.) In like manner, Ahithophel and Absalom brought ruin on themselves by their counsel against David; (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xv. 31. xvi. 20—23. xvii. 1—14. 23. xviii. 9—14;) and so did Judas, and the Jewish rulers, and the nation, by opposing Christ; of whom David, in this psalm especially, seems to have spoken, as a type or representative. Indeed, the whole Scripture predicts the final ruin of all the impenitent enemies of God and religion, and that of Satan, their great leader: (*Notes*, *Rev.* xix. 17—21. xx. 1—3. 7—10;) and the intercession of Christ, the prayers of his church, and the ministration of angels, while they tend to complete the salvation and joy of his people, concur in accomplishing the prophecies which foretel the destruction of his enemies.—‘A traveller, benighted in a bad road, is an expressive emblem of a sinner walking in the slippery and dangerous ways of temptation;... whilst an enemy is in pursuit of him, whom he can neither resist nor avoid.’ *Bp. Horne.*

V. 10. The Psalmist frequently complains, under his trials and chastisements, of broken bones, and that his bones waxed old, (*Marg. Ref.* s.) because his whole frame was sensibly affected. In like manner he considers himself, in body as well as in soul, so revived by his deliverance, that every bone would concur in admiring his Deliverer and his unrivalled excellence.—Christ was raised from the dead, and not one of his bones was broken; every member of his mystical body shall be forthcoming at the general resurrection; and every believer now has, and shall then have, cause to praise the Lord for taking care of his soul and body, in every part, and in all respects. (*Notes*, xxii. 16—18. xxxiv. 19, 20.)—Saul was too powerful for David in his poor and destitute condition; Christ was made poor and a man of sorrows, and had no armed force to oppose to the power of the Jews and Romans; and Satan and other enemies are too strong for the afflicted and humble believer.

• Heb. *Witnesses of wrong.* xxvii. 12. 1 Sam. xxiv. 9. xxv. 10. Matt. xxvi. 59, 60. Acts vi. 13. xxiv. 5, 6. 12, 13.

† Heb. *asked me.* y xxviii. 20. cix. 4, 5. 1 Sam. xix. 4, 5. 15. xxii. 13, 14. Prov. xvii. 13. Jer. xviii. 20. John x. 32.

‡ Heb. *depriving.* 1 Sam. xx. 31—33. Luke xxiii. 21—23.

z lxix. 10, 11. Job xxx. 25. Matt. v. 44. Rom. xii. 14, 15.

§ Or, *afflicted.* Lev. xvi. 29. 31. 1 Kings xxi. 27—29. Is. lviii. 3. 5. Matt. ix. 14, 15.

a Matt. x. 13. Luke x. 6.

|| Heb. *walked, as a friend, as a brother to me.* b 2 Sam. i. 11, 12. 17. &c. Luke xix. 41, 42.

c Gen. xxiv. 67. d 25, 26. xli. 8. lxxi. 10, 11. Job xxii. 29. Prov. xvii. 5. xxiv. 17, 18.

Heb. *halting.* xxxviii. 17. Jer. xx. 10. 1 Cor. xiii. 6.

e xxii. 16. lxix. 12. Job xxx. 1—11. Matt. xxvii. 27—30. 39—44. Mark xiv. 65. Acts xvii. 5.

f 8. Marg. g vii. 2. lvii. 4. h 1 Sam. xx. 24, &c. Is. i. 14, 15. John xviii. 28. 1 Cor. v. 8.

11 * False witnesses did rise up; they † laid to my charge *things* that I knew not.

12 † They rewarded me evil for good, to the † spoiling of my soul.

13 But as for me, † when they were sick, my clothing *was* sackcloth: I † humbled my soul with fasting; and † my prayer returned into mine own bosom.

14 I † behaved myself as though *he had been* my friend or brother: † I bowed down heavily, † as one that mourneth *for his* mother.

15 But † in mine † adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together: *yea*, † the abjects gathered themselves together against me, and † I knew *it* not; † they did tear *me*, and ceased not:

16 With † hypocritical mockers in

feasts, they † gnashed upon me with their teeth.

17 LORD, † how long wilt thou † look on? † rescue my soul from their destructions, my † darling from the lions.

18 † I will give thee thanks in the great congregation: † I will praise thee among † much people.

19 † Let not them that are mine enemies † wrongfully rejoice over me; *neither* let them † wink with the eye, † that hate me without a cause.

20 For † they speak not peace: but † they devise deceitful matters against *them that are* † quiet in the land.

21 Yea, † they opened their mouth wide against me; *and* said, † Aha, aha, our eye hath seen *it*.

22 *This* † thou hast seen, O LORD: † keep not silence: O LORD, † be not far from me.

xxv. 3. u Matt. xii. 19. 1 Pet. ii. 22, 23. x xxii. 13. Is. ix. 12. Luke xi. 53, 54. y xl. 15. lxx. 3. z Ex. iii. 7. Acts vii. 34. a xxviii. 1. xxxix. 12. lxxxiii. 1. b x. 1. xxii. 11. 19. xxxviii. 21. lxxi. 12.

V. 11, 12. The very persons, whom David had befriended when he was in prosperity, after he had been proscribed by Saul, bare *cruel* witness against him, and *demand*ed that punishment should be inflicted on him for alleged acts of treason, of which he had not the least consciousness.—This was far more emphatically accomplished in the great Antitype. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13, 14. The Psalmist next contrasts his conduct in respect of his persecutors, with that towards him of the very persons to whom he had rendered the most important services.—The nature of *fasting*, as an occasional voluntary act of self-abasement, submission to God under adverse dispensations, sorrow for sin as the cause of sufferings, and self-discipline in order to self-government, is illustrated by the expression, “I humbled,” or afflicted, or chastened, “myself with fasting.” (*Notes, Lev. xvi. 29—31. Matt. ix. 14, 15. P. O. 9—17.*)—The conduct of the Psalmist’s foes shewed, as he feared, that his prayers for them had not been answered; but he was satisfied that at length they would return into his own bosom. The original is *future*; “*shall* return:” and as David was still conflicting with trials, and anticipating deliverance, the future best suits his case.—He thus mourned over the afflictions of Saul and of Israel, with fasting and prayer: and Christ wept over Jerusalem, and fasted, prayed, and suffered for sinners, as for a friend, a brother, or a parent; and he prayed for his crucifiers, when about to expire amidst their cruelty and contempt! (*Notes, Matt. iv. 1, 2. Luke xix. 41—44. xxiii. 32—38.*)

V. 15, 16. When David was persecuted by Saul, or when he made any false step, as they supposed, (*marg.*) those who had before envied him rejoiced; the most abject persons, from whom he had least expected it, or who were too obscure to be known by him, conspired to do him mischief; his name was torn with incessant reproaches and false accusations; he was their sport at feasts; whilst those,

who flattered others in order to be feasted by them, or who were maintained by diverting the company, and personating and turning to ridicule the character of their neighbours, made him their constant subject; yet their contempt was united with most cruel and desperate rage.—All this was far more emphatically true of Christ, and the treatment with which he met from the hypocritical Jews, and from the most abject persons, not excepting the crucified malefactors who reviled him on the cross. (*Notes, Is. liii. 2, 3. Matt. xxvi. 63—68. xxvii. 27—31. 39—44.*)—The hypocritical priests, and scribes, who mocked Jesus, were at the same time keeping the feast of unleavened bread.

V. 17—19. (*Notes, xxii. 7—24.*) The exact agreement of the language used in these verses, with that of the passage referred to, favours the opinion that this psalm also is a direct prophecy of the Messiah. The Psalmist, however, seems evidently to have spoken of his own concerns, though carried beyond himself by the Spirit of prophecy, to use language applicable to far more important transactions.

V. 20. ‘They are men of a turbulent spirit, that give not their sovereign peaceable counsels, but devise false stories, to incense him against those that would gladly serve God quietly, under his government, without doing the least harm to any body.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—‘David would have lived quietly under the government of Saul: our Lord did not aim at temporal sovereignty;...nor did the primitive Christians desire to intermeddle with the politics of the world: yet all were betrayed, mocked, and persecuted, as rebels, and usurpers, and the pests of society.’ *Bp. Horne*.

V. 21, 22. They ‘boldly accuse me as a traitor,... saying, So, so, we have found him out; his treasonable practices are discovered, we ourselves are eye-witnesses of it.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—The appeal of David to God, the ever present witness of his conduct, and the prayer grounded

c vii. 6. xlv. 23.
lxxx. 2. Is. li. 9.
d lxxxix. 26. cxlii.
5. John xx. 28.
e vii. 8. xviii. 20—
24. xxvi. 1.
xlvi. 1. 2 Thes.
i. 6.
f 19. Job xx. 5.
g xxviii. 3. lxxiv.
8. Job i. 5. Mark
ii. 6. 8.
* Heb. *Ah, ah,*
our soul.
h cxi. 8. Ex. xv. 9.
Matt. xxvii. 43.
i lvi. 1. 2. lvii. 3.
cxix. 3. 2 Sam.
xx. 19. Lam. ii.
16. 1 Cor. xv.
54.
k 4. xl. 14. 15.
lxxi. 13. cxix.
5. Is. xli. 11. lxxv. 13—15.

23 ^c Stir up thyself, and awake to my judgment, *even* unto my cause, ^d my God and my LORD.

24 ^e Judge me, O LORD my God, according to thy righteousness; ^f and let them not rejoice over me.

25 Let them not ^g say in their hearts, ^h Ah, ⁱ so would we have it: let them not say, ^j We have swallowed him up.

26 ^k Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together, that re-

joice at mine hurt: ^l let them be clothed with shame and dishonour, ^m that magnify *themselves* against me.

27 ⁿ Let them shout for joy and be glad, that favour my ^o righteous cause: yea, ^p let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, ^q which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

28 And ^r my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness *and* of thy praise all the day long.

cix. 28. 29.
cxxxii. 18. Job
viii 22. 1 Pet. v
5.
m xxxviii. 16. Iv.
12. Job xix. 5.
Jer. xlviii. 26.
Dan xi. 36.
n xl. 16. lxxviii. 3.
cxxxii. 9. 16.
cxlii. 7. Is. lxvi.
10, 11. John xvi.
22. 1 Cor. xii.
26.
† Heb. *righteous-*
ness.
o lxx. 4.
p cxlix. 4. Jer.
xxxii. 40, 41.
Zeph. iii. 14. 17.
q l. 15. li. 14, 15.
lxxi. 24. civ. 33.
34. cxlv. 1, 2. 5.
21.

on it, have a peculiar energy, when viewed in connexion with the preceding verse. (*Notes*, xl. 13—17. *Matt.* xxvi. 63—68.)

V. 23. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, vii. 6—11. xlv. 23—26. *Is.* li. 9—11.

V. 24—28. These verses may be thus rendered “Judge me, O Lord my God, according to thy righteousness, “and let them not rejoice over me. Let them not say in “their hearts, So would we have it:” (it is as our souls desired :) “Let them not say, we have swallowed him up.— “They shall be ashamed and confounded together, who “rejoice in my shame. They shall be clothed with shame “and dishonour, that magnify themselves against me. “They will shout for joy and be glad, that favour my “righteous cause, &c.” The twenty-eighth verse is rendered in the future tense, and the two preceding verses might, with equal propriety, and perhaps with more energy, be translated in the same manner. The clamours against David, as cursing his enemies, when considered as an objection to the Scriptures, is indeed irrational; for it assumes the point in question, and determines that he spake in his own spirit, and not “as moved by the Holy Spirit;” yet it is not desirable to give needless occasion even to irrational and impious objections. (*Marg. Ref.*)—How applicable is the whole passage to the Saviour’s sufferings and triumphs, and to the consequences of them! (*Notes*, xli. 4—8. lvi. 1, 2.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The believer is admitted into a covenant of friendship with his God: and they who strive with him, fight against his omnipotent Ally; whose presence and assistance will more effectually defend his servants, and annoy their persecutors, than the most powerful hosts of well-armed valiant men. If he say to each of our souls, “I am thy “Salvation;”—if he shew us, that our sins are pardoned and subdued, we have nothing to fear; but may confidently predict the confusion and ruin of every seducer or persecutor, who seeks to destroy our lives or souls, or in any way to do us hurt.—We must not desire the ruin of any enemies, except our lusts, and those evil spirits who would compass our destruction: yet we ought fervently and constantly to pray for the desolation of all the inveterate enemies of Christ our anointed King. Assuredly, they will at length be thrown as chaff into the fire; yea, driven in a dark and slippery path, by the angels of God into the bottomless pit: and their crafty and unwearied enmity, against the holy Jesus and his harmless followers, will in-

volve them in unexpected and inevitable misery. Let then the persecuted and afflicted believer rejoice in the salvation of the Lord. His preservation is insured by the Saviour’s resurrection and exaltation; who will shortly “change “our vile bodies, and make them like his own glorious “body,” by his almighty power: then all our bones shall, as it were, praise our Deliverer, who hath rescued us poor and needy sinners from sin, Satan, and death; enemies far too strong for us.—While in faith we anticipate this glorious event of our trials, let us prepare for the cross in this world. When we consider the ingratitude, contempt, and hatred, with which the holy Jesus was treated, in return for his unspeakable love; when we remember how the multitudes, who had witnessed, or even shared, his benign miracles, rejoiced in his adversity; how the very abjects, collected round his cross, insulted him, and gnashed their teeth at him; and how the scribes and Pharisees treated his sacred person with blasphemous ridicule and mockery; even while they were hypocritically observing the feast of the passover, as if zealous for the honour of God and religion:—when we meditate on these scenes, we shall not “marvel if the world hate us;” if we be despised, abused, reviled, falsely accused, and treated with indignity and ingratitude, by those whom we have most loved, and could not have suspected; and who even profess to serve God. Let us then learn to possess our souls in patience and meekness; like the Saviour, let us persevere in praying for our enemies, and attempting to do them good: and acting towards them with compassion and affection, in hopes of “overcoming evil with good.” If this have not the desired effect, our prayer will bring down blessings on our own souls; and if that mind were in us which was in him, we could not but be grieved to think of the tremendous ruin, that hangs over the heads of our impenitent injurers.—He, who has exalted the once-suffering Redeemer, will in due time appear for all his people: the roaring lion shall not destroy their souls, which they have entrusted to the hands of their Surety; they are one with him, and precious in his sight, and shall be rescued from every peril and destruction; that with him they may give thanks in the great congregation above. Let us then give ourselves unto prayer, and study to be quiet in the land, however injured or deceived. Thus our enemies shall never triumph in our destruction; and their rejoicing over our temporal calamities shall be short-lived, as was that of the Jewish rulers over the crucified Redeemer.—But let us chiefly fear lest they should rejoice at beholding us betrayed into sin, and disgracing our profession. This would

a xviii. xc. titles.
cxliii. 12. Deut.
xxxiv. 5. 2 Tim.
ii. 24. Tit. i. 1.
Jam. i. 1. 2 Pet.
i. 1. Jude 1. Rev.
i. 1.

PSALM XXXVI.

The corrupt principles and practices of wicked men,
1—4. An admiring view of the mercy and justice of
God, and of the felicity of his people, 5—9. David
prays for his brethren and himself; and in faith tri-
umphs over the workers of iniquity, 10—12.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of
David, ^a the servant of the LORD.

^b THE transgression of the wicked
saith within my heart, *that there is*
^c no fear of God before his eyes.

2 For ^d he flattereth himself in his
own eyes, ^e until his iniquity be found
to be hateful.

3 ^f The words of his mouth *are* ini-
quity and deceit: ^g he hath left off to
be wise, *and* to do good.

4 ^h He deviseth ⁱ mischief upon his
bed; ^j he setteth himself in a way
^k Or, vanity.

that is not good: he ^l abhorreth not
evil.

5 ^m Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the
heavens, *and* ⁿ thy faithfulness *reacheth*
unto the clouds.

6 ^o Thy righteousness is like the
^p great mountains; ^q thy judgments *are*
a great deep: O LORD, ^r thou preservest
man and beast.

7 ^s How ^t excellent is thy loving-
kindness, O God! therefore the chil-
dren of men ^u put their trust under the
shadow of thy wings.

8 They shall be ^v abundantly ^w satis-
fied with the fatness of thy house;
^x and thou shalt make them drink of
the river of thy pleasures.

9 For ^y with thee is the fountain of
life: ^z in thy light shall we see light.

q xvii. 8. lvii. 1. lxiii. 7. xci. 4. Ruth ii. 12. Luke xiii. 34.
s Cant. v. 1. Is. xxv. 6. lv. 1, 2. Jer. xxxi. 12—14. Zech. ix. 17. Matt. v. 6. John
vii. 37. Heb. watered. Is. lviii. 11. s xvi. 4. Is. xliii. 20. xlviii. 21. Rev.
xxii. 1. t Is. xii. 3. Jer. ii. 13. John iv. 10. 14. vii. 37—39. Rev. xxi. 6. xxii. 17.
u xxvii. 1. Job xxix. 3. Prov. iv. 18. Is. ii. 5. lx. 1, 2. 19. Mal. iv. 2. John i. 8, 9. viii.
12. Jam. i. 17. 1 Pet. ii. 9. 1 John i. 7. Rev. xxi. 23.

please them more, than seeing us cast into a fiery furnace;
and they would exclaim, "Aha, aha, our eye hath seen it,
"so would we have it!" Then indeed those, who hate us
without cause, would wink with their eyes, encouraging
each other's blasphemies; and open wide their mouths to
proclaim our infamy, to the reproach of our religion. This
the Lord knows, and as his glory is concerned, let us
call upon him, intreating him not to be far from us; but
constantly to uphold us, that Satan and his servants may
not thus magnify themselves against us. In all things let
us act conscientiously, and leave our cause with God. And
whilst we expect to see the opposers of Christ "clothed
"with shame and dishonour;" let us pray that all who
favour his righteous cause may rejoice, and be continually
praising God: and let us remember, that he has pleasure
in the prosperity of all his servants; that we may be speak-
ing of his righteousness and praise all the day long.

NOTES.

PSALM XXXVI. V. 1. David was as much convinced
by the conduct of wicked men, that they were not habitu-
ally possessed by the fear of God, as if it had been imme-
diately spoken to his heart: and his knowledge of the de-
ceitfulness and evil of his own heart aided him in dis-
covering the source of other men's wickedness. If the
terrors of God for a moment affrighted them, they soon
cast them behind their backs, or they could not have gone
on in their daring crimes. (Notes, cxii. 1. 7. Neh. v. 14—
18. Prov. xvi. 6. Ec. xii. 11—14. Rom. iii. 9—18.)—It is
probable, that Saul was especially meant, as the wicked
man who persecuted "David, the servant of the LORD,"
with persevering enmity: yet he frequently cloaked his
malice with professions of friendship, and still kept up an
outward regard to religion. The psalm seems to have been
written, soon after Saul began to shew his hatred to David.

V. 2. The wicked man not only disguises his crimes or

intentions from others; but, through the excess of self-
love, he becomes his own flatterer, calls his vices by soft
names, or mistakes them for virtues; and deems his con-
duct justifiable, perhaps meritorious, when in fact it is a
hateful compound of impiety, injustice, and malevolence,
and will very soon be proved to be so.—Thus Saul's self-
flattery kept him from being aware of the malignity of his
conduct, till he became odious in the open view of man-
kind. (Notes, 1 Sam. xv. 13—28. xxii. 6—19. 1 Chr. x. 13,
14.)

V. 3, 4. Saul, in the beginning of his reign, behaved
wisely, and performed good services to his people: but he
soon began to act foolishly, and to disobey God; and at
length he entirely ceased to use his understanding to do
good. (Notes, 1 Sam. xi. xxviii. 3—10.) He became a
treacherous and cruel persecutor of David: and while he
perhaps ascribed his conduct in throwing his javelin at
him, to a sudden paroxysm of disease; David was aware
that he most deliberately, and in his retired hours, plotted
his destruction; and had no aversion in his heart to any
wickedness, however abominable, though he tried to cloke
his malice by plausible professions. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 5—9. The Psalmist here contrasted the divine per-
fections and government, with the conduct of wicked men,
especially when in power. The mercy of God is immensely
large; and, having filled the earth with its effects, it fills
the heavens also, by the admission of redeemed sinners to
that blessed state. His faithfulness reaches unto, and
even far above, the clouds or skies, and is liable to no
mutability or failure. His justice is placed on an immov-
able basis, and he never varies from it: yet his judgments,
or decrees, are unfathomably deep, to be adored, but not
comprehended by us. (Notes, lvii. 7—11. lxxi. 19. lxxvii.
19, 20. lxxxix. 1—4. xcii. 4, 5. xcvi. 2. c. 5. ciii. 11—13.
cxlv. 1—7. 17. Job xxxvii. 20—24. Rom. xi. 33—36.) The
Creator's care sustains, and "preserves," both man and

* Heb. draw out at length. ciii. 17. Jer xxxi. 3. John xv. 9, 10. 1 Pet. i. 5. x ix. 10. Jer. xxii. 16. xxiv. 7. John xvii. 3. Heb. viii. 11.

10 O * continue thy loving-kindness unto them * that know thee; * and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

y vii. 8—10. xviii. 24, 25. xciv. 14. 15. xcvi. 10, 11. cxlii. 1, 2. Is. li. 6—8. 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8. z x. 2. xii. 3—5. cxix. 51. 69. 85. 122. cxxiii. 3, 4. Job xl. 11, 12. Is. li. 23. Dan. iv. 37. a xvi. 8. xvii. 8—14. xxi. 7, 8. lxii. 6. cxxv. 1—3. Rom. viii. 35—39.

11 * Let not the foot of pride come against me, and * let not the hand of the wicked remove me.

b ix. 16. lv. 23. lviii. 10, 11. lxiv. 7—9. Judg. v. 31. 2 Thes. i. 8. 9. Rev. xv. 4. xix. 1—6. c i. 5. xviii. 38. Jer. li. 64.

12 ^b There are the workers of iniquity fallen: they are cast down, * and shall not be able to rise.

PSALM XXXVII.

Miscellaneous cautions against envy, anger, and discontent; descriptions of the characters, situations, and end of the righteous and the wicked; exhorta-

beast; and his immeasurable loving-kindness, in its varied exercises, encourages even the guilty and polluted sons of Adam to trust in his mercy, and to confide in his protection. (*Marg. Ref. q.—Note, Ruth ii. 11, 12.*) In this refuge, and in his service, believers find abundant consolation, and drink “pleasures as from a river,” flowing from the Fountain of life and felicity: and in the knowledge and favour of God, they see light and glory inexpressible. (*Notes, xlv. 4. Rev. vii. 13—17. xxi. 22—27. xxii. 1—5.*)—The word rendered *pleasures*, (8, עֲנָנִים,) is the plural of *Eden*.—‘In heaven alone the thirst of an immortal soul after happiness can be satisfied. There the streams of Eden will flow again.’ *Bp. Horne.*

V. 10, 11. David was conscious of integrity, and had been favoured with much experience of the Lord’s faithful and merciful care; but his dangers and troubles were multiplied, and all who knew God and uprightly served him, were in a measure involved in his difficulties. (*Note, 1 Chr. xxviii. 9.*) He therefore prayed, that the favour shewn to him and them might be prolonged according to the faithful promises of God; and that he would judge in righteousness, between his persecuted servants and their unrighteous persecutors: that so “the foot of pride might not come against him, and the hand of the wicked might not cast him down;” but that he might be preserved from the scornful oppression, and iniquitous power, of every enemy. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12. ‘Faith calleth things that are not, as though they were; it carries us forward to the end of time; it shews us the Lord sitting on the throne of judgment, the righteous caught up to meet him in the air; the world in flames under his feet; and the empire of sin fallen, to rise no more.’ *Bp. Horne.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

To be “the servant of the Lord” is the highest privilege and honour, to which we can aspire; and those who are advanced to eminent stations in society should glory to fill them up, as serving God and his church in them.—All the wickedness of men springs from contempt and forgetfulness of God: their actions speak more plainly than their words; and when they commit atrocious crimes without remorse, or habitually live in the practice of any sin, we may be sure, “that there is no fear of God before their eyes;” and that they habitually despise his favour, and defy his wrath. But proud and ignorant men deceive themselves, and verily think their conduct excusable, when it is indeed most hateful: let us then daily beg of God to preserve us from self-flattery, and to bring us acquainted with our own character, that we may judge and condemn ourselves, and not finally be condemned at his tribunal.—

When such as have appeared to be religious leave off to behave wisely and to do good, they will soon be drawn into grosser crimes; and the deceitful and corrupt language of their lips will betray the desperate wickedness of their hearts.—If we willingly banish holy meditations, in our solitary hours, nay, if we do not encourage them, Satan will soon occupy our minds with polluting and mischievous imaginations: and if any yield frequently to sudden temptations, they will at length deliberately “devise mischief upon their beds.”—Whatever be a man’s outward conduct, if he do not “abhor evil,” he is no true penitent: and if he do not set himself heartily to walk in the ways of godliness, he will soon return into the more direct road to temporal and eternal destruction.—The servants of God must expect much trouble from apostates and wicked men; but they may comfort themselves by contemplating the perfections of their almighty Friend. His merciful promises engage to every believer the enjoyment of heavenly happiness; his unfailing faithfulness guarantees the engagement; his immovable justice harmonizes with his truth and love; and his most mysterious appointments are the result of his infinite wisdom and goodness. Whilst all his creatures share his bounty and protection; his compassion and mercy, and the provisions of his redeeming love, are so immense, and of such inestimable value, that the chief of sinners may come to him, and receive pardon and peace, and put their trust under the shadow of his wings. Thither the alarmed and penitent flee for *safety*, perhaps imagining that they are thus renouncing all enjoyment in this present world: but they soon find, if decided and diligent, true happiness in the favour and service of God: the provisions of his house are rich and plenteous; and the consolations of his Spirit, communicated through his ordinances, are an earnest of heavenly joys. This “river of the water of life” proceedeth from the throne of God and of the Lamb; and they must be happy, who have access to “the Fountain of life.” (*Notes, Rev. xxi. 5—8. xxii. 1.*) Indeed God is the Source of felicity; but fallen man has forsaken him and is miserable. In Christ, however, this Fountain is accessible; “wells of salvation” are opened for us by the gospel; and sinners, returning to God according to it, see and enjoy light and felicity, in their Source and Perfection. (*Note, Is. xii. 3.*)—May we then know, and love, and uprightly serve the Lord! Then shall we be interested in the prayers of all his people, and learn to love and pray for them: and his loving kindness will be continued to us through the intercession of our heavenly Advocate. Then shall no proud enemy, on earth or from hell, come against us to trample upon us, or to separate us from his love; but we shall be established in felicity, when all the workers of iniquity are cast down to rise no more for ever.

7. 1 Sam. i. 6—promises to faith, hope, patience, and obedience; and
8. Prov. xix. 3. promises to believers under the trials of this evil world,
xxiv. 1. 19. 1—40.

b lxxiii. 3. Prov
 iii. 31. xxiii. 7
 Gal. v. 21. Jam.
 iv. 5, 6.

c 35, 36. lxxiii. 17
 —20. xc. 5, 6.
 xcii. 7. cxxix. 5
 —7. Job xx. 5—
 9. Jam. i. 10, 11.
 1 Pet. i. 24.

d iv. 5. xxvi. 1
 Is. i. 16—19. 1.
 10. Jer. xvii. 7.
 8. 1 Cor. xv. 57,
 58. Heb. vi. 10
 —12.

e Gen. xxvi. 2.
 1 Sam. xxvii. 19.
 Heb. xi. 13—16.

*** Heb. in truth,
 or, stablesness.**

f xxxiii. 19. xxxv.
 9, 10. Matt. vi.
 31—33. Luke
 xxii. 35.

g xliii. 4. civ. 34.
 Job xxvii. 10.
 xxxiv. 9. Cant.
 ii. 3. Is. lviii. 14.
 1 Pet. i. 8.

h xxi. 1, 2. cxlv.
 19. John xv. 7.
 16. 1 John v. 14,
 15.

15. + Heb. *Roll thy way upon.* lv. 22. Prov. xvi. 3. *marg.* Matt. vi. 25. Luke
 xii. 29, 30. Phil. iv. 6, 7. 1 Pet. v. 7.

A Psalm of David.

FRET not thyself because of evil-
 doers, ^b neither be thou envious against
 the workers of iniquity.

2 For ^c they shall soon be cut down
 like the grass, and wither as the green
 herb.

3 Trust in the LORD, and do good;
 so ^e shalt thou dwell in the land, and
 verily ^f thou shalt be fed.

4 Delight thyself also in the LORD;
 and ^h he shall give thee the desires of
 thine heart.

5 Commit thy way unto the LORD;

trust also in him, ⁱ and he shall bring
 it to pass.

6 And ^k he shall bring forth thy
 righteousness ^l as the light, and thy
 judgment as the noon-day.

7 Rest in the LORD, and ^m wait pa-
 tiently for him: ⁿ fret not thyself be-
 cause of him who prospereth in his
 way, ^o because of the man who bring-
 eth wicked devices to pass.

8 Cease from anger, and forsake
 wrath: ^p fret not thyself in any wise to
 do evil.

9 For ^q evil doers shall be cut off:
 but those that wait upon the LORD,
 they shall ^r inherit the earth.

15. cxvi. 11. 1 Sam. xxv. 21, 22. 33. Jer. xx. 14, 15. Jon. iv. 1. 9. Luke ix. 54, 55.
 r 35, 36. lv. 23. Job xx. 23—29. xxvii. 13, &c. s 11. 22, 29. xxv. 13. Is. lviii. 14.
 ix. 21. Heb. xi. 16. Rev. v. 10.

i Job xxii. 28. Ec.
 ix. 1. Lam. iii.
 37. Jam. iv. 15.
k xxxi. 20. Is. liv.
 17. Mic. vii. 8,
 9. 1 Cor. iv. 5.
l Job xi. 17. Mal.
 iii. 18. Matt.
 xiii. 43.

† Heb. *Be silent*
 to. lxii. 1. Josh.
 x. 12. Jon. i. 11.
margins.

m xxvii. 14. xl. 1.
 Is. viii. 17. xxx.
 15. Lam. iii. 25.
 26. Hab. ii. 3.
 Gal. vi. 9. Heb.
 x. 36, 37. Jam.
 v. 7—11.

n 1. 8. lxxiii. 3—
 14. Jer. xii. 1.

o Job xxi. 7, &c.
 Ec. v. 8. Is. x.
 13, 14. Dan. xi.
 36. Rev. xiii. 3—
 10.

p Job v. 2. xviii.
 4. Prov. xiv. 29.
 xvi. 32. Eph. iv.
 26. 31. Jam. 7.
 19, 20. iii. 14—
 18.

q xxxi. 22. lxxiii.
 15. cxvi. 11. 1 Sam. xxv. 21, 22. 33. Jer. xx. 14, 15. Jon. iv. 1. 9. Luke ix. 54, 55.

NOTES.

PSALM XXXVII. V. 1, 2. It is probable, that this psalm was written towards the close of David's life, as the result of his long experience and observation, for the instruction and encouragement of others, who might be called to pass through such trying scenes, as he had been conversant with.—Every other verse, in the original, begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet, nearly in regular order: and this arrangement, which, with some variations, is frequently adopted, might be intended as a help to those, who desired to commit to memory these sacred poems, for their comfort and benefit in silence and solitude.—The Mosaic dispensation engaged peculiar temporal blessings to the nation of Israel, while they were obedient: yet individuals frequently prospered in wickedness, while the righteous were afflicted and persecuted. (Notes, Ps. lxxiii. 1—17.) This seemed to imply an inconsistency between the word and the providence of God, and formed a great trial to ancient believers. To this difficulty the Psalmist here gives a copious solution, with many excellent cautions and counsels, which at the same time are equally suited, by varying a few expressions, to the case of Christians in this evil world. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, lxxiii. 18—22. Prov. xxiii. 17, 18. xxiv. 19, 20.)

V. 3. This verse may be rendered: "Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land; and feed thou verily," or *in confidence*. All the verbs are imperative.—The union between entire dependence on God, and doing good, as the way to be comfortable and happy, is peculiarly to be noticed. The land of Canaan was considered as the sum of earthly, and the type of heavenly felicity. to be provided for in the Lord's land, and there to dwell under his protection, near his ordinances, and among his people, was all that the genuine Israelite could desire. But the words may be considered as an exhortation to the people to dwell in the land, and not to remove on every difficulty among the surrounding Gentiles; with a promise that verily God would feed them there. (Notes, Ruth i. 1—10.)

V. 4. To "delight," not in earthly possessions, pleasures, and distinctions, but in God; in knowing, loving,

and worshipping him and enjoying his love, and in contemplation, devotion, and admiring praise; is to be spiritually-minded, like the inhabitants of heaven, and qualified for their felicity.—He that seeks delight in worldly objects very seldom obtains the wishes of his heart; but the largest and most earnest desires and requests of those who delight in God will be granted, nay, far exceeded. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Is. lviii. 13, 14. Hab. iii. 17—19. Rom. v. 11. viii. 5—9. Phil. iv. 4. Col. iii. 1—4. 1 Pet. i. 8, 9.)

V. 5—8. "When thou hast any difficult business in hand, . . . or when thou knowest not what course to take, for accomplishing of thy honest designs; leave all to the LORD, and trust to him, in pious and upright courses, that he will direct and assist thee, and bring things to a good issue." Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Prov. iii. 5, 6. Phil. iv. 5—7.) The original is "Roll thy way, &c." (Marg.—Notes, lv. 22. Prov. xvi. 3. marg. 1 Pet. v. 5—7.) The Septuagint render it "Reveal thy way, &c.;" which is very expressive of the relief which the believer, when burdened with trouble and anxiety, obtains by opening his case, and pouring out his soul, before God in fervent prayers. (Notes, 1 Sam. i. 9—16.) This may especially be hoped for under unmerited calumnies, which for a while darken the reputation, as mists and clouds obscure the sun; but God will in due time clear up the character of the upright, and make it as bright as the noon-day. (Notes, Is. liv. 15—17. Mic. vii. 8—10. Rom. viii. 32—34.) Silent waiting on God, in patience and confidence, is therefore recommended; without giving way either to that uneasiness and agitation, which are generally felt, when the ungodly for a while prosper, and run down the conscientious; or to eagerness in self-vindication: and especially a caution is given against anger and bitterness, and an imitation of the violent tempers and unjust measures of those who are the objects of indignation and of envy. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 9. (Note, xxxvi. 12.)—*The earth.*] Or "the land." He has all that the earth itself can supply, who has food and raiment, and things suited to his station, with peace, contentment, and a thankful heart. (Notes, 10, 11. 21, 22. Matt. v. 5.)

xi. 25. 29. Dan. v. 26. e lxiv. 2—6. Acts xii. 2, 3. 11. 23. f Sam.
 v. xxix. 10. 27. Hab. i. 13. Matt. xxiii. 30—34. Acts vii. 52. 1 John iii. 12.
 Light of way. g vii. 14, 15. xxxv. 8. 1 Sam. xxxi. 4. 2 Sam. xvii.
 10. Is. xxxviii. 38. Matt. xxvii. 4, 5. h xlvi. 9. lxxvii. 3—6. Jer.
 ii. 18.

21 The wicked 'borroweth, and payeth not again: " but the righteous sheweth mercy and giveth.

t lxviii. 18 29
 Job xiv 24.
 Heb. x. 37. 1 Pet.
 iv. 7. Rev. vi.
 10, 11.
 u 35, 36. xlix. 10.
 eni. 16. Job vii.
 10. 21. xiv. 10.
 xx. 8. 9. Luke
 xii. 20, 21 xvi.
 27, 28.
 x lii. 5-7. lviii.
 10, 11. cvii. 42.
 43. 1 Sam. xxv.
 38, 39. 2 Kings
 ix. 25. 34-37.
 Esth. vii. 10.
 viii. 1. Is. xiv.
 16-19.
 y Matt. v. 5. Gal.
 v. 22, 23. 1 Tim.
 vi. 11. Jam. i.
 21. iij. 13.
 z xxxvi. 8. lxxvii. 7.
 cxix. 165. Is.
 xxvi. 3. xlviii.
 18. lvii. 18-21.
 John xiv. 27.
 Phil. iv. 7.
 a 32. 1 Sam. xviii.
 21. xxiii. 7-9.
 2 Sam. xv. 10.
 12. Esth. iii. 6.
 Matt. xxvi. 4. 16.
 * Or, *practiseth*.
 Dan. ii. 12. 24.
 Mic. ii. 1.
 b xxxv. 16.
 c d 1. Prov. i. 26.
 1 Sam. xxvi. 10.
 Jer. i. 27. Ez. x.
 xxiv. 11. 17. Pro.
 + Heb. *the upris*
 23 Esth. vi. 9.
 ii. 56. Hos. i. 9.

i Prov. ii. 33. xlii
25. xv. 16, 17.
xvi. 8. xxx. 5
Ec. ii. 26. iv. 6.
Matt. vi. vi. 11.
1 Tim. vi. 6.
k x. 15. Job xxxviii.
15. Ez. xxx. 21
—25.
l 24. xlii. 12. li. 12.
lxiii. 8. cxix.
116, 117. cxlv.
14. Is. xli. 10.
xlii. 1. Jude 24.
m i. 6. xxxi. 7.
Matt. vi. 32.
2 Tim. ii. 19.
n 13. xxxi. 15.
xlix. 5. Deut.
xxxiii. 25. Matt.
xxiv. 21—24
2 Tim. iii. 1—5.
iv. 2—4. Rev. xi.
3—5.
o xvi. 11. xxi. 4.
lxixii. 24. ciii.
17. Is. ix. 21.
Rom. v. 21. vi.
23. 1 Pet. i. 4, 5.
1 John ii. 25.
p Ec. ix. 12. Am.
v. 13. Mic. ii. 3.
Eph. v. 16.
q xxxiii. 19. Job
v. 20—22. Prov.
x. 3. Is. xxxiii.
16.
r lxviii. 2. xcii. 9.
Judg. v. 31.
Luke xiii. 3. 5.
c. cii. 3. Gen. xix.
xxxviii. 12. 43. Job
ut. xv. 9—11. Job
2 Cor. viii. 9. ix.

V. 12—15. The holiness and happiness of the righteous, and the special favour which God shews them, excite the enmity and envy of the wicked. Thus Cain hated, and envied, and murdered Abel; (*Notes, Gen. iv. 1—12;*) thus Saul, from a similar spirit, plotted against David, and gnashed on him with his teeth; and thus the Jewish rulers persecuted the holy Jesus and his disciples. (*Note, xxxv. 15, 16.*) For a while they seem to prosper; but the Lord despises their impotent malice, and foresees the day, when they will suffer the just punishment of their crimes;

V. 21, 22. The wicked, though for a while prosperous,

x 11. 16. xxxii. 1. cv. 15. cxxviii. 1. v cxi. 21. Matt. xxv. 41. 1 Cor. xvi. 22. Gal. iii. 10. 13. z 9. 23. Zech. v. 3, 4. a xvii. 5. lxxxv. 13. cxix. 133. cxxi. 3. 8. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Job xxiii. 11, 12. Prov. xvi. 9. Jer. x. 23. - Or, established. xl. 2. Prov. iv. 26. b cxlvii. 10. Prov. xi. 1. 20. Jer. ix. 24. Heb. xiii. 16. c xci. 12. xciv. 18. cxlv. 14. Prov. xxiv. 16. Mic. vii. 7. 8. Luke ii. 34. xvii. 31. 32. 60—62. d 17. cxlv. 14. John x. 27—30. e lxxi. 9. 18. Job xxxii. 6, 7. Acts xxi. 16. Phil. 8, 9. f 28. xciv. 14. Josh. i. 5. 1 Sam. xii. 22. 2 Cor. iv. 9. Heb. xiii. 5. g xxv. 13. cix. 10. cxii. 2. Gen. xvii. 7. Prov. xiii. 22. Luke i. 53—55. † Heb. *all the day*. h 21. cxii. 5. 9. Deut. xv. 9. Matt. v. 7. Luke vi. 35—38. i Prov. xx. 7. Jer. xxxii. 39. k xxxiv. 14. Job xxviii. 28. Prov. xvi. 6. 17. Is. i. 16, 17. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Tit. ii. 11—14. l 3. 1 Thes. v. 15. Tit. iii. 8. 14. Heb. xiii. 16. 21. 1 John ii. 16, 17. m xi. 7. xlv. 6, 7. xcix. 4. Is. lxi. 8. Jer. ix. 24.

22 For *such as be* ^a blessed of him shall inherit the earth; and *they that be* ^y cursed of him shall be ^z cut off.

23 ^a The steps of a good man are ^a ordered by the LORD: and ^b he delighteth in his way.

24 ^c Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: ^d for the LORD upholdeth *him with his hand*.

25 ^e I have been young, and *now* am old; ^f yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, ^g nor his seed begging bread.

26 *He is* ^h ever ^h merciful, and lendeth; and ⁱ his seed *is* blessed.

27 ^k Depart from evil, ^l and do good; and dwell for evermore.

28 For the LORD ^m loveth judgment,

and ⁿ forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: ^o but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off.

29 ^p The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.

30 ^q The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment.

31 ^r The law of his God *is* in his heart; ^s none of his ^t steps shall slide.

32 The wicked ^u watcheth the righteous, and seeketh to slay him.

33 The LORD ^v will not leave him in his hand, ^w nor condemn him when he *is* judged.

34 ^x Wait on the LORD, and ^y keep his way, and he shall ^z exalt thee to in-

n 25. 40. xcii. 18 —15. Is. lix. 21. Jer. xxxii. 40, 41. John v. 24. vi. 39, 40. x. 28 —30. xv. 9. 1 John ii. 19. Jude 1. o xxi. 10. Ex. xx. 5. Job xviii. 19. xxvii. 14. Prov. ii. 22. Is. xiv. 20, 21. p 9. 11. 18. 27. Deut. xxx. 20. Prov. ii. 21. 2 Pet. iii. 13. Rev xxi. 3, 4. 7. lxxi. 15. 24. Deut. vi. 7—9. Prov. x. 21. 31. xv. 7. xxv. 11—13. xxvii. 9. Matt. xii. 35. Eph. iv. 29. Col. iv. 6. q i. 2. xl. 3. cxix. 11. Deut. xi. 18 —20. Prov. iv. 4. Is. li. 7. Jer. xxxi. 33. Heb. viii. 10. r 23. cxxi. 3. s Or, *goings*. xl. 2. t 12. x. 8—10. Jer. xx. 10. Luke vi. 7. xi. 54. xiv. 1. xix. 47, 48. xx. 20. Acts ix. 24. 7, 8. cxxiv. 6, 7. 1 Sam. xxiii. 26—28. 2 Tim. iv. 17. 2 Pet. ii. 9. Rom. viii. 1. 33, 34. v 3. 9. xxvii. 14. Prov. xx. 22 u xxxi. x cix. 31. z Job xvii 9. xxiii. a xcii. 10. cxii. 9. Luke xiv. 11. 1 Pet. i. 7. v. 6.

would soon be reduced, by the secret curse of God on his affairs, to borrow; and be disabled from paying, as well as careless about it: but the righteous would be rendered able to gratify his inclination in acts of liberal mercy, through the divine blessing, and the promise which secured to him the inheritance of the land.—This more especially referred to the Israelites in Canaan; yet the same blessing and curse, even in temporal things, are still often experienced and observed. (Notes, Deut. xxviii. 3—14. 43, 44. Prov. xxii. 7.)

V. 23, 24. Our translators here insert the word *good*; and no doubt the pious man, the true believer, is exclusively meant.—God directs, counsels, and supports his steps; and he *delights* in his holy conversation, and the fruits of his own Spirit, which are through Christ well pleasing to him. (Notes, cxlvii. 10, 11. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Jer. ix. 23, 24. Zeph. iii. 14—20. Phil. iv. 14—20. Heb. xiii. 15, 16.)—A good man may fall through temptation, as David had done in a most deplorable manner: but he shall not be cast down to rise no more, as hypocrites are, or be a castaway, one finally rejected by God; because God himself upholds him by his mighty power. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 25, 26. There is not indeed an absolute promise in scripture that no righteous man shall ever want bread, or his seed become beggars: but the Psalmist had never, during a long course of observation, known an instance of the kind. It is, no doubt, a very rare case in any age, but was peculiarly so under the Mosaic dispensation.—Yet times of persecution seem excepted from general rules concerning temporal things, having so many particular promises relating to them: and we cannot tell how it may please our wise and righteous God for our good, to try our faith and patience, or to remove us out of this world; or how he may see good to dispose of our posterity. But in general the godly man will best secure himself and his children from want: and that genuine liberality to the poor, in giving or lending, according as circumstances may require, which men think will impoverish their families, is in fact by far the best way of laying up a provision

for them. (Notes, cxii. 5—10. Prov. xi. 24—26. xiii. 22, 23. xix. 17. Ec. xi. 1—6.)

V. 27, 28. This general counsel for present and future happiness is here again inculcated, (Note, xxxiv. 11—14,) in a manner which shews, that none but the *saints*, the regenerate and believing who have obtained mercy, do thus “depart from evil and do good:” and the final preservation of the saints is most expressly maintained, and grounded on the Lord’s love of judgment, and faithfulness to his promises.—Some think this doctrine is to be found nowhere, except in St. Paul’s epistles; and then they endeavour to explain away his language: but not one sentence in his writings is more explicit, than this declaration of the inspired Psalmist. (Note, 1 Pet. i. 3—5.)

V. 29—31. (Notes, 9—11.)—“The righteous man, “whose mouth speaketh wisdom, whose tongue talketh of “judgment, and in whose heart is the law of his God, “shall not slide in any of his steps.” Thus some render these verses, which strongly mark the character of those saints, “who are preserved for ever.” (Notes. xl. 6—8. Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Rom. vii. 22—25.)—Wise and pious conversation, when it comes from the abundance of the heart, and is enforced by a holy example, is one grand means of communicating the savour of divine truth around, in families and neighbourhoods, and of transmitting it to posterity. (Notes, lxxi. 13—15. 22—24. Prov. x. 20, 21. xv. 7. xxv. 11, 12. Matt. xii. 33—37. Jam. iii. 3—12. P. O. 1—12.)

V. 32, 33. In general, God will defend his servants against the designs of wicked men, when, under colour of law, they seek to murder them by a judicial process: and in those cases in which he, for wise reasons, allows persecutors to prosper; he will finally rescue the persecuted from their malice, and openly reverse their unrighteous decisions.—The wicked one, “the accuser of the brethren,” will in like manner be baffled and silenced. (Notes, 5—8. 12—15. Rom. viii. 32—39.)

V. 34. “The apostle, writing to the Hebrew converts, “under affliction and persecution, thus expresseth the sen-

^b lii. 5, 6. xci. 8. herit the land: ^b when the wicked are cut off, thou shalt see it.

^c lxxiii. 3—11. ^d Or, a green tree that groweth in his own soil. Job viii. 13—19. Ez. xxxi. 6—10. 18. Dan. iv. 20, &c. ^e See on 10.—Ex. xv. 9, 10. 19. 1s. x. 16—19. 33, 34. Acts xii. 22, 23. Job i. 1. xlii. 12—17. 1s. xxxii. 17. lvi. 2. Luke ii. 25—29. Acts vii. 59, 60. 2 Tim. iv. 6—8. 2 Pet. i. 14. ³⁵ ^e I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like ^a a green bay-tree.

³⁶ Yet ^d he passed away, and, lo, he was not: yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.

³⁷ ^e Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of *that* man is peace.

³⁸ But ^f the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off.

³⁹ But ^g the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD, *he is* ^h their Strength in the time of trouble.

⁴⁰ And ⁱ the LORD shall help them, and deliver them; he shall deliver them ^k from the wicked, and save them, ^l because they trust in him.

^f timent contained in this verse; “Cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompence of reward: for ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come and will not tarry.” *Heb. x. 35—37.* *Bp. Horne.* (*Notes, Job xvii. 8, 9. xxiii. 8—12. Prov. iv. 23—27.*)

V. 35, 36. The text of our translation gives, as the emblem of a wicked man’s prosperity, an *ever-green*, flourishing and beautiful to look upon, but bearing no fruit, or only such as is poisonous. But most expositors suppose that a tree, growing in its native soil and never transplanted, is meant: and in these circumstances, trees acquire their largest and most luxuriant growth. (*Marg.*)—Thus Saul, Doeg, and Ahithophel, in David’s time, had flourished; and thus they had vanished.—The vision of Nebuchadnezzar, and Daniel’s interpretation, form a striking illustration of these verses. (*Notes, Dan. iv. 1—33.*) ‘I looked about me to see what was become of him, and whether he might not be removed (as a tree sometimes is,) to another place, but there was no such man . . . to be found.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, Job v. 3—5. xviii. 5—21.*)

V. 37, 38. He that patiently and accurately observes the dealings of God with his upright, consistent, and faithful servants, will find, that whatever trials, temptations, and disquietudes they have during a great part of their lives, their closing scene is tranquil and comfortable; and that there are very few exceptions to this general rule. But a contrary and dreadful end, sooner or later, awaits all the ungodly. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 39, 40. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes, Eph. ii. 4—10. 2 Tim. iv. 16—18. Tit. ii. 11—14.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is of vast importance to understand the present and future condition of the righteous and the wicked, that we may know what to choose and to expect. The workers of iniquity, who cast off the fear of God, to follow their own corrupt inclinations; and who are fraudulent, covetous, sensual, or profane; who “plot against the righteous, gnashing upon them with their teeth,” and using their power and subtlety to oppress, ruin, and murder the poor: even such monsters of wickedness often prosper for a time, succeed in their projects, flourish in wealth, pomp, and mirth, and seem to enjoy happiness. (*Note, Job xxi. 7—16.*) But their flourishing resembles that of the grass, and they will be soon cut down and withered: shortly they will be no more found on earth; into heaven they cannot enter; hell alone remains for them, where they will for ever be

sacrifices to the righteous vengeance of their offended God. Then their power of doing mischief will be at an end, and their injurious swords will pierce their own souls, with inexpressible anguish. As they are *now* under the wrath and curse of the Almighty, their plenty and prosperity only pamper them for destruction; and the wealth which they leave behind them proves a snare, and often a curse, to their posterity; while terrors of conscience, dread of death, and furious passions, mar their precarious enjoyments, and give them a sad foretaste of the wrath to come. Who that believes these things, can envy them, or fret themselves at beholding their success and magnificence; while, like the heathen sacrifices, they are led to the slaughter, adorned with gaudy ribbands, and accompanied with the viol, the song, and the dance?—But the righteous bear another character, meet with other treatment, have other supports, and will experience a contrary end. They “trust in the LORD,” walk in his ordinances and commandments, and imitate him who went about doing good to the bodies and souls of men. They delight in the favour and service of God, and expect their happiness from him; the leading desires of their hearts are after communion with him, and conformity to him, and to be instrumental to his glory; they follow after meekness, humility, and a blameless conversation; they are upright and sincere; and though often poor and needy, they spare from other expences a portion, to lend and give, as occasion requires. Their mouth will be speaking of wisdom, and their tongue will be talking of judgment: and this springs from the abundance of the heart, in which the law of God is written; and comports with the actions of their lives which are ordered in his ways. Their salvation is from the Lord, and reigns within; and it appears that they are accepted through the merits of Christ, because they are partakers of his Spirit, and bring forth “the fruits of the Spirit.”—Yet must such Christians expect tribulation in the world. They are not exempted from the common afflictions of life, or pampered with worldly prosperity; their heavenly Father does not withhold from them salutary correction; the world hates and despises them; calumnies, reproaches, and persecutions are their usual portion: while some have been constrained to wander in dens and caves, others (“of whom the world was not worthy,”) have been immured in prisons, and tortured to death. In general they are a poor and afflicted people, and Satan distresses, as much as he can, those whom he is not able to deceive, defile, or destroy: their endeavours to do good are often unsuccessful, and ingratitude proves their only recompence. They therefore have need of faith and pa-

PSALM XXXVIII.

The Psalmist deprecates the wrath of God, and describes the sufferings to which his sins had exposed him, 1—10. He complains that his friends deserted him, while persecuted by his foes, 11, 12. He resigns himself to God, and hopes in him; while he confesses his sins, shews the character of his enemies, and pleads for deliverance, 13—22.

^a lxx. *file.*

^b vi. 1. lxxxiii. 7.
15, 16. s. xxvii.
8. liv. 8. Jer. x
24. xxx. 11. Hab
iii. 2. Heb. xii
5—11.

A Psalm of David, ^a to bring to remembrance.

O LORD, ^b rebuke me not in thy wrath;

tience, of hope and love: but, observing the directions and pleading the promises of God, they find inward comfort to counterbalance their outward trials. He will maintain their lot, and supply their wants: whatever they lose for conscience' sake, "verily they shall be fed:" and food and raiment here, with heaven at last, is a goodly portion.—The Lord will also vindicate their characters, and give them peace of conscience: when he sees good, their enemies shall be at peace with them; and they shall enjoy more content, than if they actually inherited the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace: for their little shall be better, than the riches of many wicked. The Lord himself will uphold and protect them: he knows their days and will proportion their strength and comfort, and in no evil time shall they be ashamed of their confidence; for "they are the blessed of the LORD, and their "children with them." He orders their steps and delights in their way; if they fall under temptation, they shall not be utterly cast down; if into trouble, he will not leave them to sink under it. Their work of faith, and labour and liberality of love, instead of impoverishing them, shall lay up an inheritance for their children; and few accurate observers of mankind have known the consistent believer, or his children, reduced to abject, friendless penury. In short, the Lord, having separated his people from the world, and taught them to love righteousness and judgment, will preserve them for ever; and however they may be slandered, tempted, or persecuted by the way, their end shall be serene and happy: they shall have hope in their death, and be better spoken of afterwards, than during their lives; and while they enjoy their everlasting inheritance, they will witness the destruction of all impenitent transgressors. Even in this world it is evident, that the afflicted righteous man is far happier than the most prosperous of the wicked.—Let sinners then be counselled to "depart from evil, and to do good;" to repent, and forsake sin, to trust in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ, and take his yoke upon them, and learn of him, that they may dwell for evermore in heaven. Let us all watch against impatience, envy, and despondency, and look more to the wretched end of wicked men, than to their present state; committing all we are, and have, and do, to the Lord's disposal, being assured that he will order that which is best for us. Let us cease from wrath and contention, which are sure inlets to evil doing; and wait for and on the Lord, and keep his way, without wearying or turning aside: let us endeavour to give energy to edifying conversation, by holy living: let us mark the closing

neither chasten me in thy ^c hot displeasure.

2 For ^d thine arrows stick fast in me, and ^e thy hand presseth me sore.

3 *There is* ^f no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger; ^g neither is there any ^h rest in my bones, ⁱ because of my sin.

4 For ^j mine iniquities are gone over mine head: ^k as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me.

14. Matt. xi. 28. 1 Pet. ii. 24.

scenes of different characters; and thus keeping our eyes fixed on eternal things, and our dependence on God's mercy, we may pass safely and comfortably through this dangerous and miserable life; meet death with composure; and have "an entrance ministered to us abundantly into "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus "Christ."

NOTES.

PSALM XXXVIII. *Title.* Either the Psalmist, under his affliction, composed this psalm to assist him in recollecting his sins, or in calling upon God to remember his distress; or he desired to remember as long as he lived, and wished to remind others, how he had suffered for his sins, and what his sentiments and sensations had been whilst enduring correction.—It is the third of those which are called penitential psalms; and describes among the Psalmist's other trials some grievous diseases, with which he was visited for his sins; or, as some think, his inward trials were represented by language, taken from enfeebling and loathsome sickness. It is probable, that the calamities which befell David, after his sin in respect of Bathsheba and Uriah, gave occasion to the doleful complaints contained in it. (*Notes*, vi. xxxii.)

V. 1, 2. *Arrows.* (2) Acute pains, anguish of spirit, and sharp sufferings of any kind, are spoken of under the figure of barbed arrows, which fasten and rankle in the flesh, and cannot be extracted without the most exquisite torture. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 3. *Soundness.* Some understand this clause to mean, that disease had so altered the Psalmist, as scarcely to leave him the form or appearance of a human being. (*Notes*, xxx. 2. xli. 4—8. *Job* ii. 7, 8. xix. 5—22. xxx. 15—19. *Is.* i. 5, 6.) Whatever allusion may be made, in this passage, either to the depravity of human nature, or to the prevalence of sin, or to the anguish of the soul under a sense of divine wrath; it seems evident, that the writer was visited with some dire malady, which affected his whole frame in the most distressing manner; and that he considered this as the chastisement of God, for some particular sins of which his conscience accused him.

V. 4. David's iniquities, like the numberless drops of rain, which form a deluge, had been so multiplied, that they overwhelmed him; as waters which rise above a man's head, so that he can no longer stand against or escape them. And as he felt, that the temporal consequences of his crimes were so distressing, and oppressed him beyond endurance: so he seems to have been con-

17. xxxii. 3. Is. i.
5, 6. Jer. viii. 22.
* Heb. *wearied*.
m xxxv. 14. xlii. 5.
Marg. lvii. 6.
cxlv. 14.

5 ¹ My wounds stink *and* are corrupt,
because of my foolishness.

3 I am ^{*}troubled; ^m I am bowed
down greatly; ^a I go mourning all the
day long.

7 For ^o my loins are filled with a
loathsome *disease*; and *there is* no
soundness in my flesh.

8 I am feeble and sore broken: ^p I
have roared by reason of the disquiet-
ness of my heart.

9 Lord, all my desire *is* before thee;
and ^q my groaning is not hid from thee.

10 ^r My heart panteth, my strength
faileth me: as for ^s the light of mine
eyes, it also is ^t gone from me.

11 ^u My lovers and my friends ^v stand
aloof from my ^w sore; and my ^x kins-
men stand ^y afar off.

12 They also that seek after my life
^z lay snares *for me*; and they that seek
my hurt ^{aa} speak mischievous things,
and imagine deceits all the day long.

13 But ^a I, as a deaf *man*, heard not; ^{aa} and *I was* as a dumb man *that* open-
eth not his mouth.

14 Thus I was as a man ^b that hear-
eth not, and in whose mouth *are* no
reproofs.

15 For ^c in thee, O LORD, ^d do I
hope: thou wilt ^e hear, O Lord my
God.

16 ^f For I said, *Hear me*, lest *other-*
wise they should rejoice over me: when
^g my foot slippeth, they magnify *them-*
selves against me.

17 For I *am* ready ^h to halt, and ⁱ my
sorrow *is* continually before me.

18 For ^j I will declare mine ini-
quity; I will be ^k sorry for my sin.

19 But ^l mine enemies ^m *are* lively,
and they are strong: and ⁿ they that
hate me wrongfully are multiplied.

20 They also ^o that render evil for
good are mine adversaries; ^p because
I follow *the thing that* good *is*.

a xxxix. 2. 5
2 Sam. xvi. 10—
12. Is. liii. 7
1 Pet. ii. 23.
b Am. v. 13. Mic.
vii. 5. Mark xv.
3—5. John viii.
6.
c Or, *thee do I*
wait for.
d xxxix. 7. cxviii
1—3.
e Or, *answer*.
cxviii. 3.
f xlii. 3, 4. xxxv.
24—26.
g xciv. 18. Deut.
xxxii. 35.
h Heb. *for halting*.
xxxv. 15. marg.
Mic. iv. 6, 7.
i 6. vi. 6. lxxvii. 2,
3. Is. liii. 3—5.
j xxxii. 5. li. 3.
Job xxxi. 23.
xxxiii. 27. Prov.
xxviii. 13.
k 2 Cor. vii. 9—
11.
l iii. 1. xxv. 19.
m lvi. 1, 2. lix. 1—
3.
n Heb. *being liv-*
ing are strong.
k xxxv. 19. lxix.
4. Matt. x. 22.
John xv. 18—25.
Acts iv. 25—28.
o vii. 4. xxxv. 12.
p cix. 3—5. 1 Sam.
xix. 4—6. xxxiii.
5. 12. xxv. 16.
21. Jer. xviii. 20.
m Matt. v. 10.
John x. 32. 1 Pet.
iii. 17, 18. iv. 14
—16. 1 John iii.
12.

vinced, that the burden or guilt of them was far too heavy
for him to endure, without finally sinking under it.—
What then was that load of guilt and punishment, which
Christ sustained, when “the LORD caused to meet on
“him the iniquities of us all;” and when “he bare our
“sins, in his own body on the tree!” Yet he, as Emma-
nuel, was able to endure the burden, and to remove it
for ever from his people! (Notes, xl. 11, 12. Is. liii. 4—12.)

V. 5. Some accommodate this verse to the case of those,
who, having been wounded in their conflict with sin and
Satan, foolishly delay submission, repentance, and appli-
cation to the atoning blood of Christ, through pride, and
unbelief; while their souls are growing more and more
diseased and wretched, and their case more and more de-
plorable and disgraceful. (Notes, xxxii. 3—5. Jer. viii. 21,
22.)

V. 6—10. (Notes, 3. 5. vi. 6, 7. xxii. 1, 2. xxxi. 10—
13. lxxxviii. 1—9. cii. 3—11. cvii. 17—22. Is. xxxviii. 9—
15. Matt. xxvi. 36—39.)—“But why do I... make such a
“particular enumeration of my sufferings? Thou, Lord,
“understandest, what I want and what I would have.
“Though I should say never a word, all my miseries, and
“the sighs they have cost me, are not unknown to thee.
“Thou seest the great agitation of my mind, which wanders
“up and down in restless thought, but all to no purpose;
“for my strength hath forsaken me: the light of my eyes
“is so weak, that I can scarce make any use of them.” Bp.
Patrick. (Notes, lxix. 1—3. cxix. 81, 82.)

V. 11, 12. Cowardice, pride, and selfishness, caused
David’s friends and acquaintance to keep at a distance,
during his afflictions; lest they should share his disgrace
and danger, or be put to expense or inconvenience: but
his enemies were emboldened in forming plans to accom-
plish his destruction.—These particulars were still more
emphatically verified, in the sufferings of the Son of David.

(Marg. Ref.—Notes, xli. 9. lxix. 8, 9. lxxxviii. 6—9. Job
vi. 15—23. Luke x. 30—37. John xvi. 31—33.)

V. 13, 14. David, in the patience and meekness, with
which he endured his complicated sufferings, was a type
of him, who, “when he was reviled, reviled not again:”
but David’s troubles were the chastisement, and part of
them seem to have been the consequences, of his trans-
gressions; whereas Christ suffered for our sins, and ours
alone. (Notes, Is. liii. 4—7. Matt. xxvii. 11—18. 1 Pet. ii.
18—25.)

V. 15. The translation of the last clause of this verse,
in the book of common prayer, contains an important in-
struction: “Thou shalt answer for me, O Lord, my
“God.” (Marg.) Thus Christ was silent before his false
accusers and unjust judges, and “committed himself to
“Him that judgeth righteously.”

V. 16—18. It was evident, that the enemies of David
were ungodly men, who would rejoice in his falls and cala-
mities, from dislike, not to his sins, but to his religion:
the honour of God was therefore concerned to confound
and silence them; and consequently to uphold his servant,
notwithstanding that he was conscious of his weakness
and unworthiness. (Notes, xlii. 1—4. xxxv. 15, 16. Jer. xx.
10—13.) This consciousness and fear of the consequences,
not only to himself, but especially to the cause of true re-
ligion, presented a most gloomy prospect before his eyes:
except as he trusted in God to keep him from falling, for
the honour of his own name; and as he ingenuously con-
fessed his past sins, and was grieved and distressed on
account of them. (Notes, xxxii. 3—5. li. 3, 4. 2 Cor. vii.
9—11.)—*My sorrow, &c.* (17) Notes, lxxvii. 2—12. Is.
liii. 2, 3.

V. 19, 20. The humble spirit of a penitent pleading
guilty before God; and the consciousness, at the same
time, of being wrongfully hated, and ungratefully and

n xxii. 1. 11. 19.
24. xxxv. 21, 22.
o xl. 3. 17 lxx. 1.
5. lxxi. 12. cxli. 1.
• Heb for my
help.
p xxvii. 1. lxii. 2.
6. Is. xii. 2.

21 Forsake me not, O LORD: ^a O
my God, be not far from me.
22 ^o Make haste ^{*} to help me, ^p O
Lord my Salvation.

basely used, by men, not for the sins into which he had fallen in particular instances, but for the general tenour of a holy and useful life; are strongly marked in this passage. This shews, that the most decided rejoicing in the testimony of a man's conscience, respecting his conduct towards men, in those things of which he has been unjustly condemned, is perfectly consistent with the deepest humiliation as a sinner in the sight of God. (*Notes*, vii. 3—5. xxxv. 11, 12. lxix. 4. *Jer.* xviii. 18—20. *John* xv. 22—25. 2 *Cor.* i. 12—14.)

V. 21, 22. 'I am persuaded, and confident thou wilt deliver me; but do not longer delay.' (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, lxxi. 12.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Under the temporal effects of the Lord's abhorrence of sin, and the anguish of his correcting rod, the believer is most troubled with the apprehension of his vindictive wrath, and lest he should share the doom of the ungodly; and he can bear any thing when assured that this shall never be his case. Yet God often sees good, in order to warn others, to silence the reproaches of scoffers, to vindicate the honour of religion, and for his own glory, to make the afflictions of his offending children very sharp, complicated, and permanent; and to extort from them many doleful groans and lamentations. In such circumstances, when the correction begins to produce its salutary effects, they readily trace their sorrows to the fatherly displeasure of the Lord, whose "arrows stick fast in them," and whose hand presseth them sore; and they humbly acknowledge their sins to be the cause of his anger. Their own iniquities form that deluge which goes over their heads; and their sense of guilt is the heaviest burden which is laid upon them: "it is indeed too heavy for them to bear;" and would sink them into despair and ruin, unless removed by the pardoning mercy of God. The prevalence of sin, and the successful force of temptations, form their worst diseases, and their most offensive and dangerous wounds: and while "there is no soundness in their flesh," and no rest in their bones, they are led to consider their sculs, in which 'there is no health.' For pride, covetousness, envy, malice, and lust, are diseases of the soul of far greater malignity than fevers, dropsies, palsies, gout, or stone, are of the body: yet numbers feel not their sickness, till it be too late to apply the remedy. But, when we perceive our true condition, the good Physician is valued, resorted to, and obeyed: (*Note*, *Matt.* ix. 10—13:) though even they, who are in this sure way of an effectual cure, often retard it, and experience grievous relapses, through their foolishness; and their wounds rankle and corrupt, because they delay to go to their merciful Friend, and to apply the healing balm which he has prepared. Would we not prolong our own miseries, when we are conscious of having offended, we should immediately approach the mercy-seat with penitent confessions and believing prayers; that without delay our sins may be pardoned, our strength renewed, and our enemy prevented from rejoicing over us. Yet the feeling and effects of the

PSALM XXXIX.

David purposes not to offend with his tongue; and describes his inward commotion, 1—3. His prayers, and meditations on the shortness of life, and the vanity

divine displeasure must needs trouble him who loves God, and "bow him down greatly and make him to go mourning all the day long;" and even enfeeble him, and cause him to "roar for the very disquietness of his heart:" for "a wounded spirit who can bear?" (*Note*, *Prov.* xviii. 14:) and this uneasiness will be in proportion to the degree in which he values the favour of God, and delights in communion with him. But, while the hypocrite takes encouragement from David's sins to transgress, he is a perfect stranger to David's ingenuous anguish of spirit under the consciousness of his guilt.—In the true believer's case, however, all this trouble will be useful: he will wait for and on his God, and not seek relief from the world, or from himself: he will bring his whole desire before his heavenly Father, and be encouraged, because "his groaning is not hid from him;" even though, like one expiring, "his heart panteth, his strength faileth, and the sight of his eyes is gone from him," and he knows not what to say or do. Nay, should all this be attended with the unkindness and inconstancy of lovers, friends, and relatives, who stand aloof from his affliction; while treacherous and cruel foes are "laying snares for his life and seeking his hurt, and speaking mischievous things, and imagining deceits all the day long;" still that consciousness of guilt which forms his heaviest load, will keep down indignation, silence murmurs and reproaches, and produce meek and quiet submission. For if the holy Jesus bore all this, without a complaint or a reproof; what reason can a humble sinner think he has to yield to impatience or anger, when mercifully corrected for his sins, whatever rod the Lord is pleased to employ? He will therefore be as one deaf and dumb, respecting the calumnies and scoffs of the wicked, when he feels himself to be under the divine rebuke for his sins; (*Note*, *Ez.* xvi. 60—63;) he will "commit himself unto him that judgeth righteously;" and be thankful that he may yet hope, and pray to him with the prospect of being heard and helped.—When the wicked are ready to rejoice at our calamities, or to magnify themselves against us; when our feet slip; when we feel ourselves feeble, and ready to halt or stumble, and are grieved continually, that we have given them, or lest we should give them, cause to triumph over us; we have good arguments to urge in prayer, why the Lord should help and uphold us. Let us then declare before him our iniquity, and be sorry for our sins; and seek earnestly the destruction of our inward foes, which are so lively and so strong. And if, notwithstanding our offences against God, our enemies hate us, not for our sins, but because we follow the thing that is good; let us not be discouraged by their wrongful and ungrateful enmity; seeing we are in this conformed to our Saviour: but after his example, let us still persevere in endeavouring to "overcome evil with good." (*Note*, *Rom.* xii. 17—21.) Let us also continue in prayer, that the Lord may pardon and subdue our iniquities: then will he never forsake us, or be far from us; for he will surely hasten to the help of all those, who trust in him as their Salvation.

of human pursuits, 4—6. His hope in God, with prayer for pardon and comfort before his death, 7—13

To the chief Musician, *even* to ^aJeduthun, A Psalm of David.

I SAID ^bI will take heed to my ways, ^cthat I sin not with my tongue: I will keep ^{*}my mouth with a bridle, ^dwhile the wicked is before me.

² ^eI was dumb with silence, I held my peace, ^f*even* from good; and ^gmy sorrow was [†]stirred.

³ ^hMy heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: *then* spake I with my tongue.

⁴ **LORD**, ⁱmake me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, *what it is; that* I may know ^jhow frail I *am*.

⁵ Behold, ^kthou hast made my days

as an hand-breadth; and mine age is ^las nothing before thee: ^mverily every man ⁿat his best state is altogether vanity. Selah.

⁶ Surely every man walketh in ^oa vain shew: ^psurely they are disquieted in vain: ^qhe heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.

⁷ And now, Lord, ^rwhat wait I for? ^smy hope is in thee.

⁸ ^tDeliver me from all my transgressions: ^umake me not the reproach of the foolish.

⁹ ^vI was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst *it*.

¹⁰ ^wRemove thy stroke away from me: ^xI am consumed by the ^yblow of thine hand.

Joel ii. 17, 19. Rom. ii. 23, 24. t xxxviii. 13. Lev. x. 3. 1 Sam. iii. 18. 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8. xvi. 10. Job i. 21. ii. 10. xl. 4, 5. Dan. iv. 35. u xxv. 16, 17. Sam. vi. 5. Job ix. 34. xlii. 21. x xxxviii. 3, 4. * Heb. *conflict*. Job x. 8.

NOTES.

PSALM XXXIX. V. 1—4. It is thought, that David wrote this psalm during Absalom's rebellion: and it is evident that the writer's mind was greatly discomposed, by injuries and temptations, when he began his meditation. He however resolved to practise the rules which he gave to others; (Notes, xxxvii. 1—9;) and not only to walk with peculiar circumspection, but especially to watch over his words, and stop his mouth, as the mouths of animals are confined by a muzzle: for so the word signifies. (Marg.) Aware of the baseness of his enemies, he determined on a total silence before them: he would neither speak any thing in his own vindication, nor complain of them; nor utter any pious discourse, which would have been like throwing pearls before swine. Yet the treatment which he received, his indignation at the crimes which he witnessed, his zeal for the honour of God, and the restraint imposed on him, excited in his mind a vehement and painful commotion; and the thoughts, which wrought within, proved like the blowing of embers, which produces an intense heat, and bursts forth into a flame. (Notes, Jer. xx. 7—9. Ez. iii. 22—27.) He did not indeed break his resolution by speaking before the wicked: but with vehemence, and some tincture of impatience, he prayed to the Lord, that he might know his end, and the measure and limits of his days, and now near he was to the closing scene; that, being suitably affected with the shortness of life, and his own frailty, he might be the more engaged to prepare for death and eternity, and less concerned about all his temporal interests. (Notes, xc. 7—12. 1 Cor. vii. 29—31. Jam. iv. 13—17. 1 Pet. iv. 7.) David, in his entire silence, resembled Christ when he answered nothing before Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate. (Notes, Matt. xxvi. 63—68. xxvii. 11—18. Luke xxiii. 6—12. John xix. 8—12.)

A bridle. (1) מַחְסֵם *Instrumentum quod in ore jumenti ponitur, ne comedat vel mordeat; capistrum: à* סָמַם *claudere,*

obstruere. Robertson.—לֹא תִקְחֶם שׁוֹר בְּרִישׁוֹ “Thou shalt not muzzle the ox, &c.” Deut. xxv. 4.

V. 5. *At his best state.*] Or, “when settled” or established most firmly. (Marg.)—Some things decay after a certain time, but generally last that time; others endure long, if free from accidents, yet are easily broken: but the life of man not only wears out speedily as a garment, but it is also brittle like glass. (Notes, xc. 3—6. ciii. 15—18. Job xiv. 1—6. Ec. i. 2.)

V. 6. *A vain shew.*] Or *shadow*, unsubstantial and vanishing; or *an image*. (Marg.—Notes, lxxiii. 18—22.) Such are all the interests, pursuits, and distinctions of this world; about which men are constantly disquieting themselves and others, till death stops their career, and they leave their acquisitions without knowing who will at length possess them, and remove to a state of important and eternal realities. (Notes, xlix. 6—20. Esth. v. 11—14. viii. 1, 2, Prov. xiii. 22. Luke xii. 15—21. xvi. 27—31.)

V. 7, 8. Meditation on the vanity of all outward things, led the Psalmist to fix more entirely his expectation on God alone, as the Fountain of happiness: but recollecting his heinous transgressions, and his proneness to sin, he earnestly prayed for deliverance from guilt and depravity; and that he might not, by subsequent misconduct, disgrace the cause of God, and expose himself to the reproach of any foolish and wicked man. The original is *Nabal*. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Sam. xxv. 10—17. 23—31. v. 25.)

V. 9, 10. “I was dumb, I will not open my mouth,” &c. The consideration, that his afflictions were appointed by his heavenly Father, silenced the Psalmist's complaints; (Notes, xxxviii. 13, 14. Lev. x. 3. 1 Sam. iii. 16—18. 2 Kings xx. 19. Job i. 20—22;) yet he pleaded for a mitigation of them, because he was ready to sink under them. Thus Christ, when entering on the last scene of his unknown sufferings, prayed, “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.” (Note, Matt. xxvi. 36—39.)

xxxviii. 1—8.
xc. 7—10.
1 Cor. v. 5. xi.
30—32. Heb.
xii. 6. Rev. iii.
19.
* Heb. *that which*
is to be desired
in him to melt
away. cii. 10,
11.
z Job iv. 19. xiii.
28. xxx. 30. Is. l. 9. Hos. v. 12. a 5.

11 When ^ythou with rebukes dost
correct man for iniquity, thou makest
his beauty ^zto consume away like a
moth: ^asurely every man is vanity.
Selah.

12 Hear my prayer, O LORD, and

give ear unto my cry; ^bhold not thy
peace at my tears: ^cfor I am a stranger
with thee, and a sojourner, ^das all my
fathers were.

13 O ^espare me, that I may recover
strength, before I go hence, and ^fbe
no more.

b lvi. 8. cxvi. 6.
2 Sam. xvi. 12.
Marg. 2 Kings
xx. 5. Job xvi.
20. Heb. v. 7.
c cxix. 19, 54. Lev.
xxv. 23. 1 Chr.
xxix. 15. 2 Cor.
v. 6. Heb. xi. 13.
1 Pet. i. 17. ii. 11.
d Gen. xlvii. 9.
e Job x. 20, 21.
xiv. 5, 6.
f Gen. v. 24. xlii. 36.
Job xiv. 10—12

V. 11. 'The word' (הַמְּבֹרָךְ, rendered *his beauty*), 'signi-
'fieth all that he desireth, as health, force, strength, beauty,
'and in whatsoever he hath delight; so that the rod of
'God taketh away all that is desired in this world.' (Notes,
xxxviii. 3—10. cii. 3—11. Job ii. 7, 8. xiii. 24—28.)

A moth, &c.] 'The body is as a garment to the soul:
'in this garment sin hath lodged a moth, which by degrees
'fretteth...away, first the beauty, then the strength, and
'finally the contexture of its parts.' Bp. Horne.—Thus
the greatest, as well as the meanest of men, is but mere
vanity. (Notes, 5, 6. Ec. xii. 8—14.)

V. 12. The patriarchs lived in Canaan, as in a foreign
country, by the allowance of the possessors, moving their
tents from place to place; and they confessed themselves
to be strangers and pilgrims in the land: but David ruled,
as a powerful monarch and a renowned conqueror, over
the people of Israel, now fully settled in their promised
inheritance. When, however, he considered the shortness
and vanity of life, and looked forward to a future and per-
manent state; *he* too owned, that he was a stranger and
pilgrim on earth, even as they also had been. (Notes, cxix.
19—21. Gen. xlvii. 9. Heb. xi. 8—16. 1 Pet. i. 1, 2. ii. 11.)

V. 13. If this psalm was composed during Absalom's
usurpation, David might mean, that he was desirous before
he left the world, to recover his peace of mind, to be re-
instated in his authority, and to retrieve his character. He
however prayed, that his faith, hope, and love, might re-
cover strength; that he might be enabled to do some
further service to his people, before his death; and have
inward comfort, when about to depart hence and be no
more seen. His prayer in all these respects was completely
answered. (Notes, 1 Chr. xxix.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

The presence of the wicked, especially if powerful and
prosperous, exposes us to many temptations, either by
enticing or terrifying us into improper compliances, or by
exciting our indignation or envy. When we are not able
wholly to separate from them, we should double our watch-
fulness, and especially impose a strict restraint upon our
tongues; lest we should be betrayed into boasting, revil-
ing, slander, flattery, or trifling conversation: remem-
bering that they will criticise every expression, and turn it,
if they can, to our disadvantage, and to the discredit of
religion. Sometimes it may be necessary to keep silence
even from good words, when they are likely to excite pro-
fane contempt or rage; yet in general we run into an ex-
treme, when we are backward to engage in edifying dis-
course. (Note, Jam. i. 26.) But even if we be enabled to
bridle our tongues, we shall often find ourselves incapable
of repressing our passions. When zeal, anger, impatience,
compassion, grief, and other conflicting affections, are ex-

cited in the heart, confinement increases their force, and
reflection excites more disquietude, till a fire seems to be
kindled within, which must in some way break forth. In
this case, it is our wisdom to retire, and pour out our
hearts before God, and to utter our complaints, sorrows,
and desires to him alone. It is also very composing to the
believer's mind, under sore trials and temptations, to know
and consider his end, and the measure of his days: but
we are never suitably affected with such subjects, except
we pray over them, and are inwardly taught by the Spirit
of God. It would be in vain for us to enquire the precise
time which we have to live; nor would the information,
could it be had, be desirable: (Note, 2 Kings xx. 6:) it
will answer every good purpose attentively to consider the
shortness and uncertainty of life. Our days are but a
hand-breadth, or as nothing, before God, and in compa-
rison of his eternity: and in our greatest prosperity, and
in the vigour of youth and health, verily every man is al-
together vanity. He cannot live long; he may die soon,
and suddenly; his busy cares are useless, his acquisitions
are a shadow; he is disquieted in vain; and if he succeed
in heaping up riches, he must shortly leave them, not
knowing who shall gather them. How absurd then are
the perplexing anxieties, and the incessant fatigues, of the
most successful worldling, who pursues such shadows to
the marring of his present comfort, and the ruin of his
immortal soul! Indeed the believer's disquietude about
the difficulties of his path, and the treatment that he meets
with, are not much more rational.

V. 7—13.

It is worthy of notice, that, in fact, we become happy
in exact proportion, as we despair of happiness from this
changing, sinful world; and wait and hope for it, from
the mercy and all-sufficient love of God our Saviour. In-
stead of being much concerned about temporal things, let
us earnestly pray to be "delivered from all our transgres-
sions;" and that we may not be made a reproach to
those, who, being foolish at all times, never so much ex-
pose their folly, as when they deride the hopes, or insult
over the falls, of the righteous. We should look above
instruments, and view the hand of God in all our afflic-
tions: and then faith in his wisdom, justice, truth, and
love; united with consciousness that he rebukes us for
our iniquity; will render us silent and submissive, because
he has done it. Then our prayers for the removal of his
stroke, even when we "are consumed with the blow of
his hand," will be offered with resignation to his will,
and hope in his mercy.—But if his fatherly chastisements
of his children for their offences consume their strength
and comeliness, as a moth fretteth away a garment; what
will be the effect of his avenging wrath against his ene-
mies! And as every man is vanity, it behoves sinners to

PSALM XL.

David praises God for deliverance out of deep distress, and shews the benefit which would thence be derived to numbers; and the happiness of such as trust in God, 1—5. As a type of Christ, (or, Christ speaking by him,) he states the inefficacy of legal sacrifices, and the efficacy of the Redeemer's obedience, 6—8. He declares that he had published God's righteousness and salvation; and pleads for deliverance from urgent troubles, and for the confusion of his enemies, with the triumphing of the righteous, 9—17.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

I ^aWAITED patiently for the LORD; and ^bhe inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

² ^cHe brought me up also out of an

* Heb. In waiting I waited.
a xxvii. 13, 14.
xxxvii. 7. Jam. v. 7—11.
b cxvi. 2. cxxx. 2. Dan. ix. 18.
c xviii. 16, 17. lxxi. 20. lxxxvi. 13. cxvi. 3. cxlii. 6, 7. cxliii. 3. Is. xxiv. 22. Jon. ii. 5, 6. Zech. ix. 11. Acts ii. 24. 27—31.

make haste to seek forgiveness, before they go hence and be no more seen.—The Christian's sorrows are all sanctified; the gracious Lord will wipe away his tears, and answer all his prayers: he cannot but feel his afflictions; yet, as a stranger and a pilgrim on earth, he hopes for a better and more enduring habitation in heaven, where his heart and his treasure are already. He expects weariness and ill-treatment by the way: but his stay here will not be long; and, walking with God by faith, he goes forward on his journey, undiverted from his course, and not much cast down, by the ill accommodation or difficulties with which he meets. He only desires to be spared, till his measure of service on earth be finished, and his title to heaven clear; and that he may depart in that vigorous exercise of faith and grace, which may be honourable to God, encouraging to his brethren, and comfortable to himself. Then going hence, and being no more on earth, he enters upon his perfect and eternal rest; and leaves his pious friends consoled with the joyful hope of a blessed reunion; and instructed by his words and actions, how to live, to suffer, and to die. (Notes, Prov. xiv. 32. 1 Thes. iv. 13—18.)

NOTES.

PSALM XL. V. 1—5. In this psalm, David seems to have intended to speak of his own case and experience; but the Holy Spirit led him to use language, which in its full meaning can be applied to none but the Lord Jesus himself. The whole indeed may be accommodated to him, yet some passages are more suited to the case of the type, than to that of the Antitype.—These verses may be interpreted of the Redeemer's deep and dreadful sufferings, and the happy effects which followed his deliverance out of them. Exposed to the cruelty and malice of men, the horrid assaults of Satan, and the wrath of the Father, when bearing and expiating our sins; he was as one sinking in a dark and noisome pit, where dreadful noises are heard, (marg.) and he was ready to be covered and suffocated with the miry clay: but under all these sufferings, "in waiting he waited for the LORD;" and his earnest

[†] horrible pit, out of ^dthe miry clay, [†] and ^eset my feet upon a rock, and ^destablished my goings.

³ And ^ehe hath put a new song in ^emy mouth, even ^hpraise unto our God: ^fmany shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

⁴ ^kBlessed is the man that maketh the LORD his trust; and ^lrespecteth not the proud, nor such ^mas turn aside to lies.

⁵ ⁿMany, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and ^othy thoughts which are to us-ward: [†]they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

cxxxix. 6, 17, 18. Is. lv. 8, 9. Jer. xxix. 11. Job xxxvii. 19, 20.

[†] Heb. pit of noise. Mett. xiii. 50.
d Ps. lxxx. 2. i 4. 15. Jer. xxxviii. 6—12. Lam. iii. 53—55.
e xxvii. 5. lxi. 2. Matt. vii. 24, 25.
f xvii. 5. xviii. 36. xxxvii. 23. cxix. 133.
g xxxiii. 3. cxliv. 9. Rev. v. 9, 10. xiv. 3.
h ciii. 1—5. Is. xii. 1—4.
i xxxiv. 1—6. lxxv. 27. lii. 6. lxiv. 9, 10. cxlii. 7. Hos. iii. 5. Acts ii. 31—41. iv. 4.
k ii. 12. xxxiv. 8. lxxxiv. 11, 12. cxviii. 8, 9. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. Rom. xv. 12, 13.
l xv. 4. ci. 3—7. cxix. 21.
m Is. xlv. 18—20. Jer. x. 14, 15. Jon. ii. 8. 2 Thes. ii. 9—11.
n cxxxvi. 4. Ex. xv. 11. Job v. 9. ix. 10. xxvi. 14. o lxxi. 15. xcii. 5.

† Or, none can order them unto thee.

prayers were heard. At his resurrection he was brought forth from the grave, and the state of the dead: and in his exaltation he was placed as on an immovable rock; his goings were established, his remaining work became most delightful, and his full success was ensured. (Notes, Is. liii. 9—12. Acts ii. 22—32.) Thus "a new song" was put into his mouth, which he teaches his people: for no such redemption could before be celebrated; and multitudes, by faith beholding his sufferings and the glory which followed, have learned to fear the justice, and trust in the mercy of God, through him. Such persons are made happy; whilst they do not so regard the rich and great as to trust in them, or proud tyrants and persecutors so as to dread their rage; and while they renounce all connexion with those, who turn aside to idolatrous and superstitious delusions, or the deceitful interests and pleasures of sin. Many wonderful works the Lord had done for sinful man and for Israel; but this would exceed them all: nor could the number or value of his thoughts and contrivances of love and mercy be ever numbered, or estimated. (Notes, Eph. ii. 4—10. iii. 9—12. 1 Pet. i. 10—12. Rev. v. 11—14.)—Yet the passage may also be explained of David; and answers to some parts of the believer's experience.—David had been in many troubles, and seemed ready to sink in them, as in an horrible pit; but faith, patience, and prayer, supported him, and carried him through all: (Notes, cxvi. 3—5. cxxx. 1—6. cxlii. title. 7. 2 Sam. xxii. 5, 6, 17, 18. Jer. xxxviii. 1—13. Lam. iii. 52—66. Jon. ii.) In due time he was rescued, advanced, and established; his way was made plain and prosperous; a new song was put into his mouth; (Note, xxxiii. 2, 3;) his example became useful to many; and his life was spent in attempting to reckon up, and celebrate, the wonders and counsels of the love of God to him and to his people, yet he could not at all do justice to the delightful subject. (Notes, lxxi. 13—24. cxxxix. 17, 18. cxlv. 5—7.)—The third and fourth verses may be connected as follows: "Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD: Saying, Blessed is the man, &c." (Marg. Ref.)

^p l. 8. ⁱ i. 16. ⁶ Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; ^q mine ears hast thou opened: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required.

^q Ex. xxi. 6. Job xxxiii. 16. Is. l. 4, 5. ^{* Heb. digged.} ⁷ Then said I, ^r Lo, I come: ^s in the volume of the book *it is written of me:*

^s Gen. iii. 15. Luke xxiv. 27. 44 John v. 39. Acts x. 43. 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4. 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. Rev. xix. 10. ⁸ I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, ^t thy law is [†] within my heart.

^t cxii. l. cxix. 16. 24. 47. 92. Job xxxiii. 12. Jer. xv. 16. John iv. 34. Rom. vii. 22. viii. 29. ⁹ I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, ^v I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, ^z thou knowest.

^u xxxvii. 30, 31. Prov. iii. 1. Jer. xxxi. 33. 2 Cor. iii. 3. ^{† Heb. in the midst of my bowels.} ¹⁰ I have not hid ^b thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared

^x xxii. 22. 25. ^c thy faithfulness and ^d thy salvation: I have not concealed ^e thy loving-kind-

^y cxix. 13, 171, 172. ^z cxxxix. 2. John xxi. 17. ^a Ez. ii. 7. ^{iii.} 17, 18. Acts xx. 20, 21. 26, 27. Rom. x. 9, 10. 1 Thes. i. 8. Rev. xxii. 17. ^b Rom. i. 16, 17. iii. 22—26. x. 3. Phil. iii. 9. ^c Acts xiii. 32, 33. Rom. xv. 8, 9. ^d Is. xlix. 6. Luke ii. 30—32. iii. 6. 1 Tim. i. 15. ^e xxv. 10. xxxiv. 6. Mic. vii. 20. John i. 17. iii. 16, 17.

V. 6—8. It is uncertain, whether David had in these verses any intention of declaring, that cheerful and prompt obedience to the precepts of the moral law, proceeding from faith and love, was more acceptable to God than legal sacrifices: (Note, l. 7—15. 1 Sam. xv. 22:) but it is evident that the Holy Spirit foretold the obedience of the promised Messiah. Sacrifices, though appointed by God himself, were of no intrinsic value: he neither delighted in them, or required them for their own sake, nor could they take away sin. (Notes, Gen. viii. 20—22. Heb. ix. 18—26. x. 1—4. 11—18.) But the incarnation and obedience of the Son of God, which they shadowed forth, were previously appointed for that purpose. His ears were *opened* to receive and obey the command of the Father; or pierced as those of servants were, who chose to continue perpetually with their masters. (Note, Ex. xxi. 3—6.) When the legal sacrifices were declared inefficient, the Redeemer promptly answered, “Lo, I come, &c.” According to the eternal purpose of JEHOVAH, and as it was written in the scriptures from the beginning, or “the opening of the roll,” concerning him, he was prepared to appear in human nature, and to magnify the law of God by his perfect and divine obedience even unto the death of the cross: (Notes, Gen. iii. 14, 15. 21. iv. 3—5:) yea, his cordial love to the holy commandment, and his zeal for the honour of the divine government and perfections, and his compassion for the souls of men, were so powerful, that he delighted in thus performing the will of his heavenly Father. (Note, John iv. 31—34.)—The apostle, in quoting this passage, follows nearly the translation of the LXX, which gives an interpretation, rather than a translation, of the words rendered, “Mine ears hast thou opened.” But, as this variation did not at all affect his argument, or alter the meaning of the passage, it was not necessary, that he should interrupt his subject by noticing it. (Note, Heb. x. 5—10.)

V. 9, 10. When David avowed the earnestness and boldness, with which he had celebrated the works and ways of God, he typified Christ in the performance of

ness and thy truth from the great congregation.

^f lxxix. 13, 16. ¹¹ Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O LORD: ^g let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me. ^h xxii. 11—19.

ⁱ xxxviii. 4. Is. liii. 6. 1 Pet. iii. 18. ¹² For ^h innumerable evils have compassed me about: ⁱ mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: ^k they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore ^l my heart [†] faileth me. ^k xix. 12. lxxix. 4.

^l xxxiii. 26. Gen. xlii. 28. Luke xxi. 26. ^{† Heb. forsaketh.} ¹³ Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, ⁿ make haste to help me. ⁿ xxxviii. 22. lxx. 1.

^o xxxi. 17, 18. xxxv. 4. 26. lxx. 2. Is. xli. 11. xlv. 24. ^p Matt. xxi. 38—41. ¹⁴ Let them be ashamed and confounded together, ^q that seek after my soul to destroy it; let them be ^r driven backward, and put to shame, that wish me evil. ^q ix. 3. John xviii. 6. Acts ix. 4—6. xii. 23, 24.

his prophetic office.—Neither reproach nor persecution had caused David to refrain his lips, from declaring before the congregation of Israel, the righteousness, faithfulness, loving-kindness, and salvation of the Lord. He had not been contented with treasuring up these subjects in his heart, for his private use: but had openly published them for the edification of the people, and the honour of God. Thus Christ, personally before his sufferings, and by his ministers afterwards, published to innumerable multitudes the justice, truth, and mercy of God; his method of justifying and sanctifying sinners, as well as the ways of righteousness in which he guides them. (Notes, 1—5. xxii. 22—25. xxxv. 17—19. Heb. ii. 10—13.)—The connexion of the term, “thy righteousness,” with loving-kindness, mercy, faithfulness, and salvation, and the evident subject of the passage, warrants this interpretation; and shews, that “the righteousness of God, which is unto all and upon all that believe,” was primarily meant. (Note, Rom. iii. 21—26.)

Preached. (9) בִּשְׂרָרָה. *est, bono nuncio reficere, lætum nuncium indicare, ευαγγελιζεσθαι.* Robertson.—Εὐαγγελισαμην. *Sept.*—This word, as thus used in the Old Testament, seems precisely to signify, *preaching the gospel*, proclaiming glad tidings; as a similar word does in the Arabick.

V. 11, 12. David might be here pleading for an interest in those mercies and that salvation, which he proclaimed to others; when he was struggling with those complicated evils, which were consequent to his iniquities in the matter of Uriah. These called his other sins to remembrance, which took such hold upon him, and so discouraged him, that he should not have dared to look up, if it had not been for his belief of the infinite mercies of God. But some think, that Christ may be supposed to speak, in the depth of his humiliation, when our innumerable iniquities met upon him, in his agony in the garden, and his sufferings on the cross. (Notes, lxxix. 4. Is. liii. 4—7. Matt. xxvi. 36—39. xxvii. 46.)—The original of the 11th verse is simply future: “Thou wilt not withhold, &c.”

V. 13—15. (Note, Ps. lxx.) The first of these verses

^r lxix. 24, 25. 15 Let them be ^rdesolate for a re-
^{lxiii.} 19. cix. 6 ward of their shame, that ^rsay unto
^{—20.} Luke xix. me, Aha, aha!
^{43, 44.} xxi. 23.
^{24.}
^s xxxv. 21. 25. lxx. 16 ^rLet all those that seek thee rejoice
^{3, 4.} and be glad in thee: let such as ^ulove
^t xxii. 26. xxxv. 27. lxviii. 3. cv. 3. Is. lxxv. 13, 14. 16
^u cxix. 81. 111. 123. 166, 167. Matt. xiii. 45, 46. Phil. iii. 7—9.

thy salvation ^x say continually, The LORD be magnified.
17 But ^y I am poor and needy; yet ^z the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art ^a my Help and my Deliverer; ^b make no tarrying, O my God.

^x xxxv. 27. Luke i. 46, 47. Acts xix. 17.
^y xxxiv. 6. lxix. 33. lxx. 5. Is. xli. 17. Matt. viii. 20. 2 Cor. viii. 9. Jam. ii. 5.
^z 1 Pet. ii. 23. v. 7. a liv. 4. Is. l. 7—9. Heb. xiii. 6.
^b cxliii. 7, 8. Rev. xxii. 20.

is imperative, in which the Psalmist simply prays for deliverance: the others are throughout in the future tense, and naturally express the language of lively faith and hope, rather than that of wishing or desiring the destruction foreseen and predicted; and the transition is worthy our notice. A regard to the Septuagint, and other ancient versions, seems to have induced our venerable translators generally to put such passages in the imperative, which, at first view at least, gives them an appearance of harshness, not so congenial to the spirit of devotion. The two verses, however, viewed as predictions of the destruction, which awaits the obstinate enemies of Christ and his church, have been wonderfully accomplished in the dire end of many traitors and persecutors, and in the condition of the Jews to this day. (Notes, lxix. 22—28. cix. 6—20.)

V. 16. "All those who seek thee shall be glad and rejoice in thee; such as love thy salvation, shall say continually, The LORD be magnified." "I am confident, that this eventually will be the case; notwithstanding present temptations and sufferings."—The clause, "love thy salvation," exactly discriminates a true believer from all other men. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 17. Marg. Ref.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We are here again called upon to contemplate the intense sufferings, into which our sins plunged the divine Saviour, when he willingly gave himself for us a sacrifice to God: and we should also mark his patient confidence in the Father under all; and observe how his prayers were heard, his soul delivered, and his body raised; and how, in human nature, he was exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. In his exaltation all his people should rejoice: the new song, which was put into his mouth, was intended for our use, that we may render praises unto our God: (Note, Rev. v. 8—10:) and the whole interesting scene, and all the mediatorial power and grace of our exalted Saviour, were designed to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come, and to put their entire trust in the mercy of the Lord. Happy are all they, who renounce every lying vanity and carnal confidence, thus to depend upon the living God: they shall continually experience the faithfulness of his promises; and contemplate with admiring gratitude all the counsels of his love, and his wonderful works in behalf of his redeemed people: nor will they be able to eternity to exhaust the subject, or to recount all the particular instances of his mercy to them. Yet the incarnation and suretyship, the obedience and sufferings, of the Son of God, are the centre and the means of all other mercies to us. (Notes, John iii. 16. xiv. 6. 1 John iv. 9—12.) Thus God is glorified, and sinners are saved: no costly sacrifices, nor even moral righteousness, can be acceptable from sinners to a holy God, except as they stand in relation to the person and atonement of his beloved Son.

In his obedience unto death, the eternal purposes of JEHOVAH were accomplished; the types and prophecies of the Old Testament were fulfilled; the law of God was magnified, and the demands of justice were satisfied. Humiliating and painful as this obedience was, the loving Saviour delighted to perform it: (Note, John iv. 31—34:) the law of God possessed his heart, and he was bent upon honouring its precepts and its awful sanction; that all might learn the excellence of the command, and the evil of transgression, in connexion with the infinite love of God to sinners. Now his redemption is completed, and the proclamation is sent forth to call upon us to come and accept of it. May we believe his testimony, trust his promise, and submit to his authority! For all who thus seek the Lord shall rejoice in him; and all "who love his salvation" will say continually, The Lord be magnified:" while the shame and ruin of impenitent sinners, especially of those who oppose his cause, or seek to destroy his people, and rejoice in their calamities, are ensured by the predictions and denunciations of the word of God, and even by his intercession for his church.—But if the holy Jesus, "the beloved Son, in whom the Father was well pleased," endured such innumerable evils, and became so poor and needy for our sake; shall we, whose "iniquities are more" in number than the hairs of our head," complain when we meet with pain and poverty! Had it not been for his voluntary sufferings, our sins would have taken such hold on us, that we should never have been able to look up: our hearts must indeed have failed, and in the horrible pit, whence there is no escape, our hopes would for ever have expired. Of this believers are fully convinced; and this should teach them patient submission under every trial. And if any are struggling with remorse of conscience, and fears of wrath, and, to their own apprehension, sinking in a deep and horrible pit; let them wait patiently for God, and cry humbly unto him, and he will hear and help them, and turn their fears and sorrows into joyful praises. If we are thus rescued, let us continue to pray that "our goings" may be established" in holiness, as a proof that we are fixed upon the Rock of salvation. And in order that our praises may be honourable to God and profitable to man, we should endeavour to unite humble dependence on Christ with obedient imitation of him. For those, who are really his, are taught to delight in doing his will, and have his law written in their hearts. Let us not then be ashamed of him or of his word; but declare his righteousness, truth, and salvation, according to our place in the church, to all around us. Let us put our whole trust in his mercy under every trial, and seek to him to make haste to help and deliver us; and to disappoint Satan and every foe, who seeks after our souls to destroy them. Though despised and obscure, let it suffice us, that the Lord thinks of us: and if he be our Help and Deliverer, he will make no long tarrying; but will soon remove us out of the reach of sin and sorrow: and at length raise our bodies from the grave

PSALM XLI.

David shews the blessedness of those who consider the poor, 1—3. He prays for mercy, and complains of the treachery and malice of his enemies, and the ingratitude of one who had been his friend, 4—10. He expresses confidence in God, and praises him, 11—13.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

BLESSED ^a is he that considereth ^b the poor: ^b the LORD will deliver him in [†] time of trouble.

² The LORD will ^c preserve him, and keep him alive; *and* he shall be ^d blessed upon the earth: ^e and [†] thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies.

³ The LORD will ^f strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: thou wilt ^g make all his bed in his sickness.

⁴ I said, ^h LORD, be merciful unto

me; ^h heal my soul; for I have sinned against thee.

⁵ Mine enemies speak evil of me; When shall he die, and ^k his name perish?

⁶ And if he come to see me, ⁱ he speaketh vanity: his heart gathereth iniquity to itself; ^m when he goeth abroad he telleth it.

⁷ All that hate me ⁿ whisper together against me: ^o against me do they devise ^p my hurt.

⁸ ^q An ^r evil disease, *say they*, cleaveth fast unto him: ^s and *now* that he lieth he shall rise up no more.

⁹ ^t Yea, ^u mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, ^v which did eat of my bread, hath ^w lifted up *his* heel against me.

¹⁰ But thou, O LORD, ^x be merciful unto me, and raise me up, ^y that I may requite them.

that we may be with him, and behold and share his glory for ever. (Note, Phil. iii. 20, 21.)

NOTES.

PSALM XLI. V. 1—3. It is generally agreed, that David wrote this Psalm during Absalom's rebellion, when, it seems, his other afflictions were accompanied with sickness: or rather he had previously been visited with some dangerous disorder, from which his enemies hoped he would not recover; and this emboldened them in their treasonable practices. (Notes, 4—8. xxx. 1, 2. xxxviii. 3—10.) Finding his own afflictions aggravated by their cruelty and perfidy; he was led to commend that temper of mind, which disposed a man to consider, and compassionate and relieve, the poor and afflicted; and to declare him happy who possessed it. Some render the first clause "Blessed is he that *judgeth wisely* of the poor:" "not 'condemning him as accursed whom God doth visit,' (as Job's friends did him;) 'knowing that there are divers 'causes why God layeth his hand upon us, yea and afterward he restoreth us.' It is, however, generally understood to refer to the considerate, active, and liberal kindness, shewn to the poor and afflicted, from genuine faith and love. (Marg. Ref. a.) Such a becoming conduct would ensure a gracious recompence from God; either exemption from the calamities, which in evil times befell others, the preservation of life, with many blessings, and protection from envious and spiteful enemies; or, in case of sickness, inward strength and various alleviations, (as when the bed of the sick is *turned*, and smoothed to aid their repose,) till health was restored, or till a peaceful death terminated all his sorrows.—It is astonishing to the student of scripture, in reading the most admired writings of pagan moralists, to observe, how entirely this branch of morality is omitted! Certainly it is peculiar to the

scriptures, and to writings formed on them. (P. O. Deut. xv, conclusion.)

V. 4—8. David was conscious, that his affliction was a correction for his sins; and with humble confessions he pleaded especially for "the healing of his soul:" but his enemies reviled him, and impatiently expected his death, and hoped that his very name and memory would be disgraced. Recollecting their former behaviour, and comparing it with their conduct in following Absalom, he perceived that their apparent kindness, and their visits, were only intended to impose on him with vain professions of attachment, and to gain an opportunity of collecting materials of slander and reproach. They maliciously adverted to every one of his words, and every part of his behaviour; treasuring up in their mind whatever could be unfavourably interpreted, and then whispering it abroad among the people, to prejudice them against him and his government. (Notes, 2 Sam. xv. 1—11.) And, considering his malady as a proof of his guilt, ("a thing of Belial," marg.) they exulted in the hope that he would sink under it to rise no more.

V. 9. As David was a type of Christ, so was Ahithophel in some respects of Judas. The latter clause of this verse was fulfilled in Judas's ungrateful and cruel treachery. But Christ never *trusted* in him, as David had confided in Ahithophel; and therefore the former part was more suited to the type than to the Antitype. (Notes, lv. 12—15. 20, 21. cix. 2—5. 2 Sam. xv. 12. 31. xvi. 20—23. xvii. 1—4. John xiii. 18—30.)—"The sufferings of the church, 'like those of her Redeemer, generally begin at home; ... 'and, unnatural as it may seem, they, who have waxed 'fat upon her bounty, are sometimes the first to "lift up "the heel" against her.' Bp. Horne. (Note, Deut. xxxii. 15.)

V. 10. "All this doth not discourage me, when I think 'of thy mercy, O Lord; ... I am not so low (8), but

2 D

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brooks, ^b so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

2 My soul ^c thirsteth for God, for the living God: ^d when shall I come and appear before God?

3 My ^e tears have been my meat day and night, ^f while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God?

4 ^h When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: ^k for I had gone with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, ^l with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy-day.

5 ^m Why art thou ⁿ cast down, O my soul? and ^o why art thou disquieted in me? ^p hope thou in God: for I shall yet ^q praise him ^r for ^s the help of his countenance.

6 O ^t my God, my soul is cast down

within me: ^u therefore will I remember thee ^v from the land of Jordan, and of ^w the Hermonites, from ^x the hill Mizar.

7 ^y Deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of thy water-spouts: ^z all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.

8 Yet the LORD will ^a command his loving-kindness in the day-time, and ^b in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto ^c the God of my life.

9 I will say unto ^d God my Rock, ^e Why hast thou forgotten me? ^f why go I mourning ^g because of the oppression of the enemy?

10 ^h As with a ⁱ sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, ^j Where is thy God?

(Joel i. 20. Heb.) Thus David longed and mourned after the courts of God: but still more for the living God himself; for his presence and favour, and those pleasures, which he had enjoyed in communion with him. (Notes, lxiii. 1—4. lxxxiv. 1, 2. cxliii. 6. Matt. v. 6. Rev. vii. 13—17.) The want of these consolations was the more grievous, because his former confidence was now openly derided, and it was thought, that God had deserted him, and would not, or could not, afford him any relief. (Notes, 9, 10. iii. 1, 2. xxii. 7, 8.) These taunts and reproaches so distressed him, that he lost his appetite for his food, and tears were as his meat continually, his only solace and relief, day and night.

Panteth. (1) ^{אֵרָעָה}: brays, or makes that complaining noise, which is peculiar to the species. ^{Figuratè}, *appetit, desideravit, anhelavit.* Hinc ^{ορεγομαι} *appeto.* Robertson.—^{ἐπιποθεi}. Sept.

V. 4, 5. In this distressing situation, the Psalmist recollected former times, till his soul was even “poured out,” or melted, within him. (xxii. 14.) He had been used to accompany the multitude to the house of God, upon their solemn feast-days; and he counted it his chief honour and happiness, to join in their sacred songs of joy and praise: (Notes, 2 Sam. vi. 12—15. 1 Chr. xv, xvi:) but now he was driven as an exile far from that sacred scene; and Jerusalem itself was profaned by the wickedness of his adversaries. Yet still he was fully convinced, that he ought not to yield to despondency: he would therefore call his soul to account, for being thus cast down and disquieted; enquiring of it what adequate cause could be assigned for it. Past experience and repeated express promises combined to encourage his hope, that God would yet favour, comfort, and help him, which would be done effectually with a look or a smile; for “his presence is *“salvation.”* Margin. (Notes, 11. 1 Sam. xxx. 6.)

V. 6—8. As the Psalmist's dejection continued, notwithstanding his earnest strivings against it, he next com-

plaints of it to his God; being resolved to remember him with faith, and hope, and prayer, though he was apparently turned to be his enemy; and though he was banished from mount Zion, into a remote part of the land beyond Jordan, to some little hill (marg.) in the land of Hermon. The word *Mizar* is justly rendered in other places, *small*, or *little*. (2 Chr. xxiv. 24. Is. lxiii. 18. Heb.) His sorrows were so complicated, and his outward calamities and inward anguish so combined, that he was like a ship in a violent storm, when assaulted by one billow after another, as if they called upon each other to concur in its destruction; while the water-spouts, rushing with impetuous force into the ocean, with a dreadful noise, also called upon it to unite in overwhelming the astonished mariners, who sink into the deep, where all the waves and billows go over them. Thus David seemed ready to be swallowed up by his enemies; who, along with his inward distresses, were as water-spouts, waves, and billows, with which God seemed ready to overwhelm him for his sins. (Notes, lxix. 14, 15. 2 Sam. xxii. 5, 6. Jon. ii. 3, 4.) Yet he trusted that he would command these storms into a calm. (Notes, cvii. 23—30. Matt. viii. 23—27.) He hoped that in due season, God would discover his loving-kindness to him, which would be as the return of the day to his soul; and therefore he would praise him for the past, and make his prayer unto him, as “the God of his life,” even in the darkest night of sorrow and trouble. Or, he resolved to make the mercies of every day the subject of his praise, and the encouragement of his hope and prayer during the night-season, when pain or uneasiness prevented his sleep. (Notes, Job xxxv. 9—13. Is. xxx. 29—32. Acts xvi. 25—28.)

V. 9, 10. The Psalmist was sensible, that God was chastening him for his sins; but he was also conscious of being truly penitent. He likewise knew that his cause was that of God and righteousness, and that his enemies hated him for his religion. So that he could not but wonder, on

g 5. xliii. 5.

h Jer. xxx. 17.
xxxiii. 6. Matt.
ix. 12.

11 ^g Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, *who is* ^h the Health of my countenance, and my God.

PSALM XLIII.

The Psalmist prays that God would judge his cause,

and restore him to his sanctuary, 1—3. He anticipates his joy and praise which should then take place, and encourages himself to hope in God, 4, 5.

^a JUDGE me, O God, and ^b plead my cause against an ^{*}ungodly nation: O deliver me from [†]the deceitful and unjust man.

^a vii. 8. xxvi. 1.
xxxv. 24. lxxv.
7. 1 Cor. iv. 4.
1 Pet. ii. 23.
^b xxxv. 1. 1 Sam.
xxiv. 15. Prov.
xxii. 23. xxiii.
11. Mic. vii. 9.
Or, *unmerciful*.
[†] Heb. *a man of*
deceit and in-
iquity. lxxi. 4.
2 Sam. xv. 31.
xvi. 20—23. xvii.
1—4.

what account God, his Rock, (Note, 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3,) should so long forget his servant, and leave his oppressors to prosper; while they put him to extreme torture, by their impious sarcasms and reproachful enquiries. (Note, 1—3.)

V. 11. ‘This repetition doth declare, that David did not overcome at once; to teach us to be constant, for as much as God will certainly deliver his.’—The concluding words are rather varied: “The salvations of my countenance, and my God.” (Note, 4, 5.) The deliverances and consolations of God, his Salvation, had often made the Psalmist lift up his face with joy and gladness; and he trusted he should again praise him for similar mercies. (Note, 2 Cor. i. 8—11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The believer, in proportion to the degree in which he is spiritually-minded, will continually either be rejoicing in the living God, or mourning after him. The thirsty hart does not more eagerly pant and bray for the refreshing stream, than the lively Christian desires the consolations of the Holy Spirit, and the tokens of the love and presence of God: nothing else can afford him satisfaction; and temptations, afflictions, and discouraging delays increase the spiritual appetite, and make him the more to thirst for these living waters. He therefore values publick ordinances, and delights in attending on them; so that it is indeed a great affliction to him to be banished, or confined at a distance. Yet, unless he meet his God, and enjoy communion with him, he returns even from his courts disappointed and dissatisfied: and he looks especially with longing expectation for that season, when he shall appear before him in the temple above, and be for ever satisfied in his favour, and in that joy with which his manifested glory fills every enraptured beholder. (Note, Matt. v. 8.) But the comfort of his hope is often abated, and even turned into mourning, in this evil world, by the insults and blasphemies of those, who deride his confidence in God, as presumption or delusion; especially when he is under divine rebukes, or bereft of external advantages. In such seasons of distress and prevailing iniquity, he recollects more pleasant and prosperous days, when he assembled with the people of God, and joined in his worship with the voice of joy and praise; and, comparing them with present trials, he is apt to yield to impatience and despondency. It behoves us however, under every distress, to call ourselves to account; and to enquire why we are so cast down and disquieted. We may have great cause to mourn for sin, and to pray against prevailing impiety: but our great dejection, even under the severest outward afflictions or inward trials, springs from unbelief and a rebellious will: we should therefore strive and pray against

it, and endeavour to hope in God, persuaded that we shall “yet praise him for the salvation of his countenance.” Our enemies may indeed drive us from publick ordinances, deprive us of our Bibles, banish us into deserts, or immure us in prisons; but they cannot bereave us of the favour of our God, or preclude our approach to the throne of grace. Let us then complain unto him, and remember his mercy and power, under every disconsolation. And if one trouble follow hard after another;—if divine rebukes from above, the assaults of hell from beneath, and the insults of men, like floods, waves, and water-spouts, seem to combine for our ruin;—let us remember that they all are appointed and over-ruled by the Lord, and that we deserve more than all we endure on earth: let us recollect how Jesus said, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death;” and how he suffered both from the cruelty of man, the rage of Satan, and the justice of the Father: yet was he heard and delivered. In his name, let us hope and pray: one word from him will calm every storm, turn the midnight darkness into the light of noon, and the bitterest complaints into joyful praises. We should then employ our time, under tedious and discouraging trials, in praising God for his mercies to his church and to us, and in prayer for deliverance. Ere long our night of sorrow will finally terminate, and eternal day will succeed. Let us then never think that “the God of our life,” and “the Rock of our salvation hath forgotten us;” if we have indeed made his mercy, truth, and power our refuge. Even though we cannot but “go mourning, because of the “oppression of the enemy;” and though the reproaches of the ungodly are painful as “a sword in our bones;” yet we should struggle against despondency, and still hope in God, and praise him: his favour will be the health and help of our souls, and he will be “our Shield and “exceeding great Reward.”

NOTES.

PSALM XLIII. V. 1. This is evidently a continuation of the preceding psalm, and was written before David had obtained deliverance. Every day brought him fresh intelligence concerning the ungodly, ungrateful, and *unmerciful* conduct of Israel in general; the bulk of the nation having joined the conspirators, and being ready to proceed to all lengths against the life of their aged king, which the deceit and iniquity of Absalom or Ahithophel could suggest against him. But these reports, instead of dismaying him, seem to have raised his hope; as they confirmed his confidence in the justice of his cause, and warranted his appeal to the Judge of the world, to decide between him and his most injurious foes. (Notes, vii. 8—11. xxvi. 1. xxxv. 1—3. cxliii. 1, 2.)

^c xxviii. 7. ^{exl.} 7. ^{Ex.} xv. 2. ^{Is.} xl. 31. ^{xlv.} 24. ^{Zech.} x. 12. ^{Eph.} vi. 10. ^{Phil.} iv. 13. ^d ixxi. 9. ^{lxxvii.} 7. ^{xciv.} 14. ^{1 Chr.} xxviii. 9. ^e xlii. 9. ^f lvii. 3. ^{xcvii.} 11. ^{cxix.} 105. ^{2 Sam.} xv. 20. ^{Mic.} vii. 8. ^{20.} John i. 4. ^{17.} ^g xxv. 4, 5. ^{cxliii.} 10. ^{Prov.} iii. 5, 6. ^h ii. 6. ^{iii.} 4. ^{lxxviii.} 15, 16. ^{lxxviii.} 68. ^{cxviii.} 13, 14. ⁱ 1 Chr. xvi. 1. ^{39.} xxi. 29. ^k lxvi. 13—15. ^{cxvi.} 12—19. [•] Heb. *the gladness of my joy.* ^{xxi.} 23. ^{Is.} lxi. 10. ^{Hab.} iii. 17, 18. ^{Rom.} v. 11. ^l lvii. 8. ^{lxxi.} 22. ^{lxxx.} 2. ^{2 Sam.} vi. 5. ^{Rev.} v. 8. ^m xlii. 6. ⁿ xlii. 5, 11.

2 For thou *art* ^c the God of my strength: ^d why dost thou cast me off? ^e why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

3 O ^f send out thy light and thy truth: ^g let them lead me; let them bring me unto ^h thy holy hill, and to ⁱ thy tabernacles.

4 ^k Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God [•] my exceeding Joy: yea, ^l upon the harp will I praise thee, ^m O God, my God.

5 ⁿ Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, *who is the Health of* my countenance, and my God.

PSALM XLIV.

The church acknowledges the former mercies of God, and resolves to trust in him, 1—8; complains of being left under grievous distresses and persecutions, 9—16; professes integrity under sufferings, 17—22; and earnestly prays for speedy deliverance, 23—26.

To the chief Musician ^a for the sons of Korah, Maschil.

WE ^b have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, *what* work thou didst in their days, ^c in the times of old.

2 *How* ^d thou didst drive out the heathen with thy hand, and plantedst them; *how* thou didst ^e afflict the people, and cast them out.

^a xlii. *title.* ^b xxii. 31. ^{lxxi.} 16. ^{lxxviii.} 3—6. ^{cv.} 1, 2. ^{Ex.} xii. 24—27. ^{xiii.} 14, 15. ^{Is.} xxxviii. 19. ^{Joel} i. 3. ^c Num. xxi. 14—16. ^{27—30.} Job viii. 8, 9. ^{xv.} 17—19. ^d lxxviii. 55. ^{lxxx.} 8. ^{cv.} 44. ^{cxviii.} 10—12. ^{cxviii.} 17—22. ^{Ex.} xv. 19. ^{xxxiv.} 11. ^{Deut.} vii. 1. ^{Josh.} x. 42. ^{xi.} 23. ^{xxi.} 43. ^{Neh.} ix. 22—27. ^e Ex. xxiii. 28. ^{Num.} xiii. 32. ^{Josh.} x. 11. ^{xxiv.} 12. ^{1 Sam.} v. 6, 7.

V. 2, 3. *Note*, xlii. 9, 10.—*Thy light.* (3) ‘Thy favour,’ which appeareth by the performance of thy promises. Perhaps the Psalmist also meant, the light of heavenly wisdom, teaching him how to act in such trying circumstances, so as to wait in the path of duty for the performances of God’s promises; and especially till restored to the ordinances of the sanctuary, which were far nearer to his heart, than the re-establishment of his outward prosperity, and the confirmation of his authority. (*Note*, xxvii. 1—6.)

Tabernacles.] There were at this time *two tabernacles*; or, sacred tents; that erected by Moses was at Gibeon; and the ark of the covenant was stationed on mount Zion, in a tent which David had prepared for it. (*Note*, 1 Chr. xvi. 37—43.)

V. 4. *My exceeding joy.*] Or, ‘The gladness of my joy.’ (*Marg.*) The fervent language used by the Psalmist, while anticipating his sacrifices of thanksgiving at the altar, is widely different from the frigid, unimpassioned religion of nominal Christians in general, and shames the lukewarmness of most of us. (*Notes*, cvii. 17—22. 31, 32. cxvi. 13—19. cxviii. 19—26. *Rom.* v. 11.)

V. 5. *Notes*, xlii. 4, 5. 11.—*Health.*] *יְשׁוּעָה*, *salvations.* xliv. 5. Heb.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Under the returns of distress and disconsolation, we should, again and again, have recourse to the effectual and only remedy of faith and prayer.—As Israel treated David after all his successes in faithfully promoting their interests, and notwithstanding his wisdom and piety, with the blackest ingratitude, treachery, and injustice; and as even his beloved Absalom, and his professed friend and counsellor Ahithophel, joined and headed the base conspiracy; and as the Son of God met with far baser treatment from the same favoured, yet ungodly and merciless, nation: so no eminence or usefulness can exempt any pious man from the contempt or injuries of the wicked; whether he have to do with collective bodies, or individuals. But we should commit our cause to God, and he will plead it, and deliver us from every unrighteous and treacherous assault. And though inward temptations often concur

with outward afflictions, yet God will never cast off those who trust in him as their Protector and Strength, according to his merciful and faithful promises. We should therefore discard such dishonourable fears; and pray the more earnestly, that the Lord would send forth the truth of his word and the light of his Spirit, to guide us into the ways of holiness, peace, and salvation: and by means of his ordinances on earth, bring us to his holy habitation in heaven. Through Christ, our Altar and Sacrifice, we may here find joy in God, for which we should bless and praise his name: but under every suspension of comfort, and every trouble, we should look forward to the season, when ‘God, our exceeding Joy,’ will end our sorrows and complete our felicity. Let us then silence our complaints, and repeatedly enquire, ‘Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou so disquieted within me?’ And resolve still to ‘hope in God; for we shall yet eternally praise him, who is the Health of our countenance and our God.’

NOTES

PSALM XLIV. V. 1—3. It is not agreed on what occasion, or by whom, this psalm was composed; nor does it fully suit any period in the history of the old-testament church: for even in the days of Hezekiah, under Sennacherib’s oppression, or afterwards, under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, the *bulk of the nation* could not have made the solemn protestation contained in it; (*Note*, 17—22;) and it would have been still more unsuitable to the case of the Jews, during the Babylonish captivity. It is therefore no very improbable conjecture, that David, or some other prophet, composed this psalm for the use of the *true church*, in every age, when persecuted for conscience-sake.—However this may be, the remnant of suffering believers are here introduced, as recollecting the work of God for Israel in former ages, to encourage their hope of his further protection and powerful interposition. (*Marg. Ref.*) The first verse is incorporated into our Litany, after a manner, suited to lead our thoughts to the triumphs of divine grace at the reformation, and in the age of the apostles.—Joshua and the Israelites fought valiantly against the Canaanites: yet their victories were not

3 For ^f they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them: but ^g thy right hand, and thine arm, and ^h the light of thy countenance, ⁱ because thou hadst a favour unto them.

4 Thou art ^k my King, O God: ^l command deliverances for Jacob.

5 ^m Through thee will we ⁿ push down our enemies: through thy name will we ^o tread them under that rise up against us.

6 For ^p I will not trust in my bow, neither shall my sword save me.

7 But ^q thou hast saved us from our enemies, and hast ^r put them to shame that hated us.

8 ^s In God we boast all the day long, and ^t praise thy name for ever. Selah.

9 ¶ But ^u thou hast cast off, and put us to shame; and goest not forth with our armies.

f Deut. iv. 37, 38. viii. 17, 18. Josh. xxiv. 12. Zech. iv. 6. 2 Cor. iv. 7. xvii. 7. xx. 6. lxxiv. 11. Ex. xv. 6. Is. lxiii. 12. h xlii. 5. 11. lxxx. 16. i Num. xiv. 8. Deut. vii. 7, 8. 1 Sam. xii. 22. Mal. i. 2, 3. Rom. ix. 10—15. k lxxiv. 12. lxxxix. 18. cxlix. 2. Is. xxxiii. 22. l xlii. 8. Mark i. 25, 26. 31. 41. ix. 25. m xviii. 39—42. cxviii. 10—13. Is. xli. 14—16. Phil. iv. 13. n Deut. xxxiii. 17. 1 Kings xxii. 11. Dan. viii. 4. o lx. 12. xci. 13. cxviii. 13. Zech. x. 5. Rom. xvi. 20. Marg. p xx. 7. xxxiii. 16. 17. Hos. i. 7. q cxl. 7. cxliv. 10. Josh. i. 5. x. 8. —10. 42. xi. 6. xxiii. 9, 10. Judg. ii. 18. vii. 4—7. 1 Sam. vii. 8—12. xiv. 6—10. xvii. 47. 2 Sam. vii. 10. r xl. 14. lxxxiii. 1—18. s xxxiv. 2. Is. xlv. 25. Jer. ix. 24. Rom. ii. 17. u xliii. 2. lx. 1. lxxiv. 1. lxxx. 12, 13. lxxxix. 38—45. t cxv. 1. 18. 24—26. Rom. xi. 1—6.

10 ^x Thou makest us to turn back from the enemy: and they which hate us ^y spoil for themselves.

11 Thou hast ^z given us ^a like sheep appointed for meat; and hast ^b scattered us among the heathen.

12 Thou ^c sellest thy people ^d for nought, and dost not ^e increase *thy wealth* by their price.

13 Thou ^f makest us a reproach to our neighbours, ^g a scorn and a derision to them that are round about us.

14 Thou makest us ^h a by-word among the heathen, ⁱ a shaking of the head among the people.

15 ^j My confusion is continually before me, and the shame of my face hath ^k covered me.

16 For ^l the voice of him that reproacheth and blasphemeth; by reason of ^m the enemy and avenger.

17 ⁿ All this is come upon us; ^o yet ^p thou art not angry, O Lord, neither wilt thou be wroth with us, neither wilt thou rebuke us for ever.

rendered to him, and that for ever.—“Glorying in God” is generally expressed, by another modification of the same verb. (Is. xlv. 25. Jer. ix. 23. Heb.)

V. 9—16. Israel, in general accustomed to victory by the help of JEHOVAH, is here represented as worsted and crushed by the enemy.—The Lord is pleased to permit his church to be run down, as if he had cast her off with abhorrence: his people are then plundered and oppressed: many are slain, as sheep, for the pleasure or profit of their persecutors; or driven from their native country, and scattered among idolaters and savages; or sold at a very low price like the meanest of slaves. Of all these events, the history of the church gives many affecting illustrations. Thus the Lord seems to sell his people for nought, and allow his enemies to prevail, even to his own dishonour; as if he parted with his flock, without any increase to his other wealth. And while these things are transacting, his people have trials of cruel mockings, insults, and reproaches; which they could the better endure, did they not also continually hear the name and truths of God blasphemed, by their impious and revengeful enemies.—Many of the verbs are in the future tense, in the original: and perhaps the Psalmist meant, that past calamities led the people to very doleful conclusions as to the event. (Marg Ref.—Notes, lx. 1—3. lxxiv. 1, 2. lxxix. 1—5. lxxxix. 38—45. Josh. vii. 6—9. Is. l. 1—3.)

V. 17—22. (Note, 1—3.) ‘Certainly we have deserved ‘...all’ these calamities; ‘though this comfort is still remaining, that we are not so wicked as to be moved by all ‘this to desert thee, and violate that covenant, whereby ‘we are engaged to worship thee alone.’ Bp. Patrick.—The formalist commonly escapes persecution, by turning with the stream, and purchasing security with sinful compliances, or open apostasy; but the true church of God cannot be prevailed on, by menaces, sufferings, or pro-

owing to their own valour or strength, but to the power and favour of God. (Note, Josh. x. 9, 10.) The apostles laboured in the most zealous and self-denying manner to spread the gospel in the primitive times: but its prevalence was not the effect of their eloquence, or wisdom, or assiduity; but of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven to prosper their labours. The conversion and salvation of the believer is not effected by his merit, wisdom, or resolution; but springs from the mercy and grace of God: yet he diligently uses the appointed means.—*The people.* (2) לְאֻמִּים: Or *peoples*, the several nations inhabiting Canaan. (Notes, 1 Sam. xii. 22. Rom. ix. 10—18.)

V. 4. “Thou art He, my King, O God: command ‘the salvations of Jacob.’ ‘Thou art the same almighty God and Saviour, who by thy sovereign will didst of old effect these wonderful deliverances to thy people.—Thou art our King, as thou wast their’s: therefore save and deliver us, as thou didst them.’ This is a never failing plea for the church under persecution, and for the believer when steadily resisting temptation, and for the minister in praying for success on his labours. (Notes, xxvii. 13. Matt. vi. 13.)

V. 5—7. God is frequently spoken of as a Horn, or as raising up for his church “a Horn of salvation;” (Notes, Deut. xxxiii. 7. 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3. Luke i. 67—75;) and the Psalmist, with allusion to that metaphor, says, “Through ‘thee will we *push* down our enemies.” For the cause of God must, to the end, be maintained by the same powerful aid, as from the first made it to prevail; and in the same entire dependence on him to prosper all the means, employed for that effect; and not by trusting in the means themselves. (Notes, xx. 6—8. 1 Cor. ii. 3—5. 2 Cor. iv. 7. x. 1—6.)

V. 8. Or, “Unto God we will give praise continually, “and will confess thy name for ever. Selah.”—The whole confidence being placed in God, the whole glory will be

have we not forgotten thee, neither have we ^o dealt falsely in thy covenant. 18 ^p Our heart is not turned back, neither ^q have our ^r steps declined from thy way; 19 Though ^s thou hast sore broken us ^t in the place of dragons, and covered us ^u with the shadow of death. 20 ^v If we have forgotten the name of our God, or ^w stretched out our hands to a strange god; 21 ^x Shall not God search this out? for ^y he knoweth the secrets of the heart.

o Jer. xxxi. 32. Ez. xvi. 59. xx. 37. p lxxviii. 57. cxxv. 5. 1 Kings xv. 5. Job xxxiv. 27. Jer. xi. 10. Zeph. i. 6. Luke xvii. 32. q cxix. 51. 157. Job xxiii. 11, 12. 1 Cor. xv. 58. 1 Thes. ii. 10. r Or, going. s xxxviii. 8. lx. 1—3. Jer. xiv. 17. t lxxiv. 13, 14. Is. xxxvii. 1. xxxiv. 13, 14. xxxv. 7. Ez. xxix. 3. Rev. xii. 9. xiii. 2. 11—13. xvi. 10. u xxxiii. 4. Job iii. 5. x. 21, 22. Matt. iv. 16. v 17. vii. 3—5. Job xxxi. 5, &c. w lxxviii. 31. Ex. ix. 29. 1 Kings viii. 22. Job xi. 13. y cxxxix. 1, &c. Job xxxi. 4. 14. xxxiv. 21, 22. Jer. xvii. 10. xxxiii. 24. z Josh. xxii. 22, 23. Ec. xii. 14. Rom. ii. 16. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Heb. iv. 12, 13. Rev. ii. 23.

22 Yea, ^a for thy sake are we ^b killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

23 ^c Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? arise, ^d cast us not off for ever.

24 ^e Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and ^f forgettest our affliction and our oppression?

25 For ^g our soul is bowed down to the dust: our belly cleaveth unto the earth.

26 Arise ^h for our help, and ⁱ redeem us for thy mercy's sake.

a Rom. viii. 36. b 11. lxxix. 2, 3. 1 Sam. xxii. 17—19. 1 Kings xix. 10. Matt. v. 10—12. John xv. 21. xvi. 2, 3. 1 Cor. iv. 9. xv. 30, 31. Rev. xi. 3—9. xvii. 6. c vii. 6. xii. 5. xxxv. 23. lix. 4. 5. lxxviii. 65. Is. li. 9. Mark iv. 38. d 9. lxxiv. 1. lxxviii. 14. e x. 1. 11. xliii. 1—4. Deut. xxxii. 20. Job xiii. 24. f lxxiv. 19. 23. Ex. ii. 23, 24. Is. xl. 27, 28. Rev. vi. 9, 10. g lxxvi. 11, 12. cxi. 25. Is. li. 23. Lam. iv. 5. h Heb. a help for us. i xxvi. 11. cxxx. 7, 8.

mises, to forget God, or deal falsely in his covenant: and as the believer's heart does not turn back from God, so his feet do not decline from his way. Neither the malice, nor the subtlety, nor the poison, of the old serpent, and of his progeny, even when permitted to torment him grievously, can induce him to turn aside to idolatry, or to renounce his God and Saviour. This has been proved in ten thousand instances, while the disciples of Christ have been covered as with the shadow of death, in their constant expectation of it; and they have seen their brethren killed, by every tedious excruciating method, "all the day long, "and accounted as sheep for the slaughter." (*Notes, John xvi. 1—3. Rom. viii. 35—39.*) Their regard to the authority of their holy and heart-searching God effectually preserves them even from committing secret wickedness; and they make their appeal to him concerning their integrity. And indeed so far from suffering for their iniquities, they are hated and killed for the Lord's sake; because they bear his image, profess his truths, adhere to his commandments, and seek his glory.—"The place of dragons," or serpents, or monsters, gives the idea of man cast into a situation, in which every hateful and dreadful creature surrounds him. Such are persecutors, and such are evil spirits who employ them. (*Marg. Ref. s.*)

V. 23—26. In this trying situation, the church earnestly cries for help to God, by whose permission these afflictions come upon her, and who alone can remove them. (*Notes, xii. 5, 6. lxxiv. 10—12. lxxix. 8—13. Is. li. 9—11. Matt. viii. 23—27.*) The company of believers plead their great misery; through oppression, and inward dejection, they are thrown prostrate, and trampled in the dust, and even cleave to the ground, as utterly unable to arise: and as God had sold them, so they pray him to redeem them by his power, and through the appointed ransom, that his mercies may be glorified in their help and deliverance. (*Marg. Ref.*)—"There is a time, when the triumphs of the adversary, and the afflictions of the church, tempt men to think, that the eye of Providence is closed, or turned away, and that the Almighty hath ceased to remember their sad estate. But the truth is, that God only giveth his people an opportunity of feeling their own insufficiency; and waiteth, till, by fervent and importunate prayer, they solicit his help. For so the holy Jesus slept, while the ship was covered with the waves; until, awakened by the cries of his disciples, he arose to their

^a assistance, and spoke the tempest into a perfect calm." *Bp. Horne.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The church of God is one incorporated body, from the beginning to the end of the world: and the benefits conferred on it in every age, will be acknowledged with gratitude by believers, through all generations, and even to eternity.—"Whatsoever things were written of old time, "were written for our instruction" and encouragement; and parents should declare the work of God to their children, that they may learn to hope in him. (*Notes, lxxviii. 3—8. Is. xxxviii. 17—20. Rom. xv. 4—7.*) When we hear of the wonderful works wrought for Israel, in bringing them out of Egypt, and settling them in Canaan; or of the still more glorious interpositions of God, in the first promulgation of his gospel; we should learn to hope and pray for displays of his power and love, equally efficacious, though not miraculous.—The prosperity of the church has always been attended with the ruin of her enemies; therefore the most prosperous despisers and persecutors have cause to tremble, on account of the prayers of God's afflicted and despised people.—As human policy, power, and authority could never prevail against the cause of God; so they have been very little employed in promoting it: but, whatever instruments have been used, all real advantages have been gained by "his right hand, his arm, and "the light of his countenance, because he had a favour" to his people. They therefore give him the whole glory of the past, and entirely confide in him for the future; and they prosper in their spiritual warfare, when they depend on his grace and go forth in his name.—"Where the word "of this King is, there is power:" when he "commands "deliverances for Jacob," they will take place: and we may "push down all our enemies," and "tread them under "that rise up against us;" when, like the servants of God of old, we disclaim all self-confidence, to trust in him alone. The Lord has always hitherto saved his people: they may now "boast in him all the day long;" and they will praise his name for ever, for not having made them ashamed of their confidence. Yet, the believer must have seasons of temptations, afflictions, and humiliating discouragements; and the church must have seasons of persecution, when her remaining witnesses prophesy in sackcloth. (*Note, Rev. xi. 3—6.*) At such times the people of God will be trampled on, put to shame, plundered, mur-

PSALM XLV.

The excellency, dignity, and Deity of the Messiah, with his victories and dominion, 1—8. The Church, as espoused to him; her attendants and ornaments; with co-incident exhortations and promises, 9—17.

To the chief Musician upon ^a Shoshannim, for the sons of Korah, ^a Maschil, ^b A Song of loves.

MY heart [†] is inditing ^c a good matter: I speak of the things which I

have made ^d touching the King: ^e my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.

2 Thou art ^f fairer than the children of men: ^g grace is poured into thy lips: ^f therefore ^h God hath blessed thee for ever.

3 ⁱ Gird thy sword upon *thy* thigh, ^k O most mighty, with ⁱ thy glory and thy majesty.

—19. Phil. ii. 9—11. i Is. xlix. 2. lxiii. 1—6. Heb. iv. 12. Rev. i. 16. xix. 15. 21. k Is. ix. 6, 7. Acts x. 36. Rom. xiv. 9. i xxi. 5. xcvi. 6. civ. 1. cxlv. 5. 12. Heb. i. 3. viii. 1. Jude 25.

^a lxix. lxxx. titles.
^b Or, of instruction.

^c Cant. i. 1, 2, &c.
Is. v. 1. Eph. v. 32.

[†] Heb. boileth, or bubbleth up. Job xxxii. 18—20. Prov. xvi. 23. Matt. xii. 35.

^c xlix. 3. Job xxxiii. 3. xxxiv. 4. Prov. viii. 6—9.

d ii. 6. xxiv. 7—10. cx. 1, 2. Cant. i. 12. s. xxxii. 1, 2. Matt. xxv. 34. xxvii. 37.

e 2 Sam. xxiii. 2. 2 Pet. i. 21. Cant. ii. 3. v. 10.

f —16. Zech. ix. 17. Matt. xvii. 2. John i. 14. Col. i. 15—18. Heb. i. 3, 4. vii. 26. Rev. i. 13—18.

g Prov. xxii. 11. Is. l. 4. Luke iv. 22. John vii. 46.

h xxi. 6. lxxii. 17.

dered, banished, enslaved, despised, and reproached: and they will be ready to think that he has cast them off, and to fear that his name and truth will be eventually dishonoured; while they continually hear the blasphemies and triumphs of his enemies. But in all our afflictions, especially in our sufferings for the sake of scriptural Christianity, we should complain unto the Lord, and “exercise ourselves to have a conscience void of offence:” we should be careful not to seek relief by sinful compliances; and should continually meditate on the power, truth, purity, and knowledge of our heart-searching God. If our heart turn back from him, or our steps decline from his way; he knows it, and will discover it to others. But if we are faithful to our engagements, and are “persecuted for ‘righteousness’ sake,” we are and shall be safe and happy. Even if we should be given up into the hands of enemies, formidable and venomous as dragons, and thrown into dungeons hideous as their holes; be sore broken with every torture which malice can invent, and live in the continual expectation of a violent death: yet nothing can “separate us from the love of our God;” none can go beyond his purpose and permission; and in all these things we shall be more than conquerors. (Notes, Rom. viii. 28—39.) For though he seems to hide his face, and to forget the affliction and oppression of his people, while they are trampled in the dust by antichristian persecutors; yet he is waiting for our more fervent prayers, which will cause him, as it were, to awake, and arise, and help, and redeem us for his mercies’ sake. We have reason to be thankful, considering our frailty, for exemption from the more violent species of persecution; but let us be careful, that prosperity and ease do not render us careless and lukewarm. We should remember that persecution may come on us speedily, and that we ought to prepare for it; and we should not forget the state of the church, not yet delivered from her bondage and captivity. But in answer to the Redeemer’s intercession and the prayers of his people, all that hate his cause shall be put to shame; truth and righteousness shall every where triumph; and none that belong to Christ shall be cast off for ever, but every one of them shall be completely and eternally saved.

NOTES.

PSALM XLV. Title. The word “Shoshannim” signifies lilies, and is several times so rendered in Canticles: as used, however, in the titles of a few Psalms, (Marg. Ref. a,) it is generally understood to mean an instrument of six strings.—This Psalm is entitled, “A song of loves;” and it evidently describes the mutual love, which subsists

between Christ and his church. In many respects it resembles the Song of Solomon; and it treats of the spiritual union between Christ and the church under the allusion of a marriage. (Notes, Eph. v. 22—31.) Most expositors maintain that it was written on Solomon’s marriage with Pharaoh’s daughter; but a great part of it is wholly inapplicable to that transaction: nor is there sufficient ground to support the decided opinion, that this was so much as the occasion of its being written, or that David composed it. The latter is indeed probable; but it is entirely a prophecy of Christ, and is quoted as such by the apostle. (Comp. 6, 7. with Heb. i. 8, 9.)

V. 1. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit stirred up in the prophet’s heart this meditation, on a most excellent and important subject, as water bubbles up in a fountain: (marg.) so that he spoke freely of the things, which he had been considering, and had “composed concerning the “King,” the promised Messiah; and his tongue was guided by the Spirit of God, as entirely as the pen is by the hand of a ready writer, to express promptly and fully “the mind of the Spirit,” and nothing more. This seems the genuine meaning: for as the tongue utters more rapidly, than the readiest writer can note down the words; the clause, in the common interpretation, conveys no distinct idea. (Notes, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2. John xvi. 14, 15. 1 Cor. ii. 10—13. 1 Pet. i. 10—12. 2 Pet. i. 19—21.)

V. 2. In speaking “concerning the King,” the prophet was led abruptly to address him; as one in a rapture while he contemplated his glorious excellences. He was formed more beautiful and lovely than the children of men: (Cant. v. 16. Note, Zech. ix. 17:) he unspeakably surpassed all, who ever were admired or extolled on earth, for wisdom, justice, truth, and love; without having any intermixture of infirmity or defect. His word reveals the unsearchable riches of his grace: and, being authorized to speak to sinners, as their Prophet, in the Father’s name, “grace is poured into his lips,” and his words are full of energy, instruction, persuasion, and consolation: and being in every respect fully qualified for his mediatorial work, God has exalted and blessed him for ever, in order to the completion of it.—“His word instructed the ignorant, resolved the doubtful, comforted the mourners, reclaimed the wicked, silenced his adversaries, healed diseases, troubled the elements, and raised the dead.” Bp. Horne. (Notes, Cant. v. 10—16. Is. l. 4. Luke iv. 16—22. John vii. 40—53.)

V. 3—5. The prophet here joyfully foretels the progress and success of the Messiah, in setting up his kingdom and overcoming his enemies. Girded with the word

4 And in thy majesty ^{* ride} ^m prosperously, ⁿ because of truth ^o and meekness and righteousness; and ^p thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

5 ^q Thine arrows ^r are ^s sharp in the heart of the King's enemies: ^t whereby the people fall under thee.

6 ^u Thy throne, ^v O God, ^w is for ever and ever: ^x the sceptre of thy kingdom ^y is a right sceptre.

7 ^z Thou lovest righteousness, and ^a hatest wickedness: therefore ^b God, ^c thy God, ^d hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness ^e above thy fellows.

^f Heb. prosper thou, ride thou. Rev. vi. 2. xix. 11. m cx. 2. 3. 1 Thes. i. 5. ii. 13. 2 Thes. iii. 1. n lx. 4. John i. 17. xiv. 6. o Zech. ix. 9. Matt. xi. 29. xii. 19, 20. 2 Cor. x. 1. p ii. 9. xxi. 8, 9. cx. 5, 6. Is. lix. 17, 18. lxiii. 1—6. Luke xix. 27. 2 Thes. i. 8, 9. Rev. vi. 16, 17. xi. 18. xix. 17—21. xx. 15. q xxi. 12. Num. xxiv. 8. Zech. ix. 13, 14. r ii. 1—9. Luke xix. 42—44. xx. 18, 19. Acts ii. 37. 41. v. 33. vii. 54. xxii. 27. lxvi. 3. 4. Acts iv. 4. v. c. 14. vi. 7. Rom. xv. 18, 19. t lxxxix. 29. 36, 37. xciii. 2. cxlv. 13. Dan. ii. 44. Luke i. 32, 33. Heb. i. 8. u Is. ix. 6, 7. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. John i. 1. 1 Tim. iii. 16. x lxxii. 1, &c. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. 4. Jer. xxxiii. 15, 16. Rev. xix. 11. y xxxiii. 5. xcix. 4. Matt. iii. 15. Heb. i. 9. vii. 26. z ci. 3, 4, 8. Matt. vii. 23. Luke xiii. 27. Rev. xxi. 27. a lxxxix. 26. John xx. 17. Eph. i. 3. b lxxxix. 20. Lev. viii. 12. 1 Sam. xvi. 13. 1 Kings i. 39, 40. xix. 16. Is. lxi. 1—3. Luke iii. 22. iv. 18—21. John iii. 34. c xxi. 6. Acts ii. 28. d John i. 16. Rom. viii. 29. Col. i. 18, 19. Heb. ii. 14.

8 ^e All thy garments ^f smell of myrrh, and aloes, and ^g cassia, out of ^h the ivory palaces, ⁱ whereby they have made thee glad.

9 ^j Kings' daughters ^k were among thy honourable women: ^l upon thy right hand did stand ^m the queen in ⁿ gold of Ophir.

10 ^o Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear: ^p forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;

11 ^q So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for he is ^r thy Lord; and ^s worship thou him.

^t Cant. i. 2. 13. iii. 6. iv. 6. 13. 14. v. 1. 5. 13. Matt. ii. 11. John xix. 39. 2 Cor. ii. 14—16. f Ex. xxx. 23, 24. g 15. 1 Kings xxii. 39. Am. iii. 15. John xiv. 2. h xvi. 11. Heb. xxi. 2. i 13. lxxii. 10. Cant. vi. 8, 9. vii. 1. Is. xlix. 23. lx. 10, 11. Rev. xxi. 24. k 1 Kings ii. 19. l Cant. iv. 8—11. John iii. 29. Eph. v. 26, 27. Rev. xix. 7. xxi. 2, 9. m 1 Kings x. 11. Job xxii. 24. n Cant. ii. 10—13. Is. lv. 1—3. 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. vii. 1. o Gen. ii. 24. xii. 1. Deut. xxi. 13. p Cant. i. 8. 12—16. ii. 2. 14. iv. 1—5. 7, 9, 10. vi. 4. vii. 1—10. Is. lxii. 4, 5. Zeph. iii. 17. Eph. v. 26, 27. q 6. Is. liv. 5. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. John xx. 28. Acts x. 36. Rom. xiv. 9. Phil. ii. 10, 11. iii. 8. r ii. 12. xcv. 6. Luke xxiv. 52. John iv. 21, 22. Rev. v. 8—14.

of truth, rendered effectual by the power of the Holy Spirit, as with a sharp sword, let him ride forth as a mighty Conqueror, in unrivalled might, glory, and majesty, to spread truth, meekness, and righteousness on earth; (Notes, Is. lxiii. 1—6. Rev. vi. 1, 2. xix. 11—16;) bringing his people into a state of acceptance and peace with God; and teaching them to live in humble meekness, peace, and equity with each other. For his right hand, expert in this warfare, would readily execute his purposes, whether of mercy or of vengeance. (Notes, ii. 7—9. cx. 3—6.) His arrows of conviction are very sharp, and the effects of them very terrible, for a time, in the hearts of sinners, till they are humbled, subjected, and reconciled: but the arrows of his righteous vengeance are unspeakably more sharp and dreadful to his obstinate enemies, when they fall under that power to which they refused to submit. (Notes, xxi. 8—13. lxvi. 1—3. lxviii. 17—23.)

V. 6, 7. The victorious Conqueror is here introduced as placed on his royal throne: and the prophet not only celebrates him as far superior to all the sons of men, but as being himself "God over all." His everlasting kingdom, which he possesses for the benefit of his church, is administered with perfect wisdom and equity: his character, doctrine, precepts, and, above all, his atoning sacrifice, shew that he "loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity." Therefore God the Father, as "his God," in respect of his human nature and mediatorial offices, (Note, John xx. 11—17, end,) has given him the Holy Spirit, without measure: that, being thus anointed to be our Prophet, Priest, and King, he might have the pre-eminency in the gladdening gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit the Comforter; and from his fulness might communicate them to his fellows, his brethren in human nature. (Notes, Is. lix. 20, 21. Zech. xiii. 7. John i. 16. iii. 27—36. Eph. iv. 7—13.)—Various attempts have, in different ages, been made to explain away this decisive testimony to the Deity of Christ; but the manner in which the apostle quotes it, rather varied from the Septuagint and made more energetic, is conclusive to all who admit his authority.—Some would render the words, "God is thy throne for ever and ever." Heaven indeed is the throne of God; but who

ever heard of God being the throne of any of his creatures! (Marg. Ref.—Note, Heb. i. 8, 9.)

V. 8. The garments of princes were generally imbued with costly perfumes: those of the high priests were anointed with the holy ointment, composed of the spices here mentioned, with several others. (Notes, cxxxiii. 2. Ex. xxx. 22—33.) Thus the Messiah is represented as clothed with garments, which diffuse a refreshing fragrant through his royal palace, his church on earth, and in heaven, in which he more rejoices, than magnificent princes do in palaces inlaid with ivory. (Marg. Ref.—Note, xxi. 1—7.)—'From the glorious vestments of our High Priest and King is diffused the sweet savour of his heavenly graces, filling those happy regions of joy and gladness, where he keeps his residence above; and, by the communication of his Spirit, refreshing the faithful on earth with their odours.' Bp. Horne.—Aloes.] Note, Num. xxiv. 6.

V. 9—11. The King, now seated in majesty and glory on his throne, is next represented as surrounded with a splendid train. Among other honourable women, the daughters of Kings are mentioned, who may be supposed to have submitted to his authority, and put themselves under his protection; and who would deem it an honour for their daughters to wait, in his court, around his queen; while she, arrayed in the most costly robes, stood at his right hand, as a bride adorned for her nuptials. By "the queen," the collective body of believers seems to be intended, who, clothed in the righteousness of Christ, enriched by his bounty, and adorned by the graces of his Spirit, adhered to him in singleness of affection and fidelity, and are admitted to the most endeared union and communion. The other attendants are either introduced, according to the customs of the times on such occasions, to keep up the allegory; or they may mean distinct churches or individuals who in succession seek to be admitted into this sacred relation. (Notes, 12—15. Cant. i. 5, 6. v. 9.)—The royal consort is next exhorted, as it seems, by the Father himself, to hearken, consider, and consent to, the terms of this union: and, in order to enter into it, and act properly in it, she must forget her own people.

Is. xxiii. 17, 18.
Acts xxi 3—6.
1 Lxxii. 10. Is. lx
6, 7. Matt. ii.

1.
a xxii. 29. Is. xlii.
23. lx. 3, 10, 11.
* Heb. face.

x 9, 10. Cant. vii.
1. 1 Pet. ii. 9
Rev. xix. 7, 8.

y 1 Sam. xvi. 7.
Luke xi. 40.
Rom. ii. 29.

2 Cor. v. 17.
1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.
9. Matt. v. 16.

xxii. 11, 12. Rom.
xiii. 22. xlii. 14.
Rev. iii. 18.

a Cant. i. 4. John
xvii. 24. 2 Cor. xi. 2.
v. 8, 9. vi. 1. 8. 13. viii. 13. Rev. xiv. 1—4

12 And 'the daughter of Tyre *shall be there* 'with a gift; *even* "the rich among the people shall intreat thy 'favour.

13 * The King's daughter is ' all glorious within: "her clothing is of wrought gold.

14 " She shall be brought unto the king in "raiment of needle-work: "the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.

b Ex. xxviii. 39 Judg. v. 30. c Cant. i. 3. 5. ii. 7.

15 " With gladness and rejoicing " shall they be brought: " they shall enter into the King's palace.

16 ' Instead of thy fathers shall be " thy children, whom thou mayest make "princes in all the earth.

17 " I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: " there-fore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever.

Mal. i. 11. Matt. xxvi. 13. 1 Cor. xi. 26. lxxii. 3.

d Is. xxxv. 10. li.
11. lv. 12, 13.
lx. 19, 20. lxi.
10. Rev. vii. 15

—17.
e Is. lvi. 5. John
xiv. 3. Rev. iii.
12. 21.

f Matt. xix. ' 4.
Mark x. 25, 30.
Phil. iii. 7, 8.

g Is. xlix. 21, 22.
liv. 1—5. lx. 1—
5. Gal. iv. 26.

27.
h 1 Pet. ii. 9. Rev.
i. 6. v. 10. xx.
6.

i xxii. 30, 31. lxxii.
17—19. cxlv. 4
—7. Is. lix. 21.
k lxxii. 17. Cant. vi. 9. Is. lxi. 9

and her father's house. The whole church, composed of Jews and Gentiles, consists of such as were born in sin: and separation from all idolatry, iniquity, and self-dependence, and from all the carnal interests, pleasures, and attachments of an unconverted state, must make way for receiving Christ as their whole Portion and Salvation. (Note, Gen. xii. 1—3.) When grace has thus prepared the heart, there is a spiritual beauty with which the Redeemer is greatly delighted; and the soul is ready to submit to him as Lord, and to worship him as God, with unreserved obedience and humble adoration; as well as to cleave to him in love, and trust in him as a Saviour. (Notes, Cant. iv. 8—14. Is. liv. 4, 5. lxxii. 1—5. John iii. 27—36. 2 Cor. xi. 1—6. Eph. v. 22—27. Rev. xix. 7, 8.)

V. 12. The accession of the Gentiles to the church may be here predicted, under the name of Tyre, a neighbouring city, and at that time the mart of the world: for even the richest among the nations will in due time submit to the Messiah, consecrate their wealth to him, and court the friendship and desire the prayers of his church. (Notes, Is. lx. 1—14. Zech. viii. 20—23. Rev. iii. 8, 9.)

Thy favour.] תִּפְתָּח: the pronoun is feminine, and the queen, the church, is especially meant.

V. 13—15. The relation, in which the believer stands to the Lord, comprises in it every tie and affection; and the church is called his spouse, sister, or daughter, indiscriminately: or the title "spouse," or "bride," may express her relation to the Son of God; and "daughter," that to the Father. Her glory and beauty are inward and spiritual: and her adorning is most precious; as she is arrayed with the righteousness which Christ wrought out in human nature for her justification, and with the beauties of a holy conversation by the operation of the Spirit of God; who works by the labours of ministers, and by all the means, which others diligently use, to promote the sanctification of themselves and of their brethren. (Notes, 1 Pet. iii. 1—4. Rev. xix. 7, 8.) When the church is thus prepared, this union is begun on earth, which will be completed and avowed in the King's palace above: while every individual, whose affection and dependence have been singly placed on Christ, shall be admitted as a guest at these nuptials, and likewise share for ever in the joy and honour of this sacred union. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Matt. xxv. 1—13.)

V. 16. While the church forgets and renounces all worldly connexions, interests, and affections, in order to her espousal to Christ, a spiritual progeny, a numerous succession of converts, arises from this new and sacred relation. (Notes, xxii. 30, 31. Gen. xii. 1—3. Matt. xix. 29,

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30. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. Phil. iii. 8—11.) These are "kings" and priests to our God, and reign even on earth," as in reality the most honourable persons in every land. (Notes, 1 Pet. ii. 4—6. 9, 10. Rev. i. 4—6. v. 8—10.) Many of them have been raised to great authority and possessed great influence in their several countries: and, however the church has hitherto been generally despised and persecuted, the time is coming when her sons shall be made kings and rulers through all nations, as well as heirs of an eternal kingdom in heaven. (Notes, Is. xlix. 18—23. liv. 1—5. lx. 1—7. lxxv. 13—16. Gal. iv. 21—31.)—Instead of Jewish ancestors or kindred, an illustrious race of gentile believers, 'of whom were to be chosen Christian kings to 'govern the world, and Christian bishops to preside in the 'church.' Bp. Horne.—But the church renounces none of the Jewish race; except unbelievers, in exactly the same way, as she renounces unbelieving gentiles.—Solomon had, as far as we know, no children by Pharaoh's daughter: and nothing can be less applicable to any one, than the seventeenth verse is to her. So that if Solomon's marriage to her were at all intended, this part of the prediction especially wholly failed of being accomplished. (Note, Heb. i. 8, 9.)

V. 17. This verse shews, that Christ and the church were immediately and expressly intended throughout the Psalm. The language is peculiarly emphatical; and can mean nothing less, than all successive generations to the end of the world, and likewise eternal ages in heaven. Either the Father himself thus declared his purpose of glorifying his beloved Son, and his people with him, for ever; or, as many explain it, the Psalmist foresaw, that this sacred poem would be used by the church through all generations, in celebrating the honour of the Redeemer, and in calling on others to do the same; and that it would thus be useful in preparing the redeemed people of God, for the exalted adorations of the eternal world.—There can be no doubt, that this will be verified by the event. (Notes, lxxi. 17, 18. lxxii. 17—19.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

The difference of men's characters, before God, greatly consists in the thoughts which habitually occupy their minds. The lively believer has his memory, imagination, and affections, so stored with heavenly things, that he has commonly some good matter to meditate on, in those hours of solitude and leisure, which others waste in vanity, or employ in wicked and polluting speculations. (Note, cxix. 113.) But no subject is so congenial to the heaven-born

PSALM XLVI.

The church exults in the assurance of protection and consolation from God, 1—5; recounts his wondrous works in her behalf, 6—9; and, while God demands submission from all the earth, she declares her confidence in him, 10, 11.

soul, or so replete with comfort and instruction, as the contemplation of the excellences of Christ our King. Lively thoughts of his Person, character, and grace, springing up in the heart, inspire a heavenly savour into the discourse: and without the gift of prophecy, our tongues in this case become as the pen of a ready writer, simply and promptly declaring to all around us the truths originally revealed by the Spirit of God.—In the Redeemer, the enlightened soul perceives unutterable goodness and beauty, which eclipse all the dim excellences, that it was wont to admire in the children of men. The gracious words which he speaks to sinners, are replete with divine harmony, and excite ineffable comfort in the broken heart: and Christ himself rejoices in his exaltation, and in the power and glory which the Father has conferred on him; because he delights in bestowing on his people the blessings, which he obtained for them on the cross.—All, who have seen his glory and tasted his grace, greatly desire to promote his cause; they rejoice in his former victories, and long to see him “ride forth in his majesty” to extend his conquests; and by his word and Spirit, to reduce enemies and strangers to a willing submission to his truth, and righteousness, and gentle dominion. But, while he delights in salvation, his powerful right hand will teach him to execute dreadful vengeance on all impenitent opposers: his sharp arrows will penetrate their souls; and all must either yield to this almighty King, or be crushed by him. For his throne is established for ever; his name is Emmanuel; his sceptre is swayed in justice and mercy; “he loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity:” and while his Spirit leads believers to look unto him, as “bearing our sins in his own body on the cross,” and to rest all their hopes on his atonement; the views which they receive of this great transaction, especially impress them with a sense of the odiousness and desert of every transgression, shew them the reasonableness of obedience, and teach them the beauty of holiness; so that, not one of *them* can possibly abuse his grace for an encouragement to continue in sin.—In proportion as we are conformed to his holy image, we may expect the gladdening influence of the Comforter, which is communicated from his fulness: and while his name is to us, “as ointment poured forth;” the fragrant of heavenly affections will recommend our conversation to the spiritually minded, and render us meet for his palace above. (Notes, Cant. i. 3. 2 Cor. ii. 14—17.)

V. 9—17.

Next to the Redeemer's excellences, those of his espoused church are most worthy to be celebrated: not for what she was in herself; but for what he has made her, in consequence of his love and choice. (Notes, Cant. iv. 1—15. vi. 4—10. vii. 6—8. Ez. xvi. 9—14.) If we desire to share these blessings, we must hearken to his word, consider his proposals, and incline our ears and our hearts to seek a union with him: we must renounce, and even forget, our carnal and sinful attachments, pursuits, and connexions,

To the chief Musician *for ^athe sons ^bof Korah, ^cA Song upon ^dAlamoth.

GOD is ^dour Refuge and Strength,
^ea very present Help in trouble.

18. e cxlv. 18. Gen. xxii. 14. Deut. iv. 7. 2 Sam. xxii. 17—20.

^a Or, of. lxxxiv. lxxxv. lxxxvii. titles. b xlvi. lxvi. titles. c 1 Chr. xv. 20. d 7. 11. lxi. 7, 8. xci. 1—9. cxlii. 5. Prov. xiv. 26. xvii. 10. Luke xiii. 34. Heb. vi. 17—20.

if we would be pleasing in his eyes, or admitted into this honourable relation. Other lords must be disavowed; for he must be our Lord, as well as our Saviour: and all idols must be thrown away, that we may give him our whole heart, and render him unreserved worship, as well as seek all our happiness from him alone. (Note, Gen. ii. 24. P. O. Gen. xxiv. 33—67.) Indeed, the true believer's privileges, as well as the most estimable parts of his character, are *internal*, and undiscerned by an ungodly world: yet the holiness of his conversation proves the inward adorning of his soul, and that he is arrayed with “the robe of righteousness and salvation.”—No wonder that the prosperity of the Redeemer's cause, and the conversion of sinners to him, delight all those on earth, who are pure and upright in heart; seeing angels, who never sinned, “rejoice over one sinner that repenteth:” (Notes, and P. O. Luke xv. 1—10:) what then will be the joy, and mutual congratulations, and harmonious praises, which shall attend the final admission of all the redeemed to the full possession of their purchased inheritance!—Those who are taught of God, however great in the world, will count it their honour to attend on Christ our King, and to employ their wealth and influence for the good of his church. And such as leave all for him, shall be abundantly compensated even in this world, in new and spiritual relations, friends, and honours. To be a child of God, to be espoused to Christ, and made an heir of heaven, are the highest of all possible distinctions: this honourable race shall be continued and multiplied until the end of time, and at length shall possess and fill the earth; and thus shall the name of the Redeemer be remembered in all generations, and his people praise him for ever and ever. Amen, and Amen.

NOTES.

PSALM XLVI. *Title.* As the sons of Korah were principal singers in the sanctuary through successive generations, the title alone does not determine the date of this Psalm. It is not known by whom, or when, it was written: but the ancient opinion, that it was composed on occasion of the deliverance of Jerusalem from Sennacherib's invasion, is very probable; though some think it was composed by David, after his victories over the Ammonites and Syrians. (Note, xlvi. 1.) It is however, well adapted to the use of the church, especially on great emergencies, in every age.—When Luther received any discouraging news, he used to say, ‘Come, let us sing the ‘forty-sixth Psalm.’

Alamoth.] (Note, 1 Chr. xv. 20, 21.) ‘Alamoth is thought to be either some tune in common use, or some kind of musical instrument, unknown to us; in which young virgins, as some fancy, took a peculiar delight, and were wont to learn to play upon it, which they make the reason and original of its name.’ Bp. Patrick.—“Alamoth” signifies *virgins*.

V. 1—3. (Note, xxvii. 1—3.) The clause, “a very

^f xxiii. 4. xxvii. 3. ² Therefore ^f will not we fear, ^g though the earth be removed, and ^h though the mountains be carried into the ^{*} midst of the sea; ³ Though ⁱ the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though ^k the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah. ⁴ There is ^l a river, the streams whereof shall make glad ^m the city of God, ⁿ the holy place of the tabernacles of ^o the Most High. ⁵ ^p God is in the midst of her: ^q she shall not be moved: God shall help her, ^r and that right early. ⁶ ^s The heathen raged, ^t the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, ^u the earth melted. ⁷ ^v The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is ^w our Refuge. Selah. ⁸ ^x Come, behold the works of the LORD, ^y what desolations he hath made in the earth. ⁹ ^z He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; ^a he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; ^b he burneth the chariot in the fire. ¹⁰ ^c Be still, and ^d know that I am God: ^e I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. ¹¹ The LORD of hosts is with us; ^f the God of Jacob is our Refuge. Selah.

¹ xxiii. 4. xxvii. 3. Matt. viii. 24—26. Heb. xiii. 6. Gen. vii. 11, 12. Luke xxi. 9—11. 25—28. 33. 2 Pet. iii. 10—14. h Matt. xxi. 21. * Heb. heart of the seas. i xviii. 4. xciii. 3. 4. Job xxxviii. 11. Is. v. 30. xvii. 12, 13. Jer. v. 22. Matt. vii. 25. Rev. xvii. 15. k cxiv. 4—7. Judg. v. 4, 5. 1 Kings xix. 11. Job ix. 5, 6. Jer. iv. 24. Mic. i. 4. Nah. i. 5. Rev. xvi. 20. l xxiii. 2. xxxvi. 8, 9. Is. viii. 6, 7. xlviii. 18. Rev. xxii. 1. m lxviii. 1. 8. lxxxvii. 3. 2 Chr. vi. 6. Is. xxxvii. 35, 36. lx. 14. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xxi. 2, 3. n Deut. xii. 11, 12. o xci. 1. xcii. 1. 8. Ec. v. 8. Mic. vi. 6. p lxviii. 18. Deut. xxiii. 14. Is. xii. 6. Ex. xliii. 7. 9. Hos. xi. 9. Joel ii. 27. Zeph. iii. 15. Zech. ii. 5, 10, 11. viii. 3. Matt. xviii. 20. Rev. ii. 1. q lxii. 2. 6. cxii. 6. cxxv. 1. r ii. 1—4. lxxxiii. 2—8. 2 Chr. xiv. 9—13. xx. 1. 20—24. Is. viii. 9, 10. xxxvii. 21—36. s Is. xiv. 12—16.

^t lxviii. 8. xcvi. 5. Josh. ii. 11. Is. lxiv. 1, 2. Am. ix. 5, 13. Nah. i. 5. Hab. iii. 5, 6. 10, 11. 2 Pet. iii. 10—12. Rev. vi. 13, 14. xx. 11. u 11. Num. xiv. 9. 2 Chr. xlii. 12. Is. viii. 10. Matt. xxviii. 20. Rom. viii. 31. 2 Tim. iv. 22. v Heb. an high place for us. ix. 9. marg. x lxvi. 5. xcii. 4—6. cxi. 2, 3. Num. xxiii. 23. Ex. x. 7. xii. 30. xiv. 30, 31. Josh. xi. 20. 2 Chr. xx. 23, 24. Is. xxiv. 1. xxxiv. 2, &c. z Is. ii. 4. xi. 9. lx. 18. Mic. iv. 3, 4. a lxxxvi. 3—6. Ez. xxxix. 3, 9, 10. b Josh. xi. 6. 9. Mic. v. 10. c Hab. ii. 20. Zech. ii. 13. d lxxxiii. 18. c. 3. Ex. xviii. 11. 1 Sam. xvii. 46. 1 Kings xviii. 36. 2 Kings xix. 36. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 23. Rev. xix. 3, 4. e xxi. 13. lvii. 5. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Is. ii. 11, 17. v. 16. Ez. xxxviii. 23. Rev. xv. 3, 4. f 1. 7. xlviii. 3. Deut. xxxiii. 27. Jer. xvi. 19.

“present Help in trouble,” may be rendered more literally, “found exceedingly a Help in troubles;” or, “a Help most readily to be found in troubles.” The Psalmist’s experience, and that of all believers from the beginning, evinced it; and this encouraged his present unshaken confidence: whereas all who call on idols, or on any creature, to help them in trouble, are invoking the *absent*, as well as the *helpless*.—Earthquakes, and other terrible convulsions in nature, are often made emblems of great commotions in nations, the fall of empires, revolutions, and other public calamities. But if imagination should be employed to conceive of such desolations, as are not likely to be realized, in the full literal import of the terms here used, till the consummation of all things; still the presence and power of an almighty Protector and Upholder would suffice to secure the church and every true member of it: and strong faith would exclude terror even in the prospect of such tremendous scenes. (Notes, Is. xxv. 9. xxvi. 3, 4. 20, 21. xxxii. 16—20. Luke xxi. 25—28. 2 Pet. iii. 10—13.)

V. 4. Perhaps, the gentle streams which watered Jerusalem may be alluded to: (Note, Is. viii. 6—9:) but “the River of the water of life,” the graces and consolations of the Holy Spirit, which pervade every part of the church, the city of our God; and through which his sacred ordinances revive and rejoice the hearts of afflicted believers, are particularly intended. (Notes, Ex. xvii. 5, Ez. xlvii. 1—10. John iv. 10—15. vii. 37—39. Rev. xxii. 1.)

V. 5. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Is. xii. 4—6. Zeph. iii. 14—17. Zech. ii. 10—13. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.)—*Right early.* Or, “When the morning appeareth:” (marg.) that is, “In good time, when the help shall be most honourable to God and profitable to his people.” “God, when there is any danger, will send us seasonable and speedy relief against those that invade us.” Bp. Patrick. (Notes, cxxv. 1, 2.)

V. 6. Nothing can be more concise, energetick, and sublime than this verse. (Note, Ex. xv. 9, 10.)—Many deliverances afforded to Israel answer the description, espe-

cially that under Hezekiah: but the success of the gospel notwithstanding all opposition of every kind, and from every quarter, which melted away before the blessing of God on the preaching of the apostles and evangelists, was a singular accomplishment of it; (Marg. Ref.—Notes, ii. 1—6;) and it shall ere long have a still more glorious completion, in the destruction of every antichrist, and the universal prevalence of genuine Christianity.

V. 7. ‘The LORD of armies, the God of Jacob, who redeemed him from all evil, is with us his descendants, according to his promise: what then have we to fear?’—EMMANUEL, GOD WITH US, is in every age the Refuge and Protector of his church. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 8, 9. The Psalmist here calls on all people, to contemplate the wonders which God had wrought for his people, and the desolations which he had made among their powerful enemies: for he had made wars to cease to the ends of the earth, by disabling all who had delighted in them, and utterly destroying all their weapons and preparation of war. (Notes, 2 Kings xix. 35—37. 2 Chr. xx. 21—30.)—He will hereafter put an end to all wars, by the universal success of the gospel of peace; and this event also may be foretold. (Notes, Is. ii. 2—5. Mic. iv. 1—4. Rev. xx. 4—6.)

V. 10. God himself here speaks, and demands silent and adoring attention, and submission from the whole earth; and that they all should acknowledge, and bow down to, his universal, everlasting, and absolute sovereignty, if they would escape his awful vengeance. (Notes 2 Kings xix. 14—19. v. 19. Is. ii. 22. xxxiii. 10—13. Hab. ii. 20.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Those who have received Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour, and live in grateful obedience to him, make the power, wisdom, truth, and love of God, their “refuge and strength;” and in every urgent danger and trouble, they will find him a ready and a present Help. If our faith were as strong as our security is good, we need fear no combination of enemies, no revolutions in kingdoms, and no convulsions in nature; but in the most tremendous

PSALM XLVII.

^a Or, of ^{xvi.} title. The people are excited to rejoice in God, the universal Sovereign, who had given Israel victory and inheritance, 1—4. The ascension and kingdom of Christ are celebrated with fervent praises; and the conversion of the nations and their princes is predicted, 5—9.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm ^{*} for the sons of Korah.

O ^{*} CLAP your hands, all ye people; ^b shout unto God with the voice of triumph.

2 For the LORD most high ^c is terrible; *he is* ^d a great King over all the earth.

3 He shall ^e subdue the people under us, and the nations ^f under our feet.

4 He shall ^g choose our inheritance for us, the ^h excellency of Jacob, ⁱ whom he loved. Selah.

5 ^k God is gone up ^l with a shout, the LORD with ^m the sound of a trumpet.

6 ⁿ Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto ^o our King, sing praises.

7 For God is ^p the King of all the earth: ^q sing ye praises ^r with understanding.

^a xviii. 47. lxxxii. 14. Deut. xxxiii. 29. Marg. Josh. xxi. 44. Phil. iii. 21. ^b cx. 1. Josh. x. 24, 25. 1 Cor. xv. 25. ^c Deut. xi. 12. Jer. iii. 19. Ez. xx. 6. Matt. xxv. 34. 1 Cor. iii. 22. 23. Eph. i. 18. ^d 1 Pet. i. 4. ^e h xvi. 3. Is. lx. 15. Am. vi. 8. viii. 7. Nah. ii. 2. ^f Deut. vii. 6—8. xxxiii. 3. Hos. xiv. 4. Mal. i. 2. ^g Eph. ii. 4, 5. ^h 1 John iv. 9, 10. ⁱ k xxiv. 7—10. lxxviii. 17—19. 24, 25. Luke xxiv. 51—53. Acts i. 9. Eph. iv. 8—10. 1 Tim. iii. 16. ^j l lxxviii. 65. Num. xxiii. 21. 2 Sam. vi. 15. 1 Chr. xv. 28. m lxxxii. 3. cl. 3. Num. x. 1—10. Josh. vi. 5. 1 Chr. xv. 24. xvi. 42. 1 Cor. xv. 52. ^k 1 Thes. iv. 16. Rev. viii. 6, &c. xi. 15. ^l n xcvi. 1, 2. cxvii. cxlix. 1—3. Ex. xv. 21. ^m 1 Chr. xvi. 9. xxix. 20. Is. xii. 4—6. Eph. v. 18—20. ⁿ o cxlv. 1. Is. xxxiii. 22. Zech. ix. 9. Matt. xxv. 34. xxvii. 37. ^o p 2. 8. Zech. xiv. 9. Rev. xi. 15. ^p q 1 Cor. xiv. 14, 15. ^q † Or, every one that hath understanding.

dangers, might triumph in the fullest assurance of security and victory. Were we literally to behold the deep-rooted mountains torn from their foundations, and cast into the ocean, while its impetuous waves overflowed the banks, and deluged the earth; we should not only be safe, but might be happy, if, in communion with God, we drank of the river of divine consolations, which he has communicated to his holy church on earth, as an earnest of heavenly joys. Let us then pray for increase of faith, and be careful to lay up our treasures in heaven: thus, when the earth and all its works shall be burnt up, we shall have nothing to fear, or to lose. Happy are they, in every case, who are enrolled citizens of the holy city of our God, in which he dwells as a Father, a Defender, and a Comforter of his people. While the heathen rage, their faith and patience will indeed be tried; yet He will utter his voice, their enemies will perish, and they shall triumph in praise. But let the ungodly tremble at beholding the destruction of those, who have opposed the cause and people of God: ere long the Lord will convert or destroy every adversary; and “the nations shall beat their swords into “plow-shares and learn war no more.” Let us pray for the speedy approach of these glorious days; and, in silent reverence and submission, worship and trust in our almighty Sovereign. And through life and death, let us answer every fear by the believing consideration, that “the “LORD of Hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our Refuge.”

NOTES.

PSALM XLVII. V. 1—3. This psalm is generally ascribed to David, though his name is not affixed to it: and it is thought to have been composed when very great multitudes were assembled, to attend on the removal of the ark to the tabernacle on mount Zion. (Notes, 2 Sam. vi. 1 Chr. xv.) And as the ark was a type of Christ, the psalm has generally been applied to his ascension, after his humiliation on earth, to the right hand of God in heaven. Thus the ancient fathers understood it, and on this account it is appointed in our church to be read on Ascension-day. (Notes, xxiv. 7—10. lxxviii. 1—3. 15—18.)—A large congregation having been assembled, as at a solemn festival,

the Psalmist calls on them to express the overflowing joy of their hearts, by clapping their hands, and lifting up their voices in triumphant shouting: (Marg. Ref. a, b:) because the most high God, whom Israel worshipped, and who protected Israel, was terrible to his and to their enemies, and the great Sovereign of all the earth.—In the days of Joshua, and afterwards by David, he had destroyed, or subdued, the nations of Canaan and the adjacent countries, and brought them under the dominion of Israel: but these victories were only shadows of the spiritual triumphs of the church under her king Messiah; and at length all nations shall either be joined to her in subjection to Christ, or shall be destroyed. (Notes, Dan. ii. 44, 45. Rev. xi. 15—18.)—Terrible. (2) The same word (תָּרַס) is rendered *reverend*, cxi. 9.

V. 4. The goodly land of Canaan was selected for the inheritance of Jacob's posterity, who were especially favoured by God, and raised to a pre-eminence above other nations; and comparatively they were the excellent of the earth. But they have long been excluded from that country; which typified the present privileges and chosen inheritance of the true Israel, who are in reality what the Israelites were in external character. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 5. ‘God is gone up, by the special token of his ‘presence, into the holy place, with shouts of joy and ‘praise.’ Bp. Patrick.—If, however, we consider this, as prefiguring the ascension of Him, in our nature, who is “God over all, blessed for evermore;” and the acclamations of the heavenly hosts on that grand occasion; the whole appears far more interesting, and becomes in the highest degree animated and appropriate, as introductory to the repeated call to fervent praises. (Notes, lxxviii. 17—20. 24, 25. Luke xxiv. 50—53. Acts i. 9—12. Eph. iv. 7—10. Phil. ii. 9—11.)

V. 6, 7. Our King. (6) The Messiah is continually celebrated in the psalms as Israel's King; it is therefore most natural to interpret this expression of him in almost every part of them; which leads us to multiplied proofs that he is JEHOVAH, and the Lord of all. (Notes, ii. 4—6. xlv. 1—5. Zeph. iii. 14—17. Zech. ix. 9, 10. xiv. 6—9. Matt. xxv. 34—40.)—With understanding. (7) Maschil. (Marg.—Note, xxxii. title.)

¹ xlii. 27—29. **8** * God reigneth over the heathen : God sitteth upon * the throne of his holiness.

² ix. 4. xlv. 6, 7. **9** * The princes of the people are gathered together, *even* the people of the God of Abraham : for * the shields of the earth *belong* unto God : * he is greatly exalted.

PSALM XLVIII.

³ Gen. xvii. 7, 8. ⁴ Ex. iii. 6. 15. 1s. xli. 8—10. Matt. xxii. 32. Rom. iv. 11, 12. Gal. iii. 29. ⁵ lxxxix. 18. *Marg.* ⁶ xlvii. 10. The praises of God are celebrated, in connexion with the beauty and security of Zion, and the deliverances wrought for her, 1—8. The church praises God, and rejoices in him, and in her privileges, 9—14.

V. 8, 9. The manner in which the dominion over the nations of the earth as exercised by that God, who dwelt in the holy place, by the ark the symbol of his presence, above the mercy-seat, is here mentioned, seems a clear intimation of the calling of the gentiles into the church, in consequence of Christ's ascension. (*Rom.* xv. 12.)—All the principal persons, from the several tribes of Israel, “the people of the God of Abraham,” assembled to remove the ark, leaving the protection of their houses and families unto God, who accordingly was the Shield of the land. Thus when princes and rulers join themselves to the Lord Jesus, and use their authority and influence for the benefit of the church; God is greatly exalted, in becoming the Shield and Defender of their dominions.—Some, however, interpret the last clause to mean the rulers themselves; who, belonging to God, having their authority from him, and using it according to his command, become the *shields* of their people; and thus by their means God is greatly exalted and honoured among men. *The heathen.* (8) גוֹיִם: or “the nations;” over all the nations of the earth, and not only over Israel.—*The princes of the people.* (9) נְדִיבֵי עַמִּים. Or, “of the peoples” (*plural*). The rulers of other nations must be meant, as uniting with those of Israel: and this leads us to interpret the passage, of the conversion of the gentiles to the ascended Saviour, rather than of the typical transaction of the removal of the ark.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The universal and absolute sovereignty of our holy God would be most terrible to every sinner, were it not administered by his incarnate Son from a mercy-seat: but now, it is terrible to the obstinate workers of iniquity alone.—While his peculiar people express their confidence, gratitude, and joy, by every token of external exultation, and animate each other in his service; let sinners submit to his authority, and accept of his salvation, that they may share in this holy triumph. If we are the chosen people of God, and his love and grace have made us more excellent than our unbelieving neighbours; we may be sure that he has chosen for us a more honourable and excellent inheritance, than all the kingdoms of the world; and that he will prepare our souls for that inheritance, by every dispensation here on earth. Let us then confide in his wisdom, submit

A * Song and Psalm * for the sons of Korah.

^b **G**REAT is the Lord, and * greatly to be praised ^d in the city of our God, ^e in the mountain of his holiness.

² * Beautiful for situation, * the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, ^h on the sides of the north, ⁱ the city of the great King.

³ * God is known in her palaces for a Refuge.

⁴ For, ¹ lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together.

³⁵ k lxxvi. 1—5. cxxxv. 1. 2 Chr. xii. 7. xiv. 9—15. xx. 1, &c. 33—36. Zech. ii. 4, 5. 1 lxxxiii. 2—8. 2 Sam. x. 6. 16—19. Is. vii. 1. viii. 8—10. x. 8. xxix. 5—8. Rev. xvii. 12—14. xix. 19, 20. xx. 8, 9.

a xxx. title. * Or, cf. xlv. title. b lxxxvi. 10. xcix. 3, 4. cxlv. 3. cxlvii. 5. c lxxxix. 1—7. Neh ix 5. Rev. xv. 3, 4. xix. 5. d xlvii. 4. lxxxviii. 68. lxxxvii. 3. Heb. xii. 22. Rev. xxi. 2. 10—22. e xlvii. 8. xcix. 9. Is. ii. 2, 3. xxvii. 13. Jer. xxxi. 23. Obad. 17. Zech. viii. 3. Matt. xxiv. 15. f l. 2. Lam. ii. 15. Dan. xi. 16. g Is. lx. 15—20. lxxvi. 10. Ez. xx. 6. Mal. iii. 12. Heb. xii. 22. h Is. xiv. 13. i xlvii. 7, 8. Mal. i. 14. Matt. v. Is. iv. 5, 6. xxxvii.

to his will. and be thankful for his distinguishing mercy.—As angels and glorified saints worshipped the ascending Saviour, and welcomed him with shouts of joy and the trump of God: surely we on earth should join our praises with holy affections; and with understanding of his excellency and our obligations, that we may glorify him and edify others also. Our backwardness to this reasonable service must be overcome by repeated exhortations; and when our hearts are attuned to this holy worship, we should call on all around to unite in it: for he is our King, “and the King of all the earth.” “He reigneth upon the throne of his holiness,” which yet well consists with his plenteous mercy: all the heathen are his inheritance and property: may he hasten the time, when all kings shall serve him, and use their delegated authority to his glory! Then will “all the families of the earth be blessed in him,” and he will be greatly exalted: while, as the God of Abraham, he becomes their “Shield, and exceeding great Reward.”

NOTES.

PSALM XLVIII. V. 1. Many think, that this psalm was composed on account of the deliverance of Jerusalem from the power and rage of Sennacherib: but others are of opinion, that it is more exactly descriptive of the invasion of the land during the reign of Jehoshaphat, and the extraordinary triumph of him and his subjects over the kings who had confederated against him. (*Notes*, 2 Chr. xx. 1—30.) It is however evident, that it was occasioned by some remarkable interposition of God, in rescuing “the mountain of his holiness” from powerful assailants.

V. 2, 3. The situation of Zion, with the adjacent region, was very beautiful, and the glory and joy of the whole land: but the experience of her kings, from age to age, that God was their Refuge, and the Protector of their palaces, as well as of his own holy temple, was the peculiar honour of this holy city.—Zion is supposed to have been situated on the south side of the mountain; but the temple stood on the north side of it, and was its peculiar honour and distinction. (*Is.* xiv. 13.)

V. 4—7. The confederated kings of idolatrous nation were assembled to besiege Jerusalem; but the pious princes of Judah confided in God as their Refuge. Their invader therefore, when they approached the walls, were suddenly

^m Ex. xiv. 25. 5 They saw it, and so they marvel-
² Kings vii. 6, 7. led; ^m they were troubled, and hasted
ⁿ Ex. xv. 15, 16. away.
^o Is. xiii. 6-8
^p Dan. v. 6.

6 ⁿ Fear took hold upon them there,
 and ^o pain, as of a woman in travail.

7 Thou ^p breakest the ^a ships of Tar-
 shish ^r with an east wind.

8 ^s As we have heard, so have we
 seen in ^t the city of the LORD of hosts,
 in the city of our God: ^u God will esta-
 blish it for ever. Selah.

9 We have ^x thought of ^y thy lov-
 ing-kindness, O God, ^z in the midst of
 thy temple.

10 ^a According to thy name, O God,

intimidated, troubled, and put to flight, with terror and anguish, as a woman in travail; or as the affrighted mariners look at each other, when a furious east wind drives their stout and richly laden ship upon a rock, and dashes it in pieces. These effects could not be so much ascribed to the sight of Jerusalem's fortifications, as to the immediate power of God; even as the winds and waves are at his command. (*Marg. Ref.*)—‘Illustrations of this kind are sometimes introduced, by the sacred writers, with the mark of comparison; and frequently, as here, without it. The meaning evidently is, that as the east wind shatters in pieces the ships of Tarshish, so the divine power struck the heathen kings with terror and astonishment.’ *Bp. Horne.*

V. 8. The princes and people of Judah had often heard of the wonderful deliverances, which God had in former ages vouchsafed to Israel, as well as the encouraging promises and predictions sent to them by the prophets: but the recent events, of which they had been eye-witnesses, and the astonishing interposition of the God of armies in behalf of this chosen city, impressed them with a far more lively sense of these things, than they ever before had attained to. They were also encouraged, by this instance of the Lord's faithful and powerful protection, confidently to expect that he would establish Jerusalem in safety and prosperity through all generations.—As a prophecy, this must mean that city of the living God, of which Jerusalem was but a type: (*Notes, Gal. iv. 21—31. Heb. xii. 22—25. Rev. xxi.*) for Jerusalem was repeatedly taken, and at length it was given up to be “trodden under foot by the gentiles;” but the church of Christ is founded on a Rock, and God will certainly establish it for ever and ever. (*Notes, cxxv. 1, 2. Matt. xvi. 18.*)

V. 9. ‘We have waited in silent contemplation and patient hope, for thy loving kindness, with sacrifices and believing prayers, presented at thy temple; trusting in thy aid, and not in our own power or valour.’—This was the conduct of Hezekiah, amidst the menaces and blasphemies of Rabshakeh and Sennacherib. (*Notes, 2 Kings xviii. 17—37. xix. 2 Chr. xxxii. 1—22.*) Yet the conduct of Jehoshaphat and his subjects seems more exactly to accord to these words, than even that of Hezekiah. (*Notes, Chr. xx. 1—30.*)

V. 10. The “name” of God may, in this connexion,

so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth: ^b thy right hand is full of righteousness.

11 Let mount Zion rejoice, let ^c the daughters of Judah be glad, ^d because of thy judgments.

12 ^e Walk about Zion, and go round about her: ^f tell the towers thereof.

13 ^g Mark ye well her bulwarks, ^h consider her palaces; ⁱ that ye may tell it to the generation following.

14 For ^j this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our ^k Guide even unto death.

either mean the glorious perfections by which he was known to his people, and distinguished from all the idols of the heathen; or his title, as “the LORD of hosts,” “the God of Abraham, and the God of Israel.” (*Marg. Ref. a. Notes, Ex. iii. 14, 15. xxxiv. 5—7.*)—In both respects, the powerful protection afforded his people, and the righteous vengeance executed by his right hand on their insolent and impious invaders, would tend to make his praises celebrated, through the whole land, and indeed to the ends of the earth. (*Note, 2 Kings xix. 14—19. v. 19.*)

V. 11. This verse is in the future tense, and may literally be rendered, “Mount Zion will rejoice and the daughters of Judah,” (the other towns and cities dependent on Jerusalem,) “will be glad because of thy judgments;” as an anticipation, during the apparent danger, of victory and exulting praises, rather than as a subsequent exhortation. (*Notes, 2 Chr. xx. 12—25.*)

V. 12, 13. The people are here called on, to go round the city in solemn procession; and, while they joyfully praised and blessed the Lord, to mark all the towers, walls, and palaces; observing that not one of them had been in the least injured by their formidable invaders. This would tend the more deeply to impress their minds; and prepare them faithfully and diligently to preserve the memory of these interesting events, for the benefit of future generations. This exact survey of Jerusalem's walls and fortifications, to be transmitted to posterity, might also intimate, that they were typical of more permanent privileges; and they would after a time be demolished, that the things signified by them might remain for ever. (*Note, Heb. xii. 26—29.*)

V. 14. This verse, as the conclusion of a psalm, in which temporal deliverances, security, and privileges might appear to be exclusively celebrated, is a strong intimation, that spiritual and eternal blessings were also meant. It was before said, that God would establish Jerusalem for ever: but it is here added, in the most emphatical language imaginable, “This God,” who protects Jerusalem, “is our God,” or the Friend and Patron of his true people; and that “for ever and ever,” or “to all eternity:” “He will be our Guide unto death;” through all the sorrows and dangers of this world to the eternal blessings of heaven. (*Notes, xxiii. 1—4. lxxiii. 23—28. Heb. xi. 13—16.*)

PSALM XLIX.

The Psalmist calls on all mankind to attend to his instructions, 1—4. He shews that the righteous have no cause to fear in evil times, 5. He exposes the vanity of trusting in riches, 6—13. He contrasts the condition of the prosperous ungodly man, with that of the believer, especially in respect of death and the resurrection, 14—20.

* Or, of. xlvii. xlviii. titles.
a xxxiv. 11. lxxviii. 1. Prov. i. 20—23. Matt. xi. 15. xiii. 9. Rev. ii. 7. 11. 17. 29.
b 1. 1. Is. xlix. 6. Mal. i. 11. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Rom. iii. 29. x. 18.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm * for the sons of Korah.

HEAR this, all ye people; give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world:

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord is a great and glorious King, and worthy of universal and most exalted praises: but none on earth will render him this due honour, except the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, who worship him in the mountain of his holiness, as their God and Saviour. (*Notes and P. O. Gal. iv. 21—31.*) The beauty and glory of his church, which should be, and will eventually prove, “the joy of the whole earth,” are derived from his presence and love, and are the reflection of his uncreated excellences. Wherever there are princes or people who make God their Refuge, he will be known among them as such: for he will never disappoint the expectation of any who hope in his word. But, when kings and nations, however numerous and potent, confederate against his church, sudden terror and destruction will be their portion. We have heard and read of the works of God for Israel of old; and in the establishment of the gospel upon the ruins of idolatry: and if we wait for his loving-kindness in his holy temple, by persevering faith and prayer, we shall experience, in our measure, the same powerful supports and deliverances; and still more glorious things shall at length be accomplished, in order to establish Christianity throughout the whole earth.—The Lord will always act in perfect consistency with those glorious perfections, which, by means of his word, are made known and celebrated to the ends of the earth: the salvation of his people will be accompanied with righteous vengeance on his enemies; but every true believer may rejoice because of his judgments. Let us then diligently examine, and accurately mark, the security of the everlasting covenant, confirmed by the word and oath of the immutable God: let us consider that “his church is built upon a rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail;” and let us meditate upon his exceedingly great and precious promises, and the privileges enjoyed by every true believer. While we are thus encouraged by them to trust and serve the Lord, in perilous and difficult circumstances; let us point them out to our children, and to the rising generation: for this almighty and gracious God is the Portion and the Shield of every true Christian, through successive generations and to all eternity. He will guide us all, through life to death, and through death to glory; and in the city of our God above, we shall enjoy uninterrupted and unalloyed peace and felicity.

2 Both ^c low and high, rich and poor, together.

3 My ^d mouth shall speak of wisdom; and ^e the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.

4 ^f I will incline mine ear to ^g a praisable: I will open my ^h dark saying upon the harp.

5 ⁱ Wherefore should I fear in ^k the days of evil, when ^l the iniquity of ^m my heels shall compass me about?

^c lxxii. 9. 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. Job xxxiv. 19. Prov. xxii. 2. Jer. v. 4, 5. Jam. i. 9—11. ii. 1—7. Rev. vi. 15—17.
^d Deut. xxxii. 2. Job xxxiii. 3. 33. Prov. iv. 1, 2. viii. 6—11. xii. 17, 20, 21. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17.
^e xix. 14. xlv. 1. civ. 34. Matt. xii. 35.
^f lxxviii. 2. Matt. xiii. 35.
^g Num. xxiii. 7. Ez. xx. 49. Matt. xiii. 11—15.
^h Prov. i. 6. Dan. viii. 23. Luke xii. 3. 2 Cor. iii. 12. Is. xli. 10, 11. Acts xxvii. 24. Phil. i. 28. k Prov. xxiv. 10. Am. v. 13. Eph. v. 16. l xxxviii. 4. Prov. v. 22. Hos. vii. 2. m xxii. 16. lvi. 6, 7. Gen. xlix. 17. 1 Sam. xxvi. 20. i xxvii. 1, 2. xlvii. 1, 2.

NOTES.

PSALM XLIX. *Title.* The author of this psalm is not known. ‘But whosoever composed it, ... it is likely that he had in his eye, the unreasonable thirst of mankind after riches, and their insolence and haughtiness, when they have acquired them; which, it is possible, was a great discouragement to some pious but poor people in those times: and therefore ... he indited this psalm to check that vanity, by setting death before their eyes.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—It is not improbable that David wrote the psalm, and gave it to the sons of Korah; though the title may mean, as many think, that it was written by some of the sons of Korah. (*Note, xlvii. title.*)

V. 1—4. The Psalmist, in these verses, sublimely introduced his subject, by demanding an audience, from the whole human race, to a message which he would deliver unto them from God: and his important and universally interesting instruction, being written in the sacred scriptures, has already been proposed to innumerable multitudes, and will at length be heard by all the inhabitants of the earth, whether of noble or ignoble birth, whether rich or poor. (*Notes, 1. 4—6. lxxviii. 2. Deut. xxxii. 1, 2. Matt. xiii. 34, 35.*) As the prophet of God, he had first inclined his ear to his divine instructor: and finding the subject difficult, (because of the corrupt prejudices, aversion, and ineptitude of the mind of man to spiritual things,) and to require the closest attention, in order to a right understanding and explanation of it; he had carefully meditated on it before he spoke: and then he had formed it into poetry, and set it to musick; that sacred melody might be the vehicle of weighty instruction. (*Marg. Ref.*)

All ye people. (1) עַמִּים (plural): including all nations inhabiting the whole earth, as well as Israel.—*Both low and high.* (2) בְּנֵי אָדָם בְּנֵי אִשׁ. The sons of Adam, or man, as fallen, mean and low, and the sons of the noble, valiant, and distinguished among men.—*My dark saying.* (4) הַדָּרְחִי. *Note, 1 Kings x. 1, 2.*

V. 5. The old translation seems to give the true sense of this verse: “Wherefore should I fear in the evil days, when iniquity shall compass me about, as at mine heels.” ‘What cause is there, that I should be troubled with fears, and cares, and anxiety of mind, in calamitous times, when the iniquity of those who endeavour to supplant me hath surrounded me on all sides, and left me no way

n lli. 7. lxii. 10.
Job xxxi. 24.
Prov. x. 15.
xxiii. 5. Mark
x. 24. 1 Tim. vi.
17.

o Esth. v. 11. Jer.
ix. 23. Ez. xxviii.
4, 5. Hos. xii. 8.
Luke xii. 19.

p Matt. xvi. 26.
xx. 28. 1 Tim.
ii. 6. 1 Pet. i. 18.

q Job xxxvi. 18,
19.

r lxxxix. 48. Prov.
x. 2. xi. 4. Ec.
viii. 8. Zech. i.
5. Luke xvi. 22,
23.

s xvi. 10. John
viii. 51, 52. Acts
ii. 27. 31. xiii.
35—37.

t Ec. ii. 16. ix. 1,
2. Rom. v. 12—
14. Heb. ix. 27.

u lxxiii. 22. xcii.
6, 7. xciv. 8.
Prov. xii. 1.
xxx. 2. Jer. x. 8.

x 17. xvii. 14.
xxxix. 6. Ec. ii.
18, 19. 26. v. 13
—16. Jer. xvii. 11. Luke xii. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 6—10.
10. Luke xi. 39. Acts viii. 22.

6 They that ^atrust in their wealth,
and ^oboast themselves in the multitude
of their riches;

7 None of them can by any means
redeem his brother, nor ^pgive to God
a ransom for him:

8 (For ^qthe redemption of their
soul is precious, and it ceaseth for
ever:)

9 ^rThat he should still live for ever,
and not ^ssee corruption.

10 For he seeth *that* ^twise men die,
likewise ^uthe fool and the brutish per-
son perish, and ^vleave their wealth to
others.

11 ^yTheir inward thought is, *that*

their houses *shall continue* for ever, ^{*}Heb generation
and generation.
and their dwelling-places to ^zall ge-
nerations: ^athey call *their* lands after
their own names.

12 Nevertheless man *being* ^bin ho-
nour abideth not: he is ^clike the
beasts *that* perish.

13 This their way is ^dtheir folly:
yet their posterity ^eapprove their say-
ings. Selah.

14 ^fLike sheep ^gthey are laid in the
grave; ^hdeath shall feed on them; and
ⁱthe upright shall have dominion over
them in ^jthe morning; and ^ktheir
^lbeauty shall consume ^min the grave,
from their dwelling.

3. i xxxix. 11. Job iv. 21. † Or, strength. ‡ Or, the grave being an habi-
tation to every one of them. Job xxx. 23.

‘to escape them?’ *Bp. Patrick.* In the judgment of the best criticks, among whom is Bishop Lowth, the word, rendered as a substantive “my heels,” is a participle signifying “my supplanters.” ‘The purport of the question is ‘plainly this—Why should I give way to fear and despondency, in the time of calamity, when the wickedness of ‘my wealthy and powerful adversaries compasses me about, ‘to supplant and overthrow me?’ *Bp. Horne.*—When the consequences of a man’s sins overtake him, and he has no way to escape, he may well fear: but the believer has no occasion to fear the power or subtlety of his most malicious persecutors. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6, 7. (*Notes*, lli. 6, 7. lxii. 8—10. Job xxxi. 24—28. Jer. ix. 23, 24. Mark x. 17—31. v. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19.)—*A ransom.* (7) That is, an atonement, or expiation: for this is the literal meaning of the word (פָּדוּת). (*Note*, 1 Pet. i. 17—21.) Those, who glory and trust most in their riches, cannot with all their wealth satisfy divine justice, so as to ransom their nearest relative or best beloved friend from death, to which he is sentenced by the righteous Governor of the world: much less can they deliver his soul from hell. (*Note*, Matt. xvi. 24—28. P. O. 21—28.)

V. 8. *Precious.*] ‘Rare, or not to be found, as prophecy was precious in the days of Eli, 1 Sam. iii. 1.’ The price of redemption, whether of the life or soul, was too high for any mere man to pay: so that the ancient fathers referred the verse to Christ, in this sense, ‘No man can ‘redeem his brother, he alone excepted, who is also God.’ (*Marg. Ref.*)—Even a Jewish interpreter ‘understands ‘these words of the King Messiah, who, having died for ‘the redemption of his brethren, afterwards liveth for ‘ever, as was predicted by Isaiah, Is. liii. 10.’ *Bossuet*, quoted by *Bp. Horne.*

V. 9. ‘As long as the world endureth this will be a ‘vain endeavour.—Let him attempt it, if he please, upon ‘himself. Can he prolong his own life, ... that it shall be ‘perpetuated and never dissolved?’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, Prov. x. 2, 3. Ec. viii. 8. Luke xvi. 22, 23.) And if even this be a vain attempt, who can redeem or save his own immortal soul from the awful sentence of eternal punishment?—*See corruption.*] *Note*, xvi. 8—11.

V. 10. Every man may see, that the wise and learned of the world die, in the same manner as the foolish and stupid: and those, who have prospered in heaping up wealth, leave it all behind; perhaps to those for whom they never intended it, and who rejoice at their death. (*Notes*, xcii. 6, 7. Ec. ii. 12—23. v. 13—17. ix. 1—3. Luke xii. 15—21.)

V. 11. ‘Various are the contrivances of vain men, to ‘have their names written on earth, and to procure, after ‘death, an imaginary immortality for themselves and their ‘families, in the memory and conversation of posterity; ‘which is not often obtained, and if obtained is of no ‘value: when with less trouble, they might have secured ‘to themselves a blessed immortality in the kingdom of ‘their Redeemer.’ *Bp. Horne.* (*Notes*, Gen. iv. 16, 17. xi. 1—4. 1 Sam. xv. 12. 2 Sam. xviii. 17, 18.)

V. 12. The word (לָיַל) rendered “abideth,” signifies *to lodge all night*. Man’s continuance in the world, or in honour and distinction, resembles a traveller’s lodging at an inn, whence he removes in the morning; or is even still more precarious and transient. So soon must wealth and honour be relinquished, and the most honourable men die like the beasts that perish; except as distinguished by an immortal soul, and a future state of righteous retribution. (*Notes*, 20. lxxiii. 18—22. Ec. iii. 18—21. ix. 4—6. Heb. ix. 27, 28.)

V. 13. Some render the first clause, ‘This their way is ‘their confidence,’ meaning a rash and presumptuous confidence. ‘So close does this folly stick to mankind, that ‘they that succeed in their possessions make no benefit of ‘this observation; but are as very fools as themselves, and ‘tread in the steps of those that went before them.’ *Bp. Patrick.* Indeed, ungodly men from age to age, not only copy the example, but imbibe the principles, and adopt the maxims, of those who went before them in this path, as admired dictates of wisdom. (*Notes*, Matt. vi. 22, 23. Luke xvi. 14, 15. 1 Cor. iii. 18—23.)

V. 14. The most powerful and prosperous are soon carried into the grave, as sheep into the slaughter-house. There death feeds upon them, in silence and darkness, till “the morning” of the resurrection: then the upright, even poor oppressed believers will have the dominion over

^k xxxi. 5. ^{lv}. 3. 15 But ^k God will redeem my soul from the ^{*} power of [†] the grave: for he [†] shall receive me. Selah.

[†] Heb. *hand*. 16 ^m Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when ⁿ the glory of his house is increased;

^o Gen. xxxi. 1. 17 For when he dieth [°] he shall carry nothing away; ^p his glory shall not descend after him.

^o Job i. 21. Ec. v. 15. Luke xvi. 24. 1 Tim. vi. 7. p Is. v. 14. x. 3. 1 Cor. xv. 43.

their haughtiest persecutors. The grave will consume all the power, glory, and beauty of the wicked, which they possessed in their splendid earthly habitations; and meanness, deformity, and contempt will be their portion: while “the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” The word, repeatedly translated *the grave*, is often rendered *hell*, and probably means the unseen state, whether of body or soul. (Note, xvi. 8—11.) —“Christ’s coming is as the morning, when the elect shall ‘reign, with Christ their Head, over the wicked.’ Then all the beauty, splendour, and external decorations, which the most admired of the ungodly and affluent displayed in their palaces, will appear withered and gone; and they will be in all respects loathsome and contemptible. (Notes, 1 Cor. xv. 39—54. Phil. iii. 20, 21. 1 Thes. iv. 13—18. P. O. Mal. iii. close.)

V. 15. When the believer dies, his soul, redeemed by the Saviour’s blood, is received by him to glory; the life of his body shall also be restored; it shall be redeemed from the power of the grave, refined, and rendered incorruptible, and glorious. The Psalmist in this verse expresses a full confidence, both that his soul would be preserved from hell, and his body raised from the grave; being received by the Lord to be for ever with him. (Notes, xxxi. 5. lxxiii. 23—28. Luke xxiii. 39—43, John xiv. 2, 3. Acts vii. 54—60. 2 Tim. i. 11, 12.) If this be left out, or indeed not distinctly and fully taken into the account, what does the solemn exordium of the psalm introduce? (Note, 1—4.) For no other important distinction between the righteous and the wicked, in respect of happiness, is mentioned, or even intimated.

V. 16, 17. ‘Be thou not troubled, nor dismayed, ... whosoever thou art that hearest or readest this, when thou ‘seest a worldly man grow very rich, and great honours ‘heaped on his family; which enables and emboldens him ‘perhaps to use the meaner sort contemptuously.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, xxxvii. 1—9. lxxiii. 2—14.) When he dies, ‘nothing shall attend him, but his shroud to the ‘grave, and his works to the judgment-seat. View him ‘in this light, which is the proper light to view him in, and ‘he will cease to be the object of fear or envy.’ Bp. Horne. (Note, 1 Tim. vi. 6—10.)—Worldly men count wealth and magnificence *their glory*: (Gen. xxxi. 1:) but holiness, being the moral image of God, is the true *glory* of our rational nature; and this will accompany us to heaven.

V. 18. Prosperous sinners count themselves happy, and promise themselves much enjoyment for many years to come; and such is mankind, that those who succeed in ambitious or covetous pursuits, or who live in luxury and splendour, will be sure to find foolish and selfish admirers

18 Though [‡] while he lived he [‡] blessed his soul: and *men* ^r will praise thee, when thou doest well to thyself.

19 ‘He shall go ^s to the generation of his fathers; they shall ^t never see light.

20 ^u Man *that is* in honour, and ^x understandeth not, ^y is like the beasts *that* perish.

u 12. Esth. v. 11—14. vii. 10.

x Job iv. 21.

[‡] Heb. *in his life*.
^q Deut. xxix. 19.
^r Hos. xii. 8.
^s Luke xii. 19.
^t 1 Sam. xxv. 6.
^u Esth. iii. 2. Acts xii. 20—22. Rev. xiii. 3, 4.
^v Heb. *The soul shall go*. Ec. iii. 21. xii. 7. Luke xii. 20. xvi. 22, 23.
^w Gen. xv. 15.
^x 1 Kings xvi. 6.
^y Job xxxiii. 30. Matt. viii. 12. xxii. 13. Jude 13.
^z lxxiii. 18, 19.

and flatterers. (Notes, 1 Sam. xxv. 3—6. v. 6. Esth. v. 9—14. Acts xii. 20—23.) ‘Who will commend thee too, if ‘thou wilt imitate him’ (the luxurious worldly man) ‘in indulging thine own appetite, and denying nothing ‘to thyself and companions: but doing no good to any ‘body else.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 19. “The soul shall go, &c.” (Marg.) Death will convey one generation after another from the *light* of this world; and how awful are the words, “They shall not see ‘light for ever!’” (Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 17. Jude 11—13.) This fully proves, that the Psalmist was assured, the righteous would “see light” after death, and for ever. (Note, xxxvi. 5—9.)

V. 20. He who in prosperity has no understanding to use the gifts of God to his glory, but abuses them in wickedness, willingly renounces the grand distinction between a rational creature, and the beasts that perish. As to this world, he gratifies his appetites and inclinations, and dies, as they do: but “after death is the judgment.” (Note, 12.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The important truths, which relate to the eternal state of the righteous and the wicked, are equally interesting to all the inhabitants of the earth, “both high and low, rich “and poor, together.” Blessed be God, they are plainly proposed to us in his holy word; and had it not been for man’s dislike to such subjects, they would have been universally heard and understood.—‘At the call of folly, what ‘multitudes are always ready to assemble! But Wisdom, ‘eternal and essential Wisdom, crieth without; she lifteth ‘up her voice in the streets; and who is at leisure to attend her heavenly lectures? The “mouth” of Jesus ‘always “spake of wisdom;” but few regarded him: the ‘“meditation of his heart” was ever “of understanding;” ‘but it was accounted madness.’ Bp. Horne.—We should, however, still endeavour to illustrate and enforce these important instructions, by every method which can soften prejudice, or gain attention: especially by shewing their influence on our own hearts, in mortifying covetousness, ambition, envy, and discontent, and all selfish and sensual passions; in raising us above the fear of man, and rendering us constant and cheerful in doing the will and professing the truth of God, amidst the successful enmity of persecutors or oppressors.—How general, yet how absurd and infatuated, is it, for men to boast of their riches, and trust in them! to pursue them as the one thing needful, if they have a prospect of acquiring them; and to repine and murmur, if they have not! Yet it is most evident, that wealth can neither prolong the life, nor save the soul, of the possessor, or of his most beloved relative: and had not the ransom of the death of Christ intervened, the body

PSALM L.

The mighty God comes in awful majesty from Zion, to judge his people, in the sight of the assembled world, 1—4. He commands that the saints be gathered to him; and declares that the heavens shall declare his righteousness, 5, 6. He delights not in legal sacrifices, but in spiritual worship, 7—15. Hypocrites are rebuked and silenced, 16—21. The ungodly are solemnly warned, and salvation is promised to the upright, 22, 23.

of every sinner must have finally been left in the grave, and his soul in hell; for “the redemption was too precious” to be otherwise effected, and “must have been let alone for ever.” And as we see that neither wealth nor worldly wisdom will exempt any man from dying; and that all such acquisitions must shortly be relinquished for ever; how vain are all our anxious cares and labours! What good will it do any man, to have his name perpetuated on earth, when he has no name in the registers of heaven? Thus foolish are the thoughts and ways of ungodly men. Yet one generation after another applauds their maxims: and the character of a fool, as drawn by heavenly wisdom itself, continues the favourite model for imitation, in the judgment of a vast majority even of professed Christians! (*Note, Luke xii. 15—21.*) Death alone can convince men in general of the folly of laying up treasures upon earth: and were there no future state, the most wealthy and honourable would soon be leveled with the beasts that perish: but in the prospect of the resurrection and of eternity, the most prosperous of the wicked are infinitely more wretched and base. In this light, let the believer view the riches and the children of this world, that he may not be tempted to envy or impatience, or to fear evil consequences to himself and to the church of God, when sinners grow rich and honourable. Soon will they die, and carry nothing away with them of all their splendour and magnificence. Though they foolishly congratulate themselves, and others applaud them, as having done well for themselves; yet they are going to “the generation of their fathers, and shall never see light;” for to them “is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.” But the real Christian, when he dies, is for ever delivered from sin and sorrow; his soul is received to glory; his body shall be redeemed from the grave, and raised incorruptible and glorious. His inheritance is in heaven; and in the resurrection, he will sit in judgment on those who here oppressed and persecuted him. (*Notes, 1 Cor. vi. 1—6. Rev. iii. 20—22.*) And is there a rational creature, who can prefer the lot of the rich sinner to that of poor Lazarus? (*Notes, Luke xvi. 19—31.*) yet is not this more than brutish stupidity universal to the human race, if left to themselves? What need then have we of revelation and of the teaching of the Holy Spirit; when, with all our boasted powers, we are prone to such infatuation, in the most important of all concerns! O Lord, deliver us from the love of the world, and teach us to set our affections on things above! (*Note, Col. iii. 1—4.*)

NOTES.

PSALM L. Title. “Hezekiah ... commanded the Le-

A Psalm * of Asaph.

THE ^a mighty God, ^b even the LORD, ^c hath spoken, and ^d called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.

2 ^e Out of Zion, ^f the perfection of beauty, ^g God hath shined.

3 ^h Our God shall come, and shall

Matt. xxv. 32. e Is. xii. 6. xxvi. 21. Hos. v. 15. Hab. ii. 20. Heb. xii. 22—26. f xlviii. 2. lxxxvii. 2, 3. xc. 17. Cant. v. 16. Zech. ix. 17. g lxxx. 1. Deut. xxxiii. 2. Hab. iii. 3, 4. Rev. i. 16. xxi. 23. h xlviii. 14. lxxviii. 20.

* Or, for Asaph. lxxiii.—lxxxiii. titles. 1 Chr. xv. 17. xvi. 37. xxv. 2. 6. 2 Chr. xxix. 30. a cxi. 3—6 Gen. xvii. 1. Josh. xxii. 22. Neh. ix. 6. 32. Jer. x. 6. xxxii. 19. b 1 Kings xviii. 21. 36, 37. Is. xxxvii. 20. liv. 5. c Is. i. 2. Am iii. 8.

“vites to sing praise unto the LORD with the words of “David, and of Asaph the seer.” (2 Chr. xxix. 30.) Hence it appears that Asaph was a prophet, and wrote some Psalms, and probably this among the rest. Some expositors, however, are of opinion, that “Asaph the seer” was a different person from Asaph the Levite, who was one of the chief singers in the days of David; (*Marg. Ref.*) that he lived at a later period; and that it is not unlikely he was contemporary with Hezekiah, and referred in this Psalm to the hypocrisy of the Jews in general, even during Hezekiah’s reformation.—But, at whatever time the Psalm was composed, the instructions contained in it are of general importance and utility. It is a most sublime poem; and is generally supposed to predict the coming of Christ, the abolition of the Mosaic dispensation, and the introduction of Christianity; with the condemnation of the Jews, especially of the Scribes and Pharisees, for rejecting it. But the judgment executed upon Jerusalem prefigured the awful proceedings and consequences of the general judgment: and the Scribes and Pharisees may be considered as the parents of a numerous progeny of superstitious, formal, and hypocritical professors and teachers of Christianity, who will be condemned at that solemn day.

V. 1, 2. In the preceding Psalm all the inhabitants of the world were addressed *in the name of God*: (*Note, xlix. 1—4*;) but here the mighty God (or “the God of gods,” *Note, Josh. xxii. 21—29*;) JEHOVAH himself, is introduced with inexpressible solemnity; and all the inhabitants of the earth, as well as his people Israel, are summoned to attend. His august tribunal, however, is not placed on mount Sinai, whence he delivered his fiery law; but on mount Zion, where his glory was manifested above the mercy-seat and the ark of the covenant, which prefigured his gracious gospel. Accordingly, Zion is here called “the perfection of beauty:” as reflecting the uncreated glory and excellency of JEHOVAH, who thence shines forth in the perfect harmony of all his divine attributes.—Indeed, the words “perfection of beauty” may be referred to God himself; who appears in the gospel, at once infinitely glorious and infinitely lovely. (*Notes, xxvii. 4—6. xc. 13—17. Cant. v. 10—16. Zech. ix. 17. 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18. iv. 5, 6.*)—*Shined.* (2) *Marg. Ref. g.*

V. 3. (*Note, 16—21.*) God is said to “keep silence,” when he exercises long-suffering, and does not immediately punish men for their sins. (*Notes, Is. xlii. 13—17. v. 14. lxv. 3—7. Acts xiv. 11—18. xvii. 30, 31.*) Thus he long bore with the provocations and hypocrisy of Israel; as he still bears with the corruptions and abominations of professed Christians, and with the wickedness of mankind in general. But the time was approaching when he would no

not ¹ keep silence. ^k a fire shall devour before him, and ¹ it shall be very tempestuous round about him.

4 He shall ^m call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may ⁿ judge his people.

5 ^o Gather ^p my saints together unto me; those that have ^q made a covenant with me by sacrifice.

6 And ^r the heavens shall declare his righteousness: for ^s God is Judge himself. ^t Selah.

7 ¶ ^u Hear, ^v O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, and ^w I will testify against thee: ^x I am God, even thy God.

8 ^y I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices or thy burnt-offerings, ^z to have been continually before me.

9 I will ^b take no bullock out of thy house, ^c nor he-goats out of thy fold.

10 For ^e every beast of the forest is mine, ^d and ^e the cattle upon a thousand hills.

11 I ^e know all the fowls of the mountains: and ^f the wild beasts of the field ^g are ^h mine.

12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for ⁱ the world is mine, and ^j the fulness thereof.

13 Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?

14 ⁱ Offer unto God thanksgiving; and ^k pay thy vows unto the most High:

15 And ^l call upon me in the day of trouble: ^m I will deliver thee, and thou shalt ⁿ glorify me.

longer keep silence, but would come to execute vengeance on the guilty: and though his tribunal would be placed in Zion; yet his coming would be attended with those terrible displays of majesty, justice, and holiness, with which the law was given from mount Sinai. (*Marg. Ref. k. Notes, Ex. xix. 16—20. Deut. v. 22—27. Heb. xii. 18—21.*) Thus when Christ came among the Jews, though in the character of a Saviour, they could not “abide the day of his coming;” and his righteous indignation, like unquenchable fire, burnt up the chaff; that is, he destroyed by awful judgments the bulk of the nation, which persisted in rejecting him. (*Notes, Mal. iii. 1—6. iv. 1. Matt. iii. 7—12.*) But his second coming to judge the world, to perfect the salvation of his people, and to punish the wicked, will be attended with still more tremendous displays of his power and justice, especially against such as neglect, oppose, or pervert and corrupt his gospel.—‘The Jewish rabbies affirm the subject of this Psalm to be, that judgment which will be executed in the days of Messiah:—‘ignorant, alas! that they themselves, and their people, are now become the unhappy objects of that judgment.’

Bp. Horne.

V. 4—6. All the inhabitants of heaven, as well as of earth, shall be summoned to witness the proceedings of their omnipotent Sovereign; and they will all concur in declaring, that his decisions are perfectly wise and righteous.—The whole human race indeed must appear in judgment: yet the professed worshippers of God, who have his oracles and ordinances among them, are chiefly spoken of, in all the descriptions given us in Scripture of that solemn season; because these descriptions were especially given for their instruction, warning, or encouragement. (*Notes, Matt. xxv. 31—46. Rom. ii. 7—16. 1 Cor. iv. 3—5. 2 Cor. v. 9—12. 2 Thes. i. 5—10. Rev. xx. 11—15.*)—The “saints” may mean those who are really such, and who are interested in the new covenant, through the sacrifice

of the great Redeemer. These were separated from among the unbelieving Jews, before vengeance was executed on the nation: and they will be gathered together by the holy angels, previously to the condemnation of the wicked at the last judgment.—(*Marg. Ref. o, p.*) But some think that *professed saints* are meant, many of whom trusted to the national covenant with Israel, through the appointed sacrifices, and would at length be convicted of substituting a form, instead of the power of godliness.—As “the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son;” it must be sufficiently manifest, who it is, of whom it is said, “For God is judge himself,” even Emmanuel, the second person in the sacred Trinity, “God manifest in the flesh.” (*Notes, li. 16, 17. xcvi. 11—13. John v. 20—27.*)

V. 7—15. The Israelites in general confided, and gloried, in their relation to JEHOVAH as *their* God. And indeed they were peculiarly favoured by him, and were bound by every tie to worship and serve him only, and to expect their whole happiness from him. But this external profession, when insincere, could not secure them from his wrath: nay, “God, even *their* God,” would speak and testify against them. They were also prone to place their chief dependence on legal sacrifices, without attending to their typical import, or offering them in a proper frame of mind: thus they mistook the shadow for the substance, and at length were condemned for that perverse mistake, when they persisted in rejecting the Messiah: for these sacrifices, when thus offered in unbelief, pride, and hypocrisy, were abominable to God. (*Notes, Prov. xv. 8, 9. Is. i. 10—15. lviii. 1—7. lxvi. 3, 4. Jer. vii. 1—7. 21—23. Am. v. 21—24. Rom. ii. 17—29. Heb. x. 26, 27, former part.*) To lead their minds therefore to an attention to the more inward and essential parts of religion, and to prepare them for a more spiritual dispensation; they were here instructed, that the Lord’s controversy with them

Is. xliii. 23, 24. Mic. vi. 6—8. Acts xvii. 25. c viii. 6—8. civ. 24, 25. Gen. i. 24, 25. ii. 19. iii. 17. ix. 2, 3. 1 Chr. xxix. 14. —16. Job xl. 15. &c. Jer. xxvii. 5. 6. Dan. ii. 38. d civ. 14. Gen. xxxi. 9. Jon. iv. 11. e civ. 12. cxlvii. 9. Gen. i. 20—22. Job xxxviii. 41. xxxix. 13—18. 26—30. Matt. vi. 26. x. 29—31. Luke xii. 24. f Is. lvi. 9. Ez. xiv. 15, 16. * Heb. with me. g xxiv. 1, 2. cxv. 15, 16. Ex. xix. 5. Deut. x. 14. Job xli. 11. 1 Cor. x. 26. 28. h civ. 24. cxlv. 15, 16. Gen. i. 11, 12. 28—30. viii. 17. i 23. lxix. 30, 31. cvii. 21, 22. cxlvii. 1. Hos. xiv. 2. 1 Thes. v. 18. Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 5. 9. k lvi. 12. lxxvi. 11. cxvi. 12—14. 17. 18. Lev. xxvii. 2, &c. Num. xxx. 2, &c. Deut. xxiii. 21. Ec. v. 4, 5. Nah. i. 15. l lxxvii. 2. xci. 15. cvii. 6. 13. 19. 28. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. Job xxii. 27. Luke xxii. 44. Acts xvi. 25. Jam. v. 13. m xxxiv. 3, 4. lxvi. 13—20. Luke xvii. 15—18. n 23. xxii. 23. Matt. v. 16. John xv. 8. 1 Pet. iv. 11. 14.

o Is. xlviii. 22. Iv.
6, 7. Ez. xviii.
27.

p Prov. xxvi. 7.
Is. i. 15. xlviii.
1, 2. lviii. 1—7.
Jer. vii. 4—7.
Matt. vii. 3—5.
22, 23. Acts xix.
13—16. Rom. ii.
17—24. 1 Cor.
ix. 27. 2 Pet. ii.
15.

q xxv. 14. lxxviii.
36—38. Ez. xx.
37, 38. Heb. viii.
9.

r Prov. i. 7. 28.
29. v. 12, 13.
viii. 36. xii. 1.
John iii. 20.
Rom. i. 28.
2 Thes. ii. 10—
12. 2 Tim. iv.
3, 4.

s Neh. ix. 26. Is.
v. 24. Jer. viii.
9. xviii. 12. xxxvi. 23, &c.
Eph. v. 11—13.
9—11. Prov. ii. 16—19. vii. 19—23. Jer. v. 8, 9. Heb. xiii. 4.
1 Tim. v. 22. t Heb. sendest. lii. 2—4. Jer. ix. 5. x v. 9. x. 7. xii. 2, 3.
xxxvi. 3, 4. lv. 12. 21. lxiv. 3—5. Is. lix. 3, 4. Hos. iv. 2. Rom. iii. 13, 14. Jam. iii. 5
—9. Rev. xxi. 8. y xxxi. 18. Matt. v. 11. Luke xxii. 65.

16 ¶ But unto ° the wicked God saith, ° What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or *that* ° thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?

17 Seeing thou ° hatest instruction, and ° castest my words behind thee.

18 When thou sawest a thief, then ° thou consentedst with him, and ° hast been ° partaker with adulterers.

19 Thou ° givest thy mouth to evil, and ° thy tongue frameth deceit.

20 Thou sittest *and* ° speakest against

thy brother; thou ° slanderest ° thine own mother's son.

21 These *things* hast thou done, and ° I kept silence; thou ° thoughtest that I was altogether *such an one* as thyself: *but* ° I will reprove thee, and ° set *them* in order before thine eyes.

22 Now ° consider this, ye that ° forget God, lest ° I tear *you* in pieces, and *there be* ° none to deliver.

23 ° Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: ° and to him that ° ordereth *his* conversation *aright*, will I shew ° the salvation of God.

Lev. xix. 16. Prov. x. 18. 1 Tim. iii. 11. Tit. ii. 3. Rev. xii. 10. a Matt. x. 21. b 3. cix. 1—3. Ec. viii. 11. Is. xxvi. 10. lvii. 11. Rom. ii. 4, 5. c lxxiii. 11. xciv. 7—11. Num. xxiii. 19. Is. xl. 15—18. d 8. Prov. xxix. 1. Rev. iii. 19. e xc. 8. Ec. xii. 14. Am. viii. 7. 1 Cor. iv. 5. f Deut. xxxii. 18. Ec. vii. 14. Ez. xviii. 28. Hag. i. 5. Luke xv. 17. ix. 17. x. 4. Job viii. 13. Is. li. 13. Jer. ii. 32. Hos. iv. 6. h Hos. v. 14. xiii. 8. Rev. vi. 16. k 14, 15. xxii. 23. lxxxvi. 9. 12. Rom. xii. 1. xv. 6. 9. Gal. i. 24. l xxiv. 4, 5. xxv. 14. lxxxv. 9. John vii. 17. viii. 31, 32. Acts x. 2—4. xi. 14. xiii. 26. m xc. 16. Is. xii. 2. xlv. 17. xlix. 6. li. 5, 6. Luke ii. 30.

would not be about the omission of sacrifices, except as that arose from perverseness and rebellion. The time was approaching, when he would take no bullock or he-goat from them, requiring none but spiritual sacrifices. They could not surely be so gross as to suppose, that he wanted their cattle, seeing he was the sole Proprietor of all things: or imagine that he would “eat the flesh of bulls, “or drink the blood of goats!” Such sacrifices therefore could not be acceptable to him, except as expressions of repentance, faith, and love. On the other hand a humble, thankful heart, disposed to worship and praise God, (to “sacrifice unto God thanksgiving,” Note, Heb. xiii. 15, 16;) and to fulfil the engagements implied in the profession of being his people, as well as the vows made in the days of distress; and to confide in him and seek help from him in trouble, by earnest prayer, were sacrifices suited to his holy nature. This spiritual worship, springing from a penitent believing heart, and connected with humble submission and obedience, was the grand substance of true religion, even under the Mosaick dispensation; and would be the substance of that which was about to succeed: and worshippers of this character would be accepted and delivered, and would render glory and praise to God for temporal mercies, and eternal salvation. (Marg. Ref. i—n.)—This passage was evidently intended as an intimation, that the ceremonial law would be abrogated at the coming of the Messiah; as well as an encouragement to prayer and praise.

V. 16—21. Multitudes of the strictest professors and teachers of the Jewish church were, not only superstitious and formal, (and so either blind guides or blindly led,) but even atrociously wicked; and yet they cloaked their crimes with apparent zeal. (Notes, Matt. xxiii. 14—33.) Thus in all ages many love the credit of being called Christians, and the dignity of instructors, who “hate instruction;” and many discourse on the word of God with their lips, who pour contempt upon it in their lives. While they zealously plead for some parts of divine truth, they secretly, nay, perhaps openly, indulge themselves in lewdness, dishonesty, and in wicked and deceitful conversation, and the basest slander and calumny; especially against those who are strictly conscientious, and such pious persons as, being near to them, put them to shame by their example.

Indeed, in this manner they often excuse their crimes, and even think they have compensated for them, by their earnestness in promoting what they suppose to be the cause of God. But the righteous Judge disdains such hypocrites, and abhors their religious profession and preaching, even more than their theft, adultery, and lies; because they tend more to disgrace the gospel, and to prejudice or deceive the souls of men. “What have they to do to declare “his statutes, or to take his covenant in their mouths?” His cause needs not such helpers; he never sent nor employed them; and they must expect his vengeance as their recompence. Such were the scribes and chief priests, who were scrupulously zealous about externals, while they were full of rapine and covetousness; and were seeking to murder the holy Jesus, by bearing false witness against him before Pilate, in the most atrocious manner. The whole of this strange delusion arises from a perverse construction, put upon the long-suffering of God: (Notes, Ec. viii. 11—13. Rom. ii. 4—6;) and a wilful mistake of his character and the intention of his gospel: as if the methods of his grace, the doctrines of his word, or the ordinances of his worship, were *substituted in the stead of a holy life*, and afforded men the licence to indulge their lusts with impunity! But the Jews of old were reprov'd, convicted, condemned, and punished with the most dreadful severity, on these accounts: and so will all the superstitious, formal, hypocritical, enthusiastick, or antinomian abusers of the gospel; when the day of judgment shall come, and the secrets of men shall be judged by Jesus Christ.—*Consentedst, &c.* (18) Or, “Hadst pleasure in him.” (Note, Rom. i. 28—32, conclusion.) *Kept silence.* (21) Note, 3.

V. 22, 23. The Psalmist in conclusion warns all of every description, “who forget God,” (which is the cause of every fatal error and daring crime,) to consider the account which they must give, and to “flee from the wrath “to come;” for when the Almighty should appear as their enemy, no deliverer could possibly be found. He also encourages the upright to offer their humble tribute of grateful praise; with which God will be glorified, through the promised Redeemer, notwithstanding their deficiencies: (Notes, Col. iii. 16, 17. 1 Pet. ii. 4—6, conclusion;) and in a circumspect and conscientious conversation, to wait for a fuller discovery and experience of God's salvation; or, as

PSALM LI.

David earnestly prays for mercy, humbly confesses his sins, and laments his original depravity, 1—6. He intreats forgiveness, sanctification, and renewed com-

the last clause may be understood, to look for the coming of their promised Saviour. (*Notes*, 7—15. xxiv. 3—6.)—According to the concluding words of these verses, no man “ordereth his conversation,” or conduct, “aright,” who trusts in his own works, and does not seek “the salvation of God;” none seeks that salvation properly, who is not conscientious in his whole conduct; and none, who unites the two, fails of salvation.—The Latin version of Beza is very striking: ‘*Qui componit viam, faciam ut is fruatur salute Dei*.’ ‘Him, who disposes,’ or regulates, ‘his conduct, I will cause to enjoy the salvation of God.’ The preventing grace of God leads a man, like Cornelius, to regulate his conduct piously and uprightly, and to wait for God’s salvation in this way; and the promise ensures to such a person the enjoyment of that salvation. (*Notes*, *Acts* x. 1—8. 34, 35.)—What a noble view does this psalm give of God and of Revelation! God stands forth as the Parent, the Lord, and the Judge of all, and the Saviour of all who trust in him; exercising a universal providence, soliciting us to make him our Refuge, to worship and serve him, promising us his reward and favour.—And in the Old Testament itself which enjoins so many ceremonies, how little intrinsick value is there ascribed to them, compared with spiritual worship and ordering the conversation aright!

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15.

The almighty and eternal JEHOVAH has spoken to men from mount Sinai as a Lawgiver, and from mount Zion as a Saviour: and ere long he will speak to the whole human race from his righteous tribunal. This solemn season will be to sinners “the day of wrath, and revelation of the “righteous judgment of God,” while heaven and earth will approve the sentence denounced against them. But those who have been favoured with the blessed gospel, in which the beauty and glory of all the divine perfections shine forth in the face of Jesus Christ, and who have neglected or abused it, will hear the most tremendous doom. Happy are they, who are saints indeed! who have acceded to the covenant of grace by faith in the Redeemer’s atoning sacrifice, and who have shewn the sincerity of their love by the fruits of righteousness! These shall first be severed from among the wicked, and announced heirs of eternal life.—But let us beware of resting in any form: even divine truths and institutions may be held and attended on in unrighteousness; and God will testify against his own professed people, who trust to their outward privileges, and frequent his sacraments in pride, superstition, or self-righteousness. He demands the heart, and will not be put off with an unmeaning external observance: how then can human inventions please him, when repentance, faith, and holiness are neglected?—We cannot offer unto God any thing, which he has not bestowed upon us, nor any thing which can profit him: so that the notion of *meriting* from him is replete with ignorance, as well as arrogance. (*Note* and *P. O.* 1 *Chr.* xxix. 10—19.) As the Jews and their costly oblations were abhorred, when

fort, that he may glorify God and promote the conversion of sinners, 7—15. He shews, that God delights more in a contrite heart, than in legal sacrifices, 16, 17. He prays for the prosperity of the church, 18, 19.

they rejected him, of whom Moses and their prophets had written; so will attendance on the ordinances of Christianity be rejected, and even moral obedience itself, if substituted in *his* place: and no *spiritual* services can be performed, except by faith in him, and by the supply of his Spirit. To be sensible of our own indigence, dependence, and unworthiness; to seek every thing from the all-sufficient God by faith and prayer; to render him the tribute of a thankful heart; to perform the vows implied in baptism and the Lord’s supper; (*Note*, lvi. 12. *P. O.* *end*;) and to call upon him in every time of trouble, as our only Refuge and Friend; are reasonable sacrifices, and suited to him, who “is a Spirit, and seeketh such to worship him, as “worship him in spirit and truth.” (*Note*, *John* iv. 21—24.) Those, who thus worship, “glorify God:” and every answer to prayer, received with gratitude, forms an earnest of their eternal salvation.

V. 16—22.

If ignorant formalists, though not grossly immoral or profane, are under a dangerous delusion, what will be the doom of those, who understand, profess, and preach the truths of God; attend on, and even administer, his ordinances, and speak of his everlasting covenant; while they hate instruction, despise his commandments, and are companions with thieves, adulterers, liars, slanderers, and false swearers? Yet how many such professors and teachers of Christianity disgrace the present age! How many such scandals are found even among those, who are zealous for the doctrines of grace! nay even among popular and admired preachers. And how strangely are they connived at, and enabled to keep up their confidence, as if the Judge of the world were altogether such a one as themselves! Indeed their present impunity emboldens them to expect, that they shall always escape. But the Judge will come, and will strip off their masks, and reprove, convict, and condemn them. He will “set in order” before them, and publish to the world, what they have done; he will say to each of them, ‘See what thou hast wrought!’ while the pages which record their crimes shall be read to their confusion; and they will be speechless, when sentenced to “depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and “his angels.” Let us then judge ourselves, and beware of hypocrisy: let ministers see to it, that they preach first to themselves, and love and practise their own instructions: let every one enquire, whether he be indeed “allowed of God “to be put in trust with the gospel;” or whether he run without being sent. It is evident beyond all doubt, that God abhorreth and will never allow of those, who presume to declare his truths, while they are living in the love and habitual practice of gross sin, and take pleasure in those who do; and then slander and revile their more pious brethren, because not of their party, and because their example puts them to shame. If any have hitherto been thus forgetful of God, or given up to wickedness, let them consider their urgent danger: for if the Judge appear against them, who then can rescue them from his almighty indignation? He now warns, that he may not punish: let

a 2 Sam. xii. 1—13.
b 2 Sam. xi. 2, &c.
c xxv. 6, 7 cix. 21. cxix. 124. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Num. xiv. 18, 19. Dan. ix. 9. 18 Mic. vii. 18, 19. Rom. v. 20, 21. Eph. i. 6—8. ii. 4—7.
d v. 7. lxix. 13. 16. cvi. 7. 45. Is. lxiii. 7. 15. Marg Lam iii. 32.
e xl. 11. lxxvii. 9. cxlv. 9.
f 9. Neh. iv. 5. Is. xliii. 25. xlv. 22. Jer. xviii. 23. Acts iii. 19. Col. ii. 14.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, ^a when Nathan the prophet came unto him, ^b after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

HAVE mercy upon me, O God, ^c according to thy loving-kindness; according unto ^d the multitude of thy ^e tender mercies, ^f blot out my transgressions.

2 ^g Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and ^h cleanse me from my sin.

3 For ⁱ I acknowledge my transgressions, and ^k my sin is ever before me.

4 ^l Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* ^m evil in thy sight; ⁿ that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear ^o when thou judgest.

g 7. Ez. xxxvi. 25. Zech. xiii. 1. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Heb. ix. 13, 14. x. 21, 22. 1 John i. 7—9. Rev. i. 5 vii. 14. h 7. xix. 12. i xxxii. 5. xxxviii. 18. Lev. xxvi. 40, 41. Neh. ix. 2. Job xxxiii. 27. Prov. xxviii. 13. Luke xv. 18—21. k xl. 12. Is. lxx. 12. Jer. iii. 25. l Gen. ix. 6. xx. 6. xxxix. 9. Lev. vi. 2—7. 2 Sam. xii. 9, 10, 13, 14. Jam. ii. 9—11. m Gen. xxxviii. 7. 2 Kings xviii. 17. xxi. 6. n 1. 4. 6. Luke vii. 29. Rom. iii. 4. 19. o Acts xvii. 31. Rom. ii. 5. Rev. xv. 3, 4. xvi. 5. xix. 11.

us then thankfully embrace his gospel, and praise him for his mercy; and, endeavouring to glorify him in word and deed, wait for his complete and eternal salvation.

NOTES

PSALM LI. *Title.* (Notes, 2 Sam. xi, xii. 1—12.) When Nathan had delivered his message, we may suppose that David retired to his chamber full of confusion, remorse, and anguish; and there poured forth his soul before God in unreserved confessions and fervent prayers. And considering his rank, his age, and a variety of circumstances relating to his family, to persons disaffected to his government, and to his character among the surrounding nations; it might have been thought expedient for him to be satisfied with these secret acts of contrition and devotion, with humbling himself before God by fasting and prayer, and with “bringing forth fruits meet for repentance:” especially as God had already remitted the sentence of temporal death, to which the law condemned him. (Note, 2 Sam. xii. 13.) But he viewed the subject in another light, when brought to reflect seriously on his conduct, and its probable consequences. The honour of God and of true religion was deeply concerned, and with it the best interests of very great multitudes: nor did there appear any other way, in which the bad effects of his crimes could be so thoroughly prevented, as by his publicly taking the deepest shame to himself, for having acted directly contrary to that holy religion which he professed. Zeal for the glory of God and love to his people having now revived, and gained the ascendancy in his heart, united with deep self-abhorrence, and a kind of indignation against himself; he seems to have resolved without delay, whatever might be the consequences to himself and his reputation, to publish to his family, his subjects, the world at large, and all future generations, the judgment which he now entertained of his late behaviour, in the substance of his secret confessions and supplications; and the way in which, with deep anguish and distress, he sought forgiveness and salvation. —He therefore not only composed this psalm for his private use, or to shew his friends, or leave among his writings; but he gave it to “the chief musician,” that it might form a part of the publick Psalmody at the tabernacle, and in consequence be circulated through all the land, and among other nations; and continue in the church, with his other sacred poems, for the instruction and warning of mankind in all future ages. Nothing, all circumstances considered, can be conceived more humiliating than such a measure; nothing could more decidedly shew how much he preferred the honour of God to his

own credit; in short, nothing could more decidedly manifest the depth of genuine repentance. (Note, 1 Sam. xv. 30, 31.)

V. 1, 2. The “mercy” of God, his “loving-kindness,” his “tender mercies,” “the multitude of his tender mercies,” form the only plea, which the royal penitent admits in seeking forgiveness of his heinous crimes. He does not once mention his former services in the cause of religion; or palliate his conduct, by the peculiar temptations of his high rank, and the customs of princes; or plead that he was inadvertently betrayed into it, and led on by imperceptible degrees, step by step: (Notes, 1 Sam. xv. 15. 24, 25. Prov. xxviii. 13. Luke xv. 17—19:) but, as a vile and miserable sinner, with many repetitions and an accumulation of words, energetically expressing his inmost thoughts and feelings, he dwells on the only cheering thought his case allowed of; and intreats, that God would, “to the praise of the glory of his grace,” forgive his sins, as a debt which when remitted is blotted out; (Notes, 9. Is. xliii. 22—25. xlv. 22. Eph. i. 3—8. Col. ii. 13—15;) and, as the stain was beyond expression deep, that he would thoroughly wash and cleanse it all away. (Notes, 7. Is. i. 16—20. Ez. xxxvi. 25—27. Zech. xiii. 1. John xiii. 6—11. 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. Tit. iii. 4—7. Rev. i. 4—6. vii. 13—17.) The language is taken from the washings and purifications of the Mosaic law; and shews that the Psalmist fervently prayed to be cleansed from the pollution, as well as the guilt of his sins; that he was aware no outward forms or endeavours of his own could effect this cleansing; and that he sought this blessing through the redemption and grace of the promised Saviour. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 3. (Notes, xxxii. 1—5.) While David endeavoured to cover his sins, to conceal or excuse them, he could not, sincerely and heartily, seek forgiveness from God, as an act of unmerited mercy and grace, and even contrary to his deservings. And this seems to have been his state of mind before Nathan came to him: but now “being come to himself,” he is deeply conscious of his most heinous guilt; and confesses it openly and ingenuously, with all its aggravations: nay, the remembrance of his complicated atrocious crimes seems to haunt him continually, and his conscience incessantly reproaches him; so that he can by no means exclude the most distressing reflections. Thus he “submits to the righteousness of God, owns that he deserves to perish, and is prepared, if spared, to ascribe the whole honour of salvation to the rich mercy and grace of God alone. (Notes, 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. Job xxxiii. 27—30. Jer. xxxi. 18—20. Luke xv. 17—21. 1 John i. 8—10.)

V. 4. ‘It is thy prohibition, O God, that can make a

p lviii. 3. Gen. v. 3. viii. 21. Job xiv. 4. xv. 14—16. John iii. 6. Rom. v. 12. Eph. ii. 3. Heb. warm. q xxvi. 2. cxxv. 4. Gen. xx. 5, 6. 2 Kings xx. 3. 1 Chr. xxix. 17. 2 Chr. xxxi. 20. 21. Prov. ii. 21. Jer. v. 3. John iv. 23, 24. 2 Cor. i. 12. Jam. iv. 8. r v. 9. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Job xxxviii. 36. Luke xi. 39. Rom. vii. 22. s Job xxxii. 8. Jer. xxxi. 33. xxxii. 40. 1 Pet. iii. 4.

5 Behold, ^p I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother ^{*} conceive me.

6 Behold, ^q thou desirest truth in ^r the inward parts; and ^s in the hidden ^t part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

7 ^t Purge me with hyssop, ^u and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be ^v whiter than snow.

8 ^v Make me to hear joy and gladness; ^w that ^x the bones ^y which thou hast broken may rejoice.

cxvi. 5, 6. Matt. v. 4. z vi. 2, 3. xxxviii. 3. Job v. 17, 18. Hos. vi. 1, 2. Luke iv. 18. Acts ii. 37—41. xvi. 29—34. t Lev. xiv. 4—7. 49—52. Num. xix. 18—20. Heb. ix. 19. u Heb. ix. 13, 14. 1 John i. 7. Rev. i. 5. x Is. i. 18. Eph. v. 26, 27. Rev. vii. 13, 14. y xlii. 5. xxx. 11. cxix. 81, 82. Is. lvii. 15—18.

‘sin. I have sinned against men, but it is thy law that ‘I have violated, in that is my offence.’ *Bp. Hall.*—‘If ‘thou shouldst pronounce the heaviest sentence upon me ‘for my crimes, and execute it with the greatest severity, ‘I could not accuse thee of too much rigour; but must ‘still justify thee in thy proceedings, and clear thee from ‘all such unjust imputations.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—David’s crimes had deeply injured Bathsheba, Uriah, Joab and the other accessories to Uriah’s murder, the men slain with him, their families, and the nation; and they were likely to occasion most fatal consequences in various ways to great numbers in different nations, and all succeeding ages. (*Notes*, 2 Sam. xi. 6—17. xii. 14.) Yet the chief malignity of his conduct consisted in this; that it was a complication of most daring rebellions against the great and glorious Governor of the world; contempt of His majesty, excellency, and righteous law; a most ungrateful return for immense obligations; and an apostasy in heart from God, through idolatrous love of worldly pleasure. (*Notes*, 2 Sam. xii. 9, 10.) Indeed no words can express the heinousness and aggravations of his guilt when thus weighed: and this view seems to have possessed and overwhelmed his mind to such a degree, as to make every other consideration appear comparatively as nothing. Even before the law was given, God himself stated that the grand malignity of murder consisted in its being an assault on man, whom he created in his own image. (*Note*, Gen. ix. 5, 6.)—Crimes in civil society, which are injurious to individuals, are yet punished as violations of the laws of the land, done against the king and the peace of the realm: such are called, ‘Pleas ‘of the Crown;’ and high treason is the chief crime in every land. David indeed was not accountable for his conduct to any human tribunal: he had carefully concealed his transgressions from man; but he was sensible that the Lord had witnessed the whole, and would bring it to light. He therefore found himself constrained to plead guilty, to the most humiliating charges of guilt and depravity, brought against mankind in general, which were contained in the word of God; for he was convinced that *his* base conduct, after all his peculiar advantages and zealous profession of religion, would abundantly justify those declarations of the entire wickedness of the human heart; and fully confute the blasphemous censures, which ungodly men ventured to pass upon the government of God, and upon his denunciations and judgments, as if unjust and severe. Thus, in every sense, the case of David, when well understood, is suited to justify God in all his declarations, and to vindicate his whole government from every aspersion. (*Notes*, Gen. vi. 5. viii. 20—22. Job xv. 14—16. Rom. iii. 3, 4.)

V. 5, 6. David was the offspring of lawful and honourable marriage; nothing is intimated against his father Jesse in the sacred oracles, and he repeatedly speaks of his

mother as “the hand-maid of the Lord:” (*Notes*, lxxxvi. 16. cxvi. 16:) yet, having received from his parents Adam’s fallen nature with all its evil propensities, he confesses that he was conceived and shapen in iniquity. (*Marg. Ref.*)—His late dreadful fall evinced the depravity of his heart: and in these instances he had only acted according to its corrupt bias; being in himself naturally prone to rebellion against God. (*Marg. Ref.* p. *Notes*, Gen. v. 3. Job xiv. 1—6. xxv. Eph. ii. 3.) This he confessed in deep humiliation; yet it by no means followed, that the Lord should relax in his requirements, because of the depraved propensities of his apostate creatures.—His perfect law requires *entire* truth, purity, and love in the heart and conduct; and in this alone he delights; and *sincerity* from the inmost soul, in repentance, faith, and renewed obedience, is requisite even according to the gospel. This the Psalmist had been taught, before his transgressions: “in the hidden part the LORD *had* made him to know wisdom,” which was a great aggravation of his guilt, in that he sinned against knowledge, conscience, and the peculiar obligations conferred on him. If we read the clause in the future tense, as in our translation, and as it stands in the Hebrew, it expresses the Psalmist’s hope and prayer, that the Lord would, notwithstanding his guilt and depravity, graciously and by his effectual inward teaching, communicate to him true wisdom, and enable him to know and do what he required and delighted in.—‘I am so far from representing ‘this’ (my innate propensity to evil,) ‘as an excuse for ‘what I have done; that I confess the consideration of ‘it ought to have made me the more watchful and diligent, ‘to suppress those bad inclinations, which I knew to be ‘so natural. ... I am amazed at my folly, that I should be ‘so careless; when I was not ignorant that thou requirest ‘us not to entertain, with the least kindness, those first ‘motions which we find in our thoughts and desires after ‘any evil, but uprightly to oppose them.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, Jam. i. 13—18.)—*Desirest.* (6) ^{וְהִשְׁתַּדַּלְתָּ}: *delightest in.*

V. 7. The *hyssop*, employed in sprinkling the blood of the sacrifices, (as it is generally thought,) in the offerings of the cleansed leper; and in sprinkling the water of purification; represented the efficacy of faith, in applying to the soul the blood of Christ for pardon, and the influences of the Holy Spirit for sanctification. (*Num.* xix. 18. —*Notes*, Ex. xii. 22, 23. xxiv. 6—8. Lev. xiv. 4—7. Ez. xxxvi. 25—27. Heb. ix. 18—23.) Thus David prayed to be completely cleansed from all sin, both as to its guilt and pollution, that he might be as if he had never sinned: and thus believers will at length be made equal to the angels, who are arrayed in spotless robes of innocence, whiter than the snow itself. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, Rev. vii. 13—17.)

V. 8. A man, who has fallen from a precipice, and broken his bones, when he comes to himself will feel ex-

^a Is. xxxviii. 17. ⁹ ^a Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. ^b ¹⁰ ^c Create in me ^d a clean heart, O God; and ^e renew a ^f right spirit within me. ¹¹ ^g Cast me not away from thy presence; and ^h take not thy ⁱ Holy Spirit from me. ¹² ^j Restore unto me ^k the joy of thy salvation; and ^l uphold me with thy ^m free Spirit. ¹³ ⁿ Then will I teach transgressors

^a Is. xxxviii. 17. Jer. xvi. 17. Mic. vii. 18, 19. ^b 1. Col. ii. 14. ^c 2 Cor. v. 17. Eph. ii. 10. ^d 1xxiii. 1. Prov. xx. 9. Jer. xlii. 27. xxxii. 39. Ez. xi. 19. xviii. 31. xxxvi. 25—27. 37. Matt. v. 8. Acts xv. 9. 1 Pet. i. 22. ^e Rom. xii. 2. Eph. iv. 22—24. Col. iii. 10. Tit. i. 5. ^f Or, constant. lxxviii. 8. 37. Josh. xiv. 14. 1 Kings xv. 3—5. Acts xi. 23. 1 Cor. xv. 58. Jam. i. 8. ^g f xliii. 2. lxxi. 9. 18. Gen. iv. 14. 2 Kings xiii. 23 xvii. 18—23. xxiii. 27. 2 Thes. i. 9.

quisite torture, and be utterly disabled for the present; and probably will be reminded of his fall as long as he lives. Thus David had, through unwatchfulness, been induced to commit the most heinous wickedness: and though, by the abundant mercy of God, he was preserved from that final destruction which he had justly merited; yet he experienced such anguish of conscience, and such a sense of the divine displeasure, and met with such severe rebukes from the Lord, that he felt as if all his bones had been broken: he was full of pain and anguish; he was crippled, and disabled from his former employments. He hoped, however, and prayed that “the God of salvation” would restore his peace and comfort; and thus set his broken bones, and even cause them to rejoice. (Notes, 12, 13. xxxviii. 4—10. Is. lxi. 1—3. Hos. vi. 1—3.)

V. 9. (Note, 1, 2.) ‘The soul, still restless and uneasy, reiterates her request, that God would not only cease to behold her iniquity for the present, as a man who turneth away his face from a writing; but that he would not behold it more, as a man who blotteth out what is written, so that it can never be read again.’ Bp. Horne. (Marg. Ref. e. Note, 1, 2.)

V. 10. The production of a holy disposition in a sinner’s heart,—the forming him to a spiritual judgment and taste, a submissive will, a pure imagination, and well regulated affections,—is a “new creation:” even as if Satan, by almighty power, should again be made a holy angel. This state of the understanding and heart is “a right spirit,” it is reasonable and excellent, such as all intelligent beings should possess, and it is absolutely necessary to true liberty and felicity. Man originally possessed it; but it was lost by the fall: and where it is again produced, it is the “renewal of a right spirit.” This is begun in regeneration, and carried on by progressive sanctification, and completed in glory. When the sinner is deeply convinced that such a change is necessary, and that he is unable to work it in himself; and when he reads the promises of God to this purpose, (Notes, Ez. xi. 17—20. xviii. 30—32. xxxvi. 25—27,) he asks it from God: and every discovery of remaining sinfulness leads the believer to renew this supplication; and thus the change is gradually effected till it be finally completed.—The margin, however, renders it, “Renew a constant (נָכוֹן, established) spirit within me.” Holy angels are established in a right spirit; and so are “the spirits of just men made perfect.” Even on earth real Christians have in a measure, this constant, established spirit: but hypocrites are unstable. David had experienced the inconstancy of his heart; and was sensible, that even if pardoned and restored, he should, in case he were left to himself, be again drawn aside; and he prayed earnestly for that constancy, which might enable him, “with pure pose of heart to cleave unto the Lord.” (Notes, 12, 13.

sence; and ^g take not thy ^h Holy Spirit from me.

¹² ^j Restore unto me ^k the joy of thy salvation; and ^l uphold me with thy ^m free Spirit.

¹³ ⁿ Then will I teach transgressors

Gen. vi. 3. Judg. xiii. 25. xv. 14. xvi. 20. 1 Sam. x. 10. xvi. 14. 2 Sam. vii. 15. Is. lxiii. 10, 11. Luke xi. 13. John xiv. 26. Rom. i. 4. viii. 9. Eph. iv. 30. i lxxxv. 6—8. Job xxix. 2, 3. Is. lvii. 17, 18. Jer. xxxi. 9—14. k xlii. 5. xli. 1. xxxv. 9. Is. xlix. 13. lxi. 10. Luke i. 47. Rom. v. 2—11. l xvii. 5. xix. 13. cxix. 116, 117, 133. Is. xli. 10. Jer. x. 23. Rom. xiv. 4. 1 Pet. i. 5. Jude 24. m Rom. viii. 15. 2 Cor. iii. 17. Gal. iv. 6, 7. n xxxii. 5. 8—10. Luke xxii. 32. John xxi. 15—17. Acts ii. 38—41. ix. 19—22. 2 Cor. v. 8—20.

Num. xiv. 24. Josh. xiv. 6—15. Acts xi. 23, 24. 1 Cor. xv. 55—58. Jam. i. 5—8.)

V. 11. Eternal banishment from the gracious presence of God, under his wrath and curse, constitutes a principal part of the misery of hell: (Note and P. O. Matt. xxv. 41—46:) and something like this misery may be felt on earth, even by the believer, when, excluded from comfortable communion with God, he finds his heart oppressed with the sense or dread of deserved wrath. This heaviest of all afflictions David deprecated.—The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, when he was rejected from being king, and an evil spirit from God troubled him: (Note, 1 Sam. xvi. 14:) and David feared the same sentence for his more atrocious crimes, as in some respects they certainly were. All his sufficiency, as the prophet of God, as his anointed king, and as the Psalmist of Israel, was derived from the Holy Spirit: and all his comfort and usefulness must terminate, if the Holy Spirit should be finally taken from him. It is indeed maintained, and, as it appears to me, on scriptural ground, that the spirit of life and sanctification is never finally taken from believers: but, even in this case, their comforts may expire in despondings, their credit in disgrace, and all their gifts and usefulness may wither and be lost to the end of life; and they cannot, in such circumstances, distinguish themselves from hypocrites.

V. 12, 13. “The joy of God’s salvation,” arises from a persuasion and perception of the mercy and grace of God, according to his promises; of the nature and glory of his salvation, as revealed in the Scriptures; of its suitableness to the sinner’s wants, its freeness, and sufficiency; from a prevailing confidence of an interest in this mercy; and from communion with God, and the exercise of faith, hope, admiring, adoring, grateful love, and all other holy affections, as springing from the Spirit of sanctification. The raptures and ecstasies peculiar to the prophets were of a very different nature, and arose from the sublime discoveries made to them in dreams or visions, and they did not always imply holiness of heart: whereas “the joy of salvation” is the common privilege of the regenerate, according to the degree of their faith and grace; and it belongs to no one else. (Marg. Ref. k.) This joy David had often experienced, but he had lost it by sin: that loss he deeply and humbly regrets; and he earnestly prays for the restoration of his joy: for it cannot subsist, unless the conscience be kept tender, the heart watchful and spiritual, and the will submissive; and unless communion with God be maintained, and the Holy Spirit not grieved, or quenched by gross misconduct. But the royal penitent likewise feared, that even should he recover this holy joy, he should again lose it, if left to himself; and therefore he earnestly prayed, that God would “uphold him with his free Spirit” The Holy Spirit may be thus called, because he is freely

o xxv. 4. 8. Is. ii. 3. Acts xiii. 10. p xix. 7. Is. vi. 10. Jer. xxxi. 18. Matt. xviii. 3. Acts iii. 19. xv. 3. xxvi. 18—20. Jam. v. 19, 20. q xxvi. 9. lv. 23. Gen. ix. 6. xlii. 22. 2 Sam. iii. 28. xi. 15—17. xii. 9. xxi. 1. Heb. bloods. Ez. xxxiii. 8. Hos. iv. 2. Acts xviii. 6. xx. 26. r xxxviii. 22. lxviii. 20. lxxxviii. 1. Is. xii. 2. xlv. 17. Hab. iii. 18. s xxxv. 28. lxxi. 15—24. lxxxvi. 12, 13. t Ezra ix. 13. Neh. ix. 33. Dan. ix. 7. 16. Rom. x. 3. u Gen. xlii. 16. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Ez. xvi. 63. Matt. xxii. 12. Rom. iii. 19. x Ex. iv. 11. Ez. iii. 27. xxix. 21. Mark vii. 34. y lxiii. 3—5. cxix. 13. Heb. xiii. 15. z 6. Ex. xxi. 14. Num. xv. 30, 31. xxxv. 31. Deut. xxii. 22. † Or, *that I should give it.* a xl. 6. 1. 8. Prov. xv. 8. xxi. 27. Is. i. 11—15. Jer. vii. 22, 23. Am. v. 21—23. Heb. x. 5, 6.

*thy ways; and sinners shall be 'converted unto thee.

14 ^a Deliver me from * blood-guiltiness, O God, thou ^r God of my salvation: *and* ^a my tongue shall sing aloud of ^t thy righteousness.

15 ^u O Lord, ^r open thou my lips; and ^y my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16 For thou ^z desirest not sacrifice; [†] else would I give *it*: ^a thou delightest not in burnt-offerings.

17 ^b The sacrifices of God *are* ^c a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, ^d thou wilt not despise.

18 ^e Do good in ^f thy good pleasure unto Zion: ^g build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then shalt thou be ^h pleased with ⁱ the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt-offering, and whole burnt-offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

f Luke xii. 32. Eph. i. 5. 9. Phil. ii. 13. 2 Thes. i. 11. lviii. 12. Dan. ix. 25. Mic. vii. 11. Zech. ii. 5. v. 2. i iv. 5. Mal. iii. 3.

b cvii. 22. Mark xii. 33. Rom. xii. 1. Phil. iv. 18. Heb. xiii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 5. c xxxiv. 18. cxlvii. 3. 2 Kings xxii. 19. Is. lvii. 15. lxi. 1—3. lxvi. 2. Ez. ix. 3, 4, 6. Matt. v. 3. Luke xviii. 11—14. d xxii. 24. cii. 17. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. Am. v. 21. Luke vii. 39 —50. xv. 2—7. 10. 21—32. e xxv. 22. cii. 16. cxxii. 6—9. cxxxvii. 5, 6. Is. lxii. 1, 6, 7. Jer. li. 50. 2 Cor. xi. 28, 29. g Neh. ii. 17. Is. cxviii. 27. Eph.

bestowed on sinners through the gracious Saviour: but this epithet seems rather to mean, that the sanctifying Spirit sets the soul at liberty from sin and Satan, produces a noble, ingenuous, and liberal disposition, and teaches us to serve and worship God, as children and not as slaves. (Notes, Rom. viii. 1, 2. 14—17. 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18. Gal. iv. 4—7. 2 Tim. i. 6—8.) Thus comforted and upheld, David purposed yet again to teach sinners the ways of God, of peace, and holiness; and by using his influence for this purpose, and warning and encouraging them by his experience, he trusted that he should lead many to “repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.” (Notes, xxxii. 6, 7. Mark v. 14—20. Luke xxii. 31—34. 1 John i. 1—4.)

V. 14. The guilt of *murder* as it were haunted David's mind, and he was still praying for the removal of it from his conscience. And if he might but obtain this blessing from “the God of his salvation,” though dreadful judgments had been denounced against him and his family for his crimes; he yet engaged to be open in vindicating the justice of God in these dispensations, even if connected with his own deep disgrace.—Some expositors indeed explain the words to mean that he would celebrate that *righteousness*, by which sinners who believe are accounted righteous before God, or the faithfulness of God to his promises: but the former meaning appears to me more satisfactory.

V. 15. Conscious guilt had stopped David's mouth, when he attempted, as formerly, to shew forth the praises of God, or to plead his cause: but he trusted that the comforts of his pardoning love, and the returning influences of his Holy Spirit, would open his mouth, and give him confidence and liberty on these favourite topicks. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 16. Murder and adultery were by the law punishable by death; and therefore no sacrifices were appointed to be offered by those who were guilty of them. The Lord would not accept, and did not desire, any sacrifices in David's case: indeed he had no *delight* in sacrifices and burnt-offerings *for their own sake*; but merely as shadows of the true atonement, and expressions of a penitent, believing, thankful heart. (Notes, xl. 6—8. 1. 7—15.)

V. 17. The legal sacrifices were continued above a thousand years after this time, as types of the Redeemer's atoning sacrifice. Indeed a broken heart can do nothing

towards *meriting* forgiveness. But a humble spirit, *broken* off from all self-dependence and the love of sin, and crushed down into deep self-abasement and abhorrence, is a spiritual sacrifice pleasing and honourable to God: for he, who is enabled to present this oblation, unreservedly submits to the justice of God; casts himself, without plea or excuse, upon his free mercy; thankfully accepts of his salvation; and will walk according to it, in all humble obedience, and patient submission to the will of God. This broken and contrite spirit man despises, as mean and contemptible; and the possessor is apt to deem it unmeet to be presented to his offended Sovereign: but God will never despise nor reject such an unequivocal effect of his own renewing grace. (Notes, xxxiv. 18. 2 Kings xxii. 15—20. Is. lvii. 15, 16. lxvi. 1, 2. Ez. ix. 3, 4. Matt. v. 3. 2 Cor. vii. 9—11.)

V. 18, 19. David feared lest his guilt should render him as an *Achan* in the congregation of Israel: (Notes and P. O. Josh. vii. 10—18:) and therefore he concluded his penitential prayer, with intreating God to protect and prosper Zion; that the ordinances of his house might be administered to his glory, and the edification of his people. (Marg. Ref. e. g.) For though the Lord delighted not in burnt-offerings, for their own sake; yet as they were sacramental prefigurations of the Messiah's atonement; as they were acts of worship, and means of grace, and thus subserved the interests of true piety; and as they were accompanied by other sacrifices of righteousness, he was pleased with them. (Marg. Ref. h, i.)—‘Thus it ought to be the fervent prayer of every man, especially...in any exalted station,...that no sins, by him committed, may any way prejudice others, or obstruct the edification of the church.’ Bp. Horne.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—4.

If the most eminent believer ceases to watch and pray, nay, becomes more remiss and formal, than he once was; Satan may at length obtain such advantages against him, that for the time he shall seem perfectly fascinated and stupified: but the Lord will at length, by sharp rebukes, or most painful corrections, bring him to himself; and the depth of his humiliation will be proportioned to the heinousness of his sins. But the hypocrite is durably callous; and his religious profession and opinions are perversely employed, in excusing his crimes, and buoying up his pre-

PSALM LII.

David contrasts the deceit and malice of Doeg, with

sumptuous confidence.—The true penitent, even if before his fall he had been eminently holy and useful, has nothing to plead, except his own misery and the Lord's abundant mercy. For the more we are enabled to do in his service, the greater are our obligations: (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* xxix. 10—19:) and our sins are the more aggravated, when committed against knowledge, mercies, and vows; when they do violence to the new nature, and the strivings of the Holy Spirit; and when they are inconsistent with our character and profession, and tend to dishonour the gospel, and mislead our brethren.—The real penitent will be deeply humbled and afflicted; but he will not sink into despair: and in proportion as he renounces every false confidence, the more earnestly will he call upon God to "have mercy on him, according to the multitude of his tender mercies." He longs to have the whole debt of his sins cancelled, and every stain cleansed. He would be "thoroughly washed from his iniquities," till all his guilt and defilement be completely removed: but the hypocrite always has some secret reserves, and would spare some favourite lust.—While sinners conceal or palliate their sins, they are out of the way of mercy: but when they humbly and ingenuously plead guilty, and unreservedly confess their crimes; they may even plead that confession, as a reason why they should be spared: for this yields the point in contest; namely, that the Lord might justly punish, and that salvation must be all of grace.—When a load of guilt oppresses a man of a tender conscience; the recollection of his sins, and their aggravations, follows him into company and into retirement; it occurs to his mind in scenes of business and of pleasure, and even breaks his rest, and disquiets his dreams; so that "his sin is ever before him:" but slight convictions, where the heart is not broken, are soon shaken off; and the wound is skinned over, but not healed.—The true penitent considers every sin as rebellion against the authority and infinite Majesty of heaven. Even if he has been preserved from those crimes which evidently injure society, he reflects with shame upon the enmity and ingratitude of his heart against God, which have been manifested in his general conduct; and on this account he thinks himself a chief sinner: but if guilty of grosser transgressions, he considers his rebellion against God in them far more enormous than any injury, which he has done to men like himself. He is also ashamed of the folly of bestowing pains to hide these actions from men, which are done in the sight of his Lord and Judge; he takes the part of God against himself, and pleads guilty to the most humiliating charge in his word, as true in his own case: while those, who excuse themselves, commonly venture to arraign and censure the decisions and proceedings of the Almighty.

V. 5—13.

When the heart is deeply humbled on the recollection of heinous transgressions, the penitent is led to trace back the streams of actual sin to the fountain of original depravity; not to cavil or object, with the infidel or the hypocrite, but for his own deeper humiliation: he com-

the goodness of God, 1—4. He predicts Doeg's ruin, and the joy of the righteous, 5—7. He professes confidence in God, and a full persuasion that he shall praise him for ever, 8, 9.

pares the propensities of his heart as well as his outward conduct, with the holy law and glorious perfections of God; and, perceiving the contrariety, "abhors himself," and repents in dust and ashes." (*Note* and *P. O.* *Job* xlii. 1—6.) When he meditates on that "truth in the inward parts," in which the Lord delights, and that wisdom which he teaches; and considers how contrarily he has often acted to both; he is ashamed of his temper and conduct, and is led the more entirely to expect every thing good, from the sole influence of divine grace overcoming the tendency of corrupt nature. In short, he feels his need of pardon and of holiness; he longs for peace of conscience and purity of heart: and his experience of his own utter inability to obtain them for himself, puts vigour into his prayers to the Lord, to purge him by the blood and Spirit of Christ, "that he may be clean; to wash him "that he may be whiter than snow;" to "cause him to "hear of joy and gladness," that his troubled spirit may rejoice; and, pardoning all his sins, "to create in him "a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within him," by his own almighty power; that for the future he may hate and flee from all sin. He longs for this renewal to holiness as much as for "the joy of salvation;" and to be upheld from falling, equally with "the light of God's "countenance," and the consolations of his Holy Spirit.—Nothing so animates the soul to teach the ways of God to sinners, and to seek for their conversion, as a deep experience of the bitterness of sin, and of the consolations of the pardoning and saving love of God, and the freedom and pleasantness of his service: they therefore always form the most zealous preachers to others, who have themselves been most deeply humbled; and those are most earnest for the salvation of their fellow-sinners, who most value and rejoice in the salvation of God themselves.

V. 14—19.

When the heart is humbled, and the conscience tender, renewed recollection of heinous transgressions again and again discourages the soul: but this excites more fervent prayers; and when mercy is bestowed by "the God of "salvation," such penitents will most abound in thankful praises. Yet conscious guilt stops the mouth, and the humbled sinner is afraid or ashamed to speak of his God, as in times past, until the impediment be removed by some tokens of pardoning love, and the comforts of the Holy Spirit. Such a one would do any thing, or part with any thing, to obtain pardon and peace: (*Note*, *Mic.* vi. 6—8:) but human inventions are worthless; and even divine ordinances are no more than *means* of communicating the blessings, procured by the sacrifice of Christ; and which can only be received by a broken and contrite heart, with which God is well pleased.—No personal fears or troubles of conscience can render the soul of a true Christian forgetful of the interests of the church, or indifferent about them: the humble believer and faithful minister often fear lest their own misconduct should blight their endeavours for doing good: and, whatever they may suffer, or whatever may become of them, they still desire and pray, that

To the chief Musician, Maschil, A Psalm of David, when ^aDoeg the Edomite came and ^btold Saul, and said unto him, David is come to the house of Ahimelech.

WHY ^cboatest thou thyself in ^dmis- chief, ^eO mighty man? ^fthe goodness of God *endureth* continually.

2 ^gThy tongue deviseth mischiefs; ^hlike a sharp razor, ⁱworking deceitfully.

3 Thou ^klovest evil more than good; ^land ^mlying rather than to speak right- ousness. Selah.

4 Thou lovest all ⁿdevouring words, ^oThou deceitful tongue.

5 ^pGod shall likewise ^qdestroy thee

a liv. 3. 1 Sam. xxi. 7. xxii. 9—19.
b lix. 7. Jer. ix. 8. Ez. xxii. 9.
c x. 2, 3. xciv. 4. Rom. i. 30. 2 Tim. iii. 2.
d vii. 14. x. 7. xxxvi. 3—6. Prov. vi. 14. 18. Is. lix. 4. Mic. vii. 3.
e Gen. vi. 4, 5. x. 8, 9. 1 Sam. xxi. 7.
f ciii. 17. cvii. 1. 1 John iv. 7, 8.
g 1. 19. lxiv. 2—6. cxi. 2, 3. Prov. vi. 16—19. xxx. 14. Jer. ix. 3, 4. xviii. 18. Matt. xxvi. 59. Acts vi. 11—13. xxiv. 1. 5 Rev. xii. 10.
h lvii. 4. lix. 7. Prov. xii. 18. xviii. 21.
i cix. 2. cxx. 2. 2 Cor. iv. 2. xi. 13.
k Jer. iv. 22. Mic. iii. 2. Rom. i. 25. 2 Tim. iii. 4. lxii. 4. Jer. ix. 3—5. 8. John viii. 44. Rev. xxii. 15.
l Or, and the deceitful tongue.
m 1 Sam. xxii. 18, 19. Jam. iii. 6—9.
n vii. 14—16. lv. 23. lxiv. 7—10. cxx. 2—4. cxi. 9—11. Prov. xii. 19. Rev. xxi. 8.
o xxxvii. 35, 36. Job xviii. 14. xx. 6, 7. Luke xvi. 27, 28.
p Prov. ii. 22.
q xxvii. 13. cxvi. 9. Is. xxxviii. 11.
r xxxvii. 34. xcvi. 8. Mal. i. 5. Rev. xv. 4. xvi. 5—7. xviii. 20. xix. 1, 2.
s xl. 3. cxix. 120.
t lviii. 10, 11. Is. xxxvii. 22.
u Is. xiv. 16, 17. John xix. 5.
x cxlvi. 3—5. Jer. xvii. 5.
y xlix. 6, &c. lxii. 9, 10. Job xxxi. 24, 25. 1 Tim. vi. 17.
z lxxiii. 7—11. 18—20. Ec. viii. 8. Hos. xii. 7, 8.
† Or, substance.
a xcii. 12—14. Jer. xi. 16. Hos. xiv. 6—8. Rom. xi. 24.
b xiii. 5. xxxiii. 18. cxlvii. 11.
c cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2. Eph. iii. 20, 21.
d xxvii. 14. xl. 1. xlviii. 9, 10. e liv. 6. lxxiii. 25, 26.

for ever: he shall take thee away, and ^apluck thee out of *thy* dwelling-place, and ^broot thee out of ^cthe land of the living. Selah.

6 The ^drighteous also shall see, and ^efear, ^fand shall laugh at him:

7 ^gLo, *this is* the man *that* ^hmade not God his Strength: but ⁱtrusted in the abundance of his riches, *and* ^jstrengthened himself in his ^kwickedness.

8 But I *am* ^llike a green olive-tree in the house of God: ^mI trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.

9 ⁿI will praise thee for ever, because thou hast done *it*: and I will ^owait on thy name; ^pfor *it is* good before thy saints.

o xxxvii. 35, 36. Job xviii. 14. xx. 6, 7. Luke xvi. 27, 28.
p Prov. ii. 22.
q xxvii. 13. cxvi. 9. Is. xxxviii. 11.
r xxxvii. 34. xcvi. 8. Mal. i. 5. Rev. xv. 4. xvi. 5—7. xviii. 20. xix. 1, 2.
s xl. 3. cxix. 120.
t lviii. 10, 11. Is. xxxvii. 22.
u Is. xiv. 16, 17. John xix. 5.
x cxlvi. 3—5. Jer. xvii. 5.
y xlix. 6, &c. lxii. 9, 10. Job xxxi. 24, 25. 1 Tim. vi. 17.
z lxxiii. 7—11. 18—20. Ec. viii. 8. Hos. xii. 7, 8.
† Or, substance.
a xcii. 12—14. Jer. xi. 16. Hos. xiv. 6—8. Rom. xi. 24.
b xiii. 5. xxxiii. 18. cxlvii. 11.
c cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2. Eph. iii. 20, 21.
d xxvii. 14. xl. 1. xlviii. 9, 10. e liv. 6. lxxiii. 25, 26.

true religion may prevail, and that spiritual sacrifices may abound through Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God.—O Lord, give us true repentance, for thy mercies' sake; help us to offer the sacrifice of a contrite spirit; preserve us from hypocrisy and blood-guiltiness, especially that of occasioning the ruin of immortal souls by our example or neglect; and enable us through the merits and mediation of thy Son Jesus Christ, to walk with increasing watchfulness, and to pray more fervently for our fellow-Christians and fellow-sinners.

NOTES.

PSALM LII. Title. Notes, 1 Sam. xxii. 6—19.

V. 1. Doeg is here represented as boasting of his successful treachery, and savage cruelty, in murdering a multitude of unarmed and unresisting priests, and of women and children, as if he had performed some great exploit; and perhaps he menaced David and his company with the same vengeance. But the Psalmist, by contrasting Doeg's malice and mischief with the persevering goodness of God, sharply reprov'd him: and, in fact, relying on the faithful and merciful promises of God, he set him and all his other enemies at defiance.

V. 2. Doeg appeared before Ahimelech with the semblance of piety; yet treacherously became his accuser and murderer. (Notes, 1 Sam. xxi. 7.) This unsuspected malice and cruelty were like a mortal blow given with a well-set razor, so as scarcely to be felt, at the moment when given. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 3, 4. It appears that Doeg not only sought the favour of Saul, but entered cordially into the detestable service required of him. His heart, being enmity against God, hated his priests and servants, because he had a rooted aversion to piety and holiness. He loved evil, lying, and mischief, and gave them a decided preference to goodness, righteousness, and truth: for he took pleasure in gratifying his malignity and impiety, even as others did in gratifying avarice or sensual lusts. Nor was this all: for he loved and preferred in others the same hateful dispositions, in which he indulged himself; and by calumny and lies pre-

pared the way for persecution and murder. Thus he resembled, and was in some respects a type of those who saw and hated the holy Jesus, because they hated the Father that sent him; and accomplished his death by lying witnesses and virulent accusations. (Notes, Matt. xxvi. 57—62. John viii. 41—47. xv. 22—25. xvi. 1—3. 2 Thes. ii. 8—12. Jam. iii. 3—6.)

V. 5. An accumulation of most expressive metaphors is here used, to mark the certainty of that dreadful and eternal punishment, which awaited this prosperous and haughty persecutor; and which awaits all who bear the same character, however in other respects distinguished.

V. 6, 7. The righteous, beholding the ruin of this haughty and atrocious transgressor, would reverence the divine justice, become more afraid of sin, and be confirmed in true religion: yea, they would exult in beholding condign vengeance executed upon one, who was become so execrable and terrible by his crimes; and express cordial satisfaction in observing the event of a man's trusting in wealth and prosperity, encouraging himself in wickedness, renouncing God, and setting him at defiance. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, lviii. 10, 11. Rev. xviii. 20. xix. 1—6.)

V. 8. The olive-tree produces the oil, which is useful to man, and was employed in the worship of God. (Note, Judg. ix. 8—15, v. 9.) Thus David, being rooted in love to the ordinances of God, would abide and be fruitful in his house; while Doeg, who was “detained before the LORD,” became a firebrand to destroy others and himself. (Notes, xiii. 5, 6. xcii. 12—15. cxlvii. 10, 11. Rom. xi. 16—21.)

I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever.] “God shall destroy thee for ever (5).” “I will praise thee for ever (9).” (Notes, cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2.)—Can any unprejudiced man conceive, that this language refers to nothing beyond this poor perishing life on earth?

V. 9. The Psalmist praised God, as if his prediction had already been fulfilled; and he determined to wait still on his name.—The Name of God is glorious and excellent, in the judgment of all his “saints:” and they all deem it right, reasonable, honourable, and profitable, to wait

PSALM LIII.

a lxxxviii. title

b xiv. 1, &c. x. ii.

6. Matt. v. 22.

Luke xii. 20.

c x. 6. 11. 13.

1 Kings xii. 26.

Rom. i. 21. 28.

d Gen. vi. 5, 6.

11—13. Job xiv.

4. xv. 16.

e Lev. xviii. 24—

30. Deut. xii.

31. 1 Kings xiv.

24. Ez. xvi. 47.

51. 1 Pet. iv. 3.

f Rom. iii. 10, &c.

g xxxiii. 13, 14.

cii. 19. Jer. xvi.

17. xxxiii. 24.

h cxi. 10. Deut.

iv. 6. Job xxviii.

28.

i x. 4. xxvii. 8.

1 Chr. xxviii. 9.

2 Chr. xv. 2.

xix. 3. Is. lv. 6.

k xiv. 3. 2 Sam.

xx. 2. Is. liii. 6.

lxiv. 6. Jer. viii.

5, 6. Zeph. i. 6.

l Job xv. 16. Ez.

xxxvi. 25. 2 Cor.

vii. 1. Rev. xxii.

11.

The general corruption of mankind; the madness of persecutors; and the terrors which seize on them, 1—5. A prayer for the salvation of Israel, 6.

To the chief Musician upon ^a Mahalath, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David.

THE ^b fool hath ^c said in his heart, *There is no God.* ^d Corrupt are they, and ^e have done abominable iniquity: ^f *there is none that doeth good.*

2 ^g God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were *any* ^h that did understand, that did ⁱ seek God.

3 ^k Every one of them is gone back: they are all together become ^l filthy;

there is ^m none that doeth good, no, not one.

4 Have ⁿ the workers of iniquity no knowledge? who ^o eat up my people as they eat bread: they have not called upon God.

5 ^p There ^q were they in great fear where no fear was: for God hath ^r scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee: ^s thou hast put *them* to shame, ^t because God hath despised them.

6 ^u Oh, that the salvation of Israel were come ^v out of Zion! When God ^w bringeth back the captivity of his people, ^x Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad.

x cvi. 46—48. Ezra iii. 11. Neh. xii. 43. Is. xii. 1—3.

patiently his time, in his ways, for the performance of his promises. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is far worse to glory in wickedness than to perpetrate it: yet many mighty men have been ambitious of being distinguished, by doing extensive mischief with valour or crafty policy. Indeed, poets, orators, and historians have generally celebrated those as heroes, whose conduct has been the reverse of the divine goodness, and the very counterpart of Satan's malice, pride, deceit, and murder; who have abused superior advantages and endowments, to devise and execute plans of more extensive devastation; or who, by slanders and treachery, excite war and bloodshed among those who were at peace.—The words of a deceitful tongue are often, not only as a sharp razor, but more devouring than the sword; and numbers in all ages have loved evil more than good, and lies more than truth, equity, and love. But it is wonderful, 'that any man ' should value himself for being able to do mischief, when ' God esteemeth it his glory to do good;' (*Norris, in Bp. Horne*;) and his goodness will increase the condemnation of all those, who are emboldened by it in committing iniquity: but it forms the security of those, who depend on it, and copy it as their example.—The believer foresees that God will cast down, sweep away, eradicate, and extirpate from the earth, and destroy for ever in hell, those who do not make him their Strength, but idolize their wealth and prosperity, and who encourage themselves in wickedness: and no criminals will perish with greater exultation to the righteous, than hardened persecutors. Their success is like the luxuriant growth of some poisonous plant, which it is a publick service to destroy. But the righteous man is a fruitful olive-tree, planted in a good soil: he trusts in the everlasting mercy of God, and delights in his ordinances; and, however he may be now afflicted, and thus conformed to the suffering Redeemer, he will wait on the name of the Lord, and will praise him for ever. In expectation of this felicity, let us begin the work of heaven on earth; praying continually that we may only witness, but never share, the perdition of the ungodly.

NOTES.

PSALM LIII. *Title.* This psalm differs very little from the fourteenth; and it is not known, nor has it been conjectured with much probability, on what account, or for what reason, the same sentiments are repeated in almost the same words. The variations, however, are sufficient to shew, that the psalm in one place was *intentionally* altered from that in the other; and it is probable, that it was in consequence of some change in the Psalmist's circumstances, or some events which had occurred subsequent to its first publication.—The word *Mahalath* seems to denote a hollow instrument of musick, a flute or pipe: and *Maschil*, or *instructing*, implies the scope of it, viz. an instruction or warning against impiety towards God, and rebellion against his anointed king.

V. 1—4. (*Note*, xiv. 1—3.) The only variations in these verses are the change, in some instances, of one word for another of nearly the same import.

Understand. (2) מַשְׁכִּיל—*Maschil*. (*Note*, *Title*.) *Causing to understand*: that is, "Applying the heart to understanding." (*Notes*, Prov. i. 7. ii. 1—6. John iii. 19—21. Rom. i. 28—32.)—*Have*, &c. (4) 'Do not the ' workers of iniquity know, that they eat up my people. ' &c.?' Thus the verse is rendered in the old translation.

V. 5. This verse contains much more than the fifth verse in the fourteenth psalm; while the sixth is wholly omitted. (*Note*, xiv. 4—6.)—The rebels who rose up against David's authority, chiefly because they hated his religion, and were instigated by the spirit of persecution, proved on trial very cowardly; for no doubt God was pleased to impress terror on their hearts, when there was no adequate danger. (*Notes*, Judg. vii. 16—22. 1 Sam. xiv. 11—15. 2 Kings vii. 6, 7. Prov. xxviii. 1.) Thus the army of Absalom, which encamped against David, was easily routed; numbers fell in the forests; and, being left unburied, their bones were scattered: and because God despised the impotent rage of this abandoned party, his servant easily put them to confusion. (2 Sam. xviii. 6—8.)

V. 6. *Note*, xiv. 7

PSALM LIV.

David complains of his enemies, and prays for deliverance, 1—3. He glories in the help of God, predicts ruin to his foes, and vows sacrifices and praises, 4—7.

To the chief Musician on Neginoth, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David, ^a when the Ziphims came and said to Saul, Doth not David hide himself with us?

SAVE me, O God, ^b by thy name, and ^c judge me by thy strength.

2 ^d Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth.

3 For ^e strangers are risen up against

me, and ^f oppressors seek after my soul: ^g they have not set God before them. Selah.

4 Behold, ^h God is mine Helper: the Lord is with them that ⁱ uphold my soul.

5 He shall ^k reward evil unto ^{*} mine enemies: ^l cut them off in thy truth.

6 I will ^m freely sacrifice unto thee: ⁿ I will praise thy name, O LORD, ^o for it is good.

7 For ^p he hath delivered me out of all trouble: and ^q mine eye hath seen his desire upon mine enemies.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The folly of sinners greatly appears in their acting, as if they could escape the notice of Omniscience, prosper in defiance of Omnipotence, or be happy in rebellion against the Source of all felicity.—Those who go back from a religious profession, generally become most filthy, or most malicious persecutors, who of all sinners are most infatuated: for God “hath despised,” and will confound and destroy them; as he has often scattered the bones of powerful armies, who have encamped against his church.—A guilty conscience and a dread of vengeance frequently fill the enemies of God with fears, where nothing formidable can be perceived; but at length their worst terrors will be awfully realized: (Note, Prov. x. 24:) and as the deliverance and prosperity of the church on earth will be attended with the ruin of all antichristian opposers; so the eternal joys of the redeemed will be attended with the everlasting shame and misery of all their impenitent oppressors. (Note, Rev. xix. 17—21.)

NOTES.

PSALM LIV. *Title.* This psalm seems to contain the prayer and confident expectation of David, in the extremity of danger; when the Ziphites led Saul and his army to the very spot, where David and his small company lay concealed; and when, surrounded on every side by blood-thirsty, deceitful foes, nothing but an extraordinary divine interposition could possibly preserve him. Viewed in this light, and compared with the event, it appears peculiarly interesting; and shews that the Psalmist's confidence in God and fervency in prayer, increased in proportion to the emergency. (Notes, 1 Sam. xxiii. 19—28. xxvi. 1—4.)

V. 1. The honour of God, and of his holy name, was deeply concerned in David's preservation; as the Lord had expressly engaged to give him the kingdom. And as the Omnipotent Judge of all could not want power, to defend his servant from the cruelty and iniquity of Saul and his party, and thus to vindicate his own glory; the Psalmist in assured faith appealed to his righteous decision, and applied for his effectual protection. (Notes, vii. 8—11. xxvi. 1. 1 Sam. xxiv. 8—15.) His argument resembles that of Joshua:—“O LORD, what shall I say, when Israel turn-

“eth their backs before their enemies? For the Canaan-ites shall ... cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt thou do unto thy great name?” (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Josh. vii. 6—9.)

V. 2, 3. (Marg. Ref.) The Ziphites belonged to the same tribe as David; yet they acted as strangers: and Saul, the Lord's anointed king, and his party, were become most cruel and blood-thirsty tyrants: for they had “not set God before them. Selah.” Let that be noted. (Notes, iii. 1, 2. xxxvi. 1.)

V. 4. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xi. 1—3. cxviii. 5—13. Is. xii. 2.) Uphold.] Jonathan and some others adhered to David, and upheld his cause: but they were comparatively a small company. This however encouraged him, that “God was with them, and would certainly both prosper and bless them.” (Notes, Gen. xii. 1—3. 1 Chr. xii. 16—18.)

V. 5. In thy truth.] In fulfilling his promises the God of truth would certainly cut off the enemies of his servant. (1 Sam. xxvi. 10.) This was well known; and therefore David only prayed for the accomplishment of the promises, attended with those circumstances, from which it was inseparable.—“The application to Christ and to Christians is plain and easy; for which reason our church hath appointed this psalm to be read on Good Friday.” Bp. Horne. (Notes, xxi. 8—12. lxix. 22—28. cix. 6—20.)

V. 6. It is good.] To offer thank-offerings and praises was right, pleasant, and honourable and acceptable to God. (Notes, xcii. 1, 2. cvii. 8, 9. cxvi. 17—19. Heb. xiii. 15, 16.)

V. 7. The words “his desire” are not in the original, either in this or in any of the similar passages. (Note, xcii. 11.) We may suppose that David, as well as Jeremiah, could say, “I have not desired the woeful day, thou knowest.” (Notes, Jer. xvii. 15—18. xviii. 19, 20. Rom. ix. 1—3.) But he was assured that he should witness the awful judgments of God on his enemies, as well as the performance of his engagements to him.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our nearest relations may prove more unkind than strangers; those who ought to protect us may become our oppressors; and mere professors of true religion will generally behave to believers, with malignity and treachery,

PSALM LV.

David prays in great distress and terror, 1—8. He describes the wickedness, and predicts the ruin of his enemies, 9—15. He determines to persevere in prayer; and, confiding in God to deliver him and confound his foes, he exhorts others to trust in God, 16—23.

^a vi. liv. titles.

To the chief Musician on ^a Neginoth, Maschil, *A Psalm* of David.

^o v. 1. xvii. 1. lxiv. 1. lxxx. 1. lxxxiv. 8. 1 Pet. iii. 12.

^c xxviii. 1. lxxx. 4. cxliii. 7. Lam. iii. 8.

^d xlii. 1, 2. xxxii. 3. xxxviii. 6. xliii. 2. cii. 9, 10. Is. xxxviii. 14.

^e xli. 5. liv. 3. lxxxiii. 8. Lam. iii. 34—36.

^b **GIVE** ear to my prayer, O God; and ^c hide not thyself from my supplication.

^d **2** Attend unto me, and hear me: ^d I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise;

^e **3** Because of the voice of the enemy, because of ^e the oppression of the wick-

ed: ^f for they cast iniquity upon me, and in wrath they hate me.

^g **4** ^g My heart is sore pained within me; and ^h the terrors of death are fallen upon me.

ⁱ **5** ⁱ Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and ^k horror hath ^k overwhelmed me.

^l **6** And I said, ^l Oh, that I had wings like a dove! ^l for then would I fly away, and be at rest.

^m **7** Lo then ^m would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah.

ⁿ **8** I would hasten my escape from ⁿ the windy storm and tempest.

^o **9** Destroy, O Lord, and ^o divide their tongues: for ^p I have seen violence and strife in the city.

^f xxvii. 12. xxxv. 11. 2 Sam. xv. 3. xvi. 7, 8. Matt. xxvi. 59. ^g vi. 3. lxix. 20. lxxxviii. 3. cii. 3. —5. Matt. xxvi. 37, 38. Mark xiv. 33, 34. John xii. 27. 2 Cor. i. 8—10.

^h xviii. 4, 5. cxvi. 3. Is. xxxviii. 10. —13. Heb. v. 7. ⁱ cxix. 120. 2 Sam. xv. 14. Job vi. 4. xxiii. 15, 16. ^k xlii. 6. lxi. 2. lxxxviii. 15, 16. Luke xxii. 44. ^l Heb. covered.

^l xi. 1. cxxxix. 9. Rev. xii. 14.

^m 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. 2 Sam. xv. 14. xvii. 21, 22. Prov. vi. 4, 5. Jer. ix. 2. xxxvii. 12.

ⁿ xviii. 4. Is. xvii. 12, 13. Matt. vii. 25—27.

^o Gen. xi. 7—9. 2 Sam. xv. 31. xvii. 1—14. John vii. 45—53. Acts xxiii. 6—10.

^p Jer. vi. 7. xxiii. 14. Matt. xxiii. 37, 38

which even heathens would avoid and condemn. So that, looking unto David betrayed by the men of Judah, and to Jesus betrayed by his apostle, and delivered to death by the Jewish rulers and people; what can we expect from any who “have not set God before them,” except ingratitude, treachery, malice, and cruelty? But God is the Helper of his people: he will favour and prosper those “that uphold “their souls,” while he confounds their persecutors: and his truth is engaged to reward evil to their enemies. Let us trust him and call upon him, when injured or tempted: for his name’s sake he will then save us, and plead our cause with all his power.—We should recollect past deliverances to encourage our faith and prayer in present trials: and it is good and acceptable for us to sacrifice freely our spiritual oblations of grateful praise for the past, while we wait for further mercies.—As the risen and ascended Jesus could adopt the Psalmist’s words, and say, “He hath delivered me from all trouble, and mine eye “hath looked upon mine enemies;” so will his risen people at length be enabled to join in them.—O Lord, help us to bear our cross without repining, and at length bring us to behold, and to share thy victories and glory.

NOTES.

PSALM LV. V. 1. *Hide not thyself, &c.*] That is, ‘Do not disregard my prayer, nor leave me to myself, when I cry for help in my extreme distress.’ (Notes, xxviii. 1. Lam. iii. 2—9, v. 8.)

V. 2. David’s prayer, under great discomposure of mind was attended by lamentations, sighs, and groans. (Notes, xxii. 1, 2. xxxii. 3—5. Is. xxxviii. 14, 15. Hos. xii. 3—6. Rom. viii. 24—27. Heb. v. 7—10.)

V. 3. *They cast iniquity, &c.*] This psalm is supposed to have been composed during Absalom’s rebellion. The leaders of that faction, both out of malice, and to strengthen their party, charged David with various crimes of which he was not guilty. (Notes, 2 Sam. xv. 1—6. P. O. 1—12. Note, xvi. 5—14.)—Thus Christ was falsely accused by those who had taken counsel to put him to death.

V. 4—8. In general David shewed the firmest courage

in the most extreme dangers: but the unnatural rebellion of Absalom, which he knew to be the correction of his sin in the matter of Uriah, quite unmanned him; and he was filled with terror and consternation. (Notes, 2 Sam. xv. 13—15. 23.) Nay, he was become so weary of the treachery and ingratitude of men, and of the cares and disappointments of his high station; that he longed to have done with society, and to hide himself in some desert from the fury and fickleness of his people. He wished, in his haste, for the wings of the harmless dove, that he might “fly away and be at rest;” and his varied expressions, and the representation of the popular commotion as a violent tempest, shew the vehement agitation of his mind. (Note, cxvi. 10, 11.) Yet in his more collected moments he could not approve of such a wish: he was not at liberty to leave his useful station; he could find no rest any where, but in God, with whom he might commune in the midst of society; and he must wait for his more perfect rest, till he had fully served his generation.—‘These words describe ‘the state of David’s mind, when he went over the brook ‘Cedron, and up mount Olivet, “weeping as he went,” ‘and expecting speedily to be cut off: ... they describe ‘the agony of the son of David, when he likewise went ‘over the same brook Cedron, ... at the time of his passion, when his soul was “sore amazed, and very heavy, “and exceeding sorrowful even unto death.”’ Bp. Horne. —It may be added, that at that awful crisis the Saviour also prayed, “If it be possible, let this cup pass from me; “nevertheless not my will but thine be done:” (Notes, Matt. xxvi. 36—39. 42—46. John xviii. 1—3:) and David likewise speedily recovered his composure, and said, “Behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good “unto him.” (Notes, iii. 2 Sam. xv. 24—29.)—The several expressions concur in fixing this period as the date of the psalm; and do not coincide with any thing, that is recorded of David, during his persecution by Saul.

V. 9—11. David had rescued Jerusalem from the Jebusites; and it became “the holy city,” when the ark of God was placed there: (Notes, 2 Sam. v. 6—8. vi. 12—19:) yet it was now become the seat of violence and strife.

q lix. 6. 14, 15. 10 ^a Day and night they go about
 Sam. xix. 11. it upon the walls thereof; ^b mischief
 2 Sam. xvii. 1. also and sorrow *are* in the midst of it.
 2. Hos. vii. 6. 11 ^c Wickedness *is* in the midst
 Mic. ii. 1, 2. thereof: ^d deceit and guile depart not
 John xviii. 3, 28. from her streets.
 Acts ix. 24. 12 For ^e *it was* not an enemy *that*
 2 Sam. xvi. 21, reproached me; then I could have
 22. Is. lix. 6— borne *it*: neither *was it* he that hated
 15. Ez. ix. 4. me, *that* did ^f magnify *himself* against
 Zeph. iii. 1—3. me; ^g then I would have hid myself
 s Ez. xxii. 1—12. from him:
 Acts vii. 51, 52. 13 But *it was* thou, ^h a man, mine
 cix. 2, 3. Is. lix. equal, ⁱ my guide, and ^j mine acquaint-
 7. Jer. v. 26, 27. ance.
 ix. 3—5. Matt. 14 ^k We took sweet counsel toge-
 xxvi. 4. ther, and ^l walked unto the house of
 u xli. 9. God in company.
 x xxxv. 26. xxxviii. 16. Is. x. 15.
 y Matt. xxvi. 21 —23. John xiii. 18. xviii. 2, 3.
 * Heb. a man ac-
 cording to my
 rank.
 z 2 Sam. xv. 12. 23. Jer. ix.
 4. Mic. vii. 5.
 a Job xix. 13.
 Matt. xxvi. 47—
 50. Mark xiv.
 44, 45. Luke
 xxii. 21, 47, 48.
 + Heb. Who sweet-
 ened counsel.
 b xlii. 4. cxxii. 1.
 Is. ii. 3. Ez.
 xxxiii. 31.

This he perceived at the breaking out of Absalom's rebel-
 lion, and therefore he would not venture to continue there.
 (Note, 2 Sam. xv. 13—15.) And when the usurper had
 got possession, mischief and sorrow, wickedness and guile,
 occupied the city in every part, parading it day and night,
 and guarding it against every approach of piety, equity,
 and loyalty, as against the most dangerous foes. (Note,
 2 Sam. xvi. 15—23.) David therefore prayed, that the
 Lord would render the devices of the usurpers like Babel,
 by confounding their language and counsels, and thus
 leaving them to disunion, and mutual jealousies and sus-
 picions. This was granted, when Hushai's counsel was
 preferred to Ahithophel's; and when that crafty politician,
 the stay of the whole party, went and hanged himself.
 (Notes, 2 Sam. xv. 31. xvii. 1—14. 23.)—Thus the nation
 of the Jews, after they had rejected Christ, were destroyed
 by being divided: and Jerusalem, having become the scene
 of every enormity, was miserably desolated by the Romans.
 (Notes, Matt. xxiii. 34—39.)

V. 12—15. Ahithophel's treachery was peculiarly dis-
 tressing to David; and it was the more painful for being
 wholly unsuspected. So far from having been an avowed
 enemy, who now took occasion to reproach him, and to
 exult in his calamities, or menace his life; Ahithophel had
 been David's counsellor and bosom-friend, and had been
 treated by him as an equal, or as one of his own rank: he
 had also been his chosen and pleasing companion, in the
 exercise of religion, and in pious conversation. Yet this
 very man, without any affront, or previous quarrel, became
 an apostate and a traitor, and gave Absalom the most ma-
 licious and infernal counsel imaginable! (Notes, 2 Sam.
 xvi. 20—23. xvii. 1—4.)—Thus Christ was betrayed by
 one, whom he had honoured as a companion, a disciple,
 and an apostle; and who resembled Ahithophel in his
 crimes and in his doom: for both were speedily overtaken
 by divine vengeance, in the same dreadful manner. (Note,
 2 Sam. xvii. 23. Matt. xxvii. 3—5. John xiii. 18—30.)
 This was foretold by David concerning Ahithophel, and by
 Jesus concerning Judas: for the words are in the future,
 and more naturally signify a prediction, than an imprec-

15 ^c Let death seize upon them, and ^d let them go down quick into ^e hell:
 for wickedness *is* in their dwellings,
 and among them.

16 ¶ As for me, ^f I will call upon ^g God; and the LORD shall save me.

17 ^h Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and ⁱ cry aloud, and he shall hear my voice.

18 ^j He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle *that was* against me: for ^k there were many with me.

19 God shall ^l hear and afflict them, even ^m he that abideth of old. Selah. ⁿ Because they have ^o no changes, therefore they fear not God.

2 Chr. xxxii. 7, 8. Matt. xxvi. 53. k lxxv. 5. cxliii. 12. 1 Thes. ii. 15, 16.
 Rev. vi. 10, 11. 1 xc. 1, 2. Deut. xxxiii. 27. Mic. v. 2. Col. i. 17. ^o Or,
 With whom also there be no changes, yet, &c. m lxxiii. 5, 6. Prov. i. 32. Ec.
 viii. 11. Is. xxxvi. 20. Jer. xlviii. 11. Zeph. i. 12.

tion. (Marg. Ref.)—^a The sudden destruction of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, who, for stirring up rebellion against Moses and Aaron, “went down alive into the “pit,” seems here alluded to; as the grand representation of the manner, in which the bottomless pit shall one day shut her mouth for ever upon all the impenitent enemies of the true King of Israel, and great High Priest of our profession.’ Bp. Horne.

V. 16, 17. Notes, l. 7—15. cix. 2—5. Luke vi. 12.—Evening, &c. (17)—Probably this was David's general practice; from which he was not diverted by any of his troubles, but was rather made the more earnest in it. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Dan. vi. 10, 11. Acts x. 9—16.)—^b I will never give over my importunity, till he graciously grant my petition, and send me relief.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 18. As this verse is in the past tense, while those which precede and follow it are future; the Psalmist seems to refer to his former experience of the Lord's goodness and faithful care of him; and thus to encourage himself and his friends to expect a happy event to their present perils. (Notes, 1 Sam. xvii. 34—37. 2 Cor. i. 8—11.) In former instances, when far superior forces had attacked him, God had delivered him in peace, and made him triumphant; for his invisible protectors and helpers were more numerous and powerful than all his visible foes. (Notes, 2 Kings vi. 15—17.)—Thus our Lord said, “Think—est thou, that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he “shall presently give me more than twelve legions of “angels?” And angels terrified and drove away the Roman soldiers, rolled away the stone from the sepulchre, and attended his resurrection and ascension. (Notes, Matt. xxvi. 47—56. xxviii. 1—8.)

V. 19. He “who inhabiteth eternity,” (Notes, Deut. xxxiii. 27, 28. Is. lvii. 15, 16. Mic. v. 2,) hearing the prayers of his distressed servants, would certainly punish their persecutors; who had been hardened in impiety, by uninterrupted prosperity. Or, God would certainly afflict them, because *they would not turn* and fear him.

He that abideth of old.] ישב קדם, which seems to be

20 He hath ⁿ put forth his hands against such as be ^o at peace with him: he hath ^{cix.} broken his covenant.

21 ^p The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but ^a war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.

22 ^r Cast thy ^t burden upon the

LORD, and he shall sustain thee: ^s he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

23 But thou, O God, ^t shalt bring them down into ^u the pit of destruction: ^t bloody and deceitful men ^x shall not live out half their days; but I will trust in thee.

xvi. 8. xxxvii. 24. lxxii. 2. 6. 1 Sam. ii. 9. John x. 27—30. 1 Pet. i. 5. t vii. 15, 16. lviii. 9. lix. 12, 13. u Prov. xv. 11. xxxvii. 20. ls. xxxviii. 17. t Heb. men of bloods and deceit shall not have their days. v. 6. 2 Sam. iii. 27. xx. 9. 10. 1 Kings ii. 5.

5, 6.

x Job xv. 32. Prov. x. 27. Ec. vii. 17. Matt. xxvii. 4, 5

nearly equivalent to עַד עֶדְיָ, "he who inhabiteth eternity." Is. lvii. 15.

V. 20, 21. Absalom, or Ahithophel, seems to have been here intended: but the character and language of crafty flattering courtiers, and of malicious dissemblers, in all ages, is emphatically described. Thus Judas betrayed Christ, while he said, "Hail, Master, and kissed him." (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 22. 'Whatever God has given or allotted thee, commit it all to his keeping by faith and prayer.' This is the way of peace and safety. (*Notes*, xxxvii. 5—8. *Matt.* vi. 25—34. *Phil.* iv. 5—7. 1 *Pet.* v. 5—7.)—"He will not suffer the righteous, to be moved for ever." (*Note*, xxxvii. 27, 28.)

V. 23. *Half their days.*] Such persons, as are here described, generally come to a violent end, before half the years are elapsed, which they might otherwise have been expected to live. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* xvii. 23. xviii. 9. 14.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

'The most excellent persons have always experienced the basest treatment in this evil world: and the more any mere man has resembled the Son of God, in heavenly zeal and purity; the more has he been traduced and hated by them, whose crimes he opposed, or whose hypocrisy he detected.—The clamours and oppression, the calumnies and malice, of ungodly men may, however, be the more easily endured, if we possess peace of conscience, and a sweet sense of the divine favour. But when our sufferings from men excite in us the sense, or the dread, of the anger of our offended God; when a guilty conscience gives Satan advantage in assaulting our peace, and sapping the foundations of our hope; we must needs "mourn in our complaint," and the thoughts of our hearts will often become like the tempestuous waves of the restless ocean: so that, in this case, even eminent believers have been filled for a time with inexpressible horror and consternation. Yet none of them was ever so overwhelmed with terror and anguish, as the holy Jesus was; when "it pleased the LORD to bruise him, to put him to grief, and to make his soul an offering for our sins." But in "his agony he prayed more earnestly," and was heard and delivered: and if we trust in his merits, and copy his example, we too shall be supported under all, and carried through all.—Those, who are most conversant with mankind, will see the most to disquiet, discourage, and disgust them; if they have a spiritual judgment, and are labouring to do good. Disappointment and vexation, arising from the experience of the inconstancy, ingratitude, and treachery of mankind in general, will sometimes render them weary of the most eminent stations, and honourable services; and make them long

for retirement and obscurity, where they may no longer witness the miseries and crimes which they cannot prevent. This should induce us all to seek our rest in God, and to be willing to depart hence to a better world when he pleases: but we must not be "weary of well-doing," or relinquish our work, till our Lord and Master release us: and at last no change can add to our present continued happiness, except that which augments our holiness.—No wickedness so distresses the believer, as that which he witnesses in the visible church of God: with anguish of heart he often perceives violence and discord in the congregations, where the gospel of peace is preached and professed; by which the common cause is weakened, the truth disgraced, and far more mischief done than by all the fury of persecutors.—When professed Christians forsake God, and give way to malice, wickedness, and deceit; destruction and sorrow are at hand: disunion of heart, and intestine quarrels, make way for further evils; and, instead of a holy city, a Babel will be erected, which must also be destroyed.—The true Christian must expect trials from professed friends, from those whom he has most trusted and served, and even from those, with whom he has taken sweet counsel, and associated in the ordinances of God. This will be very painful, but by looking unto Jesus he will be enabled to bear it.—Though we must not pray for the destruction of our most treacherous injurers; yet we may warn them of the doom of those, who before them have trodden in the same path: and in every possible trial let us "call upon the LORD, and he will save us."—Our souls need spiritual nourishment at least as often as our bodies need food: but we generally starve in the midst of abundance; because we pray so seldom, so superficially, and so formally.—David had more loyal subjects than he expected; Christ had more favourers than appeared, when the general cry was, "Crucify him, crucify him:" and there are more true Christians, and believers have more real friends, than in their gloomy hours they suppose. If however God be for us, he will deliver our souls in peace from every conflict, whether few or many side with us: and it is better to have changes and afflictions, than to be hardened by uninterrupted prosperity, and thus emboldened to treachery and cruelty; which generally end in untimely death, and bring men down into the pit of destruction.—Flatterers, whose words are soft and insinuating, are always to be suspected and dreaded: for many of this company "have war in their hearts;" and by smooth, deceitful language do more harm, than they could have done with their drawn swords. But let us learn to trust only in the Lord, and to cast every burden upon him, by faith and prayer: for he will never suffer the righteous to be moved, either for want of inward sup-

PSALM LVI.

* Or, a golden Psalm. xvi. lvii. —ix. titles. David prays for mercy, depending on the word of God, amidst the rage and malice of his enemies, 1—7. He comforts himself by thoughts of the Lord's providential care and gracious promises; and by praising him for past deliverances, 8—13.

To the chief Musician upon Jonath-
elem-rechokim, * Michtam of David,
* when the Philistines took him in
Gath.

BE merciful unto me, O God: for
man would ^cswallow me up; he fight-
ing daily oppresseth me.

2 Mine ^tenemies would daily swal-
low me up: for *they be* ^dmany that
fight against me, O thou ^{*}most High.

3 ^fWhat time I am afraid, I will
trust in thee.

4 ^gIn God I will praise his word;
^hin God I have put my trust: I will
not fear what flesh can do unto me.

5 Every day ⁱthey wrest my words:

^k all their thoughts *are* against me for
evil.

6 They ^lgather themselves together,
they ^mhide themselves, they ⁿmark my
steps, when they wait for my soul.

7 Shall they ^oescape by iniquity?
^pin *thine* anger cast down the people,
O God.

8 Thou ^qtellest my wanderings: ^rput
thou my tears into thy bottle: ^s*are*
they not in thy book?

9 When ^tI cry unto thee, ^uthen shall
mine enemies turn back: this I know;
for ^xGod *is* for me.

10 ^yIn God will I praise *his* word:
in the LORD will I praise *his* word.

11 In God have I put my trust: ^zI
will not be afraid what man can do unto
me.

12 ^aThy vows *are* upon me, O God:
^bI will render praises unto thee.

xviii. 6. x xlvii. 7. 11. Is. viii. 9, 10. Rom. viii. 31.
Gen. xxxii. 11. Matt. xxiv. 35. Heb. vi. 18. 2 Pet. i. 4.
li. 7, 8, 12, 13. a lxvi. 13, 14. lxxvi. 11. cxvii. 14—19. cxix. 106.
22. xxxv. 1—3. Num. xxx. 2, &c. 1 Sam. i. 11. 24—28. Ec. v. 4—6.
xxi. 13. lix. 16, 17. Is. xii. 1.

ports, or outward protection. And, having thus found
comfort ourselves, let us exhort and encourage our af-
flicted brethren to apply for the same relief.

NOTES.

PSALM LVI. Title. "Jonath-elem-rechokim," signi-
fies, the silent dove of distant places, or, in a far country.
David had been harmless as a dove, in the midst of Saul's
persecutions; he was silent and patient under oppression;
he was now driven, like a timorous dove, to a distance from
his home, and from the ordinances of God; and when ex-
posed to extreme danger from the Philistines, set on per-
haps by the relations of Goliath, he bore all patiently, and
attempted no revenge. In this he typified the harmless,
suffering, and patient Jesus. (Note, 1 Sam. xxi. 10—15.)

V. 1, 2. While David remained in the land of Judah,
his countrymen fought against him; and at Gath the Phi-
listines sought to slay him. Thus Jews and Gentiles united
against Christ; and his disciples are "hated of all men for
his name's sake."

Swallow me up.] אֲנַחֵם, אֲנַחֵם, *anhelavit, aspiravit, absorpsit*
inhelando. Robertson. 'They pant after me, with eager-
ness and rage in order to devour me.' Thus Saul of
Tarsus "breathed out threatenings and slaughter against
the disciples of Christ." (Notes, xxvii. 1—3. Job xxxi.
9—32. Am. ii. 6—8. Acts ix. 1, 2.)

O thou most High. (2) אֲלֹהִים, *altum, celsitudo*. Robertson.
The clause may be rendered, "There are many who fight
against me from on high," or, from a safe and fortified
place. The original word is not the same, as is gene-
rally rendered, "most High."

V. 3, 4. David was himself greatly alarmed, when at
Gath; but in that day "when he feared," he determined
till to trust in God; and to honour his word, and glory

in it, as a full security in every possible danger. For, in
celebrating the perfections and works of God, he would
especially praise his word, his most gracious promises, and
unfailing faithfulness in performing them, and this even
while waiting for that performance. (Notes, xii. 5, 6.
cxxxviii. 2. Num. xxiii. 19, 20. Matt. xxiv. 32—35. John
i. 17.) He especially referred to the promises of God, that
he should be king over Israel. *What flesh, &c.* (4) 2 Chr.
xxxii. 8. Note, Jer. xvii. 5—8.

V. 5. *Wrest my words.*] Or, "They thwart me in all
"my concerns." The words, in either sense of them, with
the rest of this and the following verses, emphatically de-
scribe the conduct of the scribes and priests towards the
Lord Jesus, which the insidious perverseness and disin-
genuity, with which Saul and his courtiers treated David,
greatly resembled. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 6, 7. Marg. Ref.—Note, xlix. 5.

V. 8. David was continually removing from place to
place, as if he had been a vagabond: (Gen. iv. 14:) but
the Lord numbered all his wanderings, and watched over
him wherever he went. His tears also were noticed, as if
preserved in a bottle, or registered in a book: no doubt
therefore his life would be precious in the sight of the
Lord. 'If God keep the tears of his saints in store, much
'more will he remember their blood to avenge it; and
'though tyrants burn the bones, yet can they not blot the
'tears and blood out of God's register.' (Marg. Ref.)—
Wanderings.] In the translation used in the Common
Prayer Book, the word *flittings* is used. This is a provincial
term for removing from one residence to another: but it
is not generally understood.

V. 9—11. Notes, 3, 4. xxvii. 1—3. xlvii. 7. lxii. 1—7.
Rom. viii. 28—39.

V. 12. David had, it seems, made solemn vows under
2 H

13 For ^cthou hast delivered my soul from death: ^d*wilt not thou deliver* my feet from falling, that I may ^ewalk before God in ^fthe light of the living?

PSALM LVII.

In extreme danger, David fervently prays to be delivered from his cruel foes, 1—6. He encourages himself in praising God, and fervently prays that he may be universally glorified, 7—11.

To the chief Musician, * Al-taschith, Michtam of David, ^awhen he fled from Saul in the cave.

BE merciful unto me, O God, ^bbe merciful unto me: for ^cmy soul trust-

eth in thee: yea, ^din the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, ^euntil *these* calamities be over-past.

2 I will cry unto ^fGod most high; unto God ^gthat performeth *all things* for me.

3 He shall ^hsend from heaven, and save me ⁱfrom the reproach of him that would ^jswallow me up. Selah. God shall ^ksend forth his mercy and his truth.

4 My soul is ^lamong lions: and I lie *even among* them that are ^mset on fire, *even* the sons of men, ⁿwhose teeth are spears and arrows, and their ^otongue a sharp sword.

Dan. vi. 22—24. m Judg. ix. 20. Jam. iii. 6. n lviii. 6. Job iv. 10, 11. Prov. xxx. 14. o lv. 21. lxiv. 3. Prov. xii. 18. xxv. 18. Rev. xix. 15.

his distresses, of rendering publick praises unto God, when delivered; and of using the regal authority, which God had promised him, to promote his glory: and he confidently expected, and fully purposed, to perform these vows. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, lxvi. 13—15. Gen. xxxv. 1—3.)

V. 13. The Lord had rescued David from many imminent perils of death: and he trusted that he would keep him from falling by the hands of his enemies; that he might live, to walk before him, as his anointed king, in prosperity and usefulness. Or he meant, that God, having saved his soul by converting grace, would uphold him in the ways of holiness, in which he desired to walk till he came to heaven. (*Notes*, cxvi. 8, 9. cxlv. 14.)—*Light of the living.*] *Notes*, Job xxxiii. 27—30. Rev. xxi. 22—27.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The heavy and continued trials, through which many of the Lord's servants have passed, should teach us to be silent and patient under our lighter afflictions. "We have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Our good words may indeed be wrested to an evil meaning; and our footsteps watched by those, who devise evil against us: but we are not in general endangered by furious assailants, who would swallow us up, and destroy us; or at least, those who would oppress us have their hands bound or otherwise employed. Yet are we often tempted to repine and despond under our lighter sorrows! For this we should check and condemn ourselves; and, under every disquieting fear, we should place our confidence in God, and pray more earnestly for his pardoning mercy.—Meditation on the power of the Most High, engaged by his most gracious and faithful promises to his people, will encourage us to say with boldness, "The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." (*Note*, Heb. xiii. 5, 6.) The believer's soul, body, character, and interest, are all safe under the divine protection; and when he prays earnestly, his enemies will be driven back and disappointed.—Men may for a time prosper in and by iniquity; but God in his anger will soon cast them down: and our only security lies in escaping from iniquity.—The Lord graciously notes and orders the removals of his people: while they keep in the path of duty, they cannot be driven

from his gracious presence; and their tears of godly sorrow, and those which are extorted by persecution, or sympathy with the sufferings of others, will be reserved to be jewels in their crown of glory. Let us then be careful to discharge our own obligations.—General vows are upon us as Christians, which have been ratified at baptism and the Lord's supper; and we have made promises and engagements in seasons of trouble and distress. Let us conscientiously perform them, when delivered; and then we may leave all the rest with the Lord: and if his grace have delivered our souls from the death of sin; he will deliver our feet from falling, and bring us to heaven, to walk before him for ever "in the light of the living," in the bright world of perfect knowledge, love, purity, and felicity.

NOTES.

PSALM LVII. Title. Al-taschith.] "*Destroy not.*" This may intimate, that David trusted, that the Lord would not permit him to be destroyed, though closely pursued by Saul. Some think that the word refers to the restriction David laid on his officers, not to destroy Saul. (*Marg. Ref. a.—Notes*, 1 Sam. xxiv. 4—7.)—Cave.] *Notes*, cxlii. title. 1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2. xxiii. 19—29. xxiv. 1—3.

V. 1. *Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xxxvi. 5—9. lxiii. 7, 8. Ruth ii. 11, 12. Is. xxvi. 20, 21. Matt. xxiii. 37—39.

V. 2. *Most High.*] עֶלְיוֹן. *Note*, lvi. 1, 2. v. 2.—*That performeth, &c.*] David could not perform for himself those things, which were requisite for his security and advancement; and he would not seek them by killing Saul, nor would he allow his soldiers to slay him: but he trusted in God, who had given him the promise of the kingdom, to perform all things necessary to its fulfilment in his own time and manner. (*Notes*, cxxxviii. 8. 1 Sam. xvi. 13. xxiv. 4—7. xxvi. 8—12. 1 Kings xi. 37. xii. 2, 3. Phil. i. 3—6.)

V. 3. *From the reproach, &c.*] Or, *From the reproof of him that would swallow me up.* (*Note*, lvi. 1, 2.)—God would sooner send his angels from heaven to deliver his servant, than suffer his furious enemies to destroy him. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Mercy, &c.*] *Notes*, xl. 11, 12. lxii. 5—7. lxxxvi. 14, 15. lxxxix. 1—4. John i. 17.

V. 4. *My soul, &c.*] "The fiercest beasts, the most devouring of elements, and the sharpest of military

5 ^a Be thou exalted, O God, ^a above the heavens: *let* ^a thy glory *be* above all the earth.

6 They have prepared ^a a net for my steps; ^a my soul is bowed down: they have digged a pit before me, into the midst whereof they are fallen *themselves*. Selah.

7 ^a My heart is ^a fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: ^a I will sing and give praise.

8 ^a Awake up, ^a my glory; awake, psaltery and harp; I *myself* will awake early.

9 ^a I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations.

10 For ^b thy mercy *is* great unto the heavens, and ^c thy truth unto the clouds.

c Gen. ix. 9—17. Is. liv. 7—10. Heb. vi. 17, 18.

11 ^a Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: *let* thy glory *be* above all the earth.

PSALM LVIII.

David reproves unjust elders and judges, 1, 2. He describes the odious character of the wicked, 3—5. He predicts their ruin, and the joy of the righteous, on beholding the just judgments of God upon them, 6—11

To the chief Musician, ^a Al-taschith, Michtam of David.

^a Do ye indeed speak righteousness, ^b O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, ^c O ye sons of men?

2 Yea, ^a in heart ye work wickedness; ye ^c weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.

^a Or, *destroy not, a golden Psalm.* ^b lxxii. 1—4. Deut. xvi. 18, 19. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. 2 Chr. xix. 6, 7. Is. xi. 3—5. xxxii. 1. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. ^c lxxii. 1, 2. Num. xi. 16. Deut. i. 15, 16. 2 Sam. v. 3. Matt. xxvi. 3. xxvii. 1. Luke xxiii. 50, 51. Acts v. 21. ^d Ec. iii. 16. Is. lix. 4—6. Jer. xxii. 16, 17. Ez. xiii. 12, 27. Mic. iii. 1—3. 9—12. John xi. 47—53. ^e xciv. 20. Is. x. 1. xxvi. 7.

‘weapons, are selected, to represent the power and fury of David’s enemies. How much stronger and more furious were the enemies of Christ, who, in the day of his passion, resembled Daniel in the lion’s den, and the three children in the fiery furnace!’ Bp. Horne.

Set on fire.] ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^{aa} ^{ab} ^{ac} ^{ad} ^{ae} ^{af} ^{ag} ^{ah} ^{ai} ^{aj} ^{ak} ^{al} ^{am} ^{an} ^{ao} ^{ap} ^{aq} ^{ar} ^{as} ^{at} ^{au} ^{av} ^{aw} ^{ax} ^{ay} ^{az} ^{ba} ^{bb} ^{bc} ^{bd} ^{be} ^{bf} ^{bg} ^{bh} ^{bi} ^{bj} ^{bk} ^{bl} ^{bm} ^{bn} ^{bo} ^{bp} ^{bq} ^{br} ^{bs} ^{bt} ^{bu} ^{bv} ^{bw} ^{bx} ^{by} ^{bz} ^{ca} ^{cb} ^{cc} ^{cd} ^{ce} ^{cf} ^{cg} ^{ch} ^{ci} ^{cj} ^{ck} ^{cl} ^{cm} ^{cn} ^{co} ^{cp} ^{cq} ^{cr} ^{cs} ^{ct} ^{cu} ^{cv} ^{cw} ^{cx} ^{cy} ^{cz} ^{da} ^{db} ^{dc} ^{dd} ^{de} ^{df} ^{dg} ^{dh} ^{di} ^{dj} ^{dk} ^{dl} ^{dm} ^{dn} ^{do} ^{dp} ^{dq} ^{dr} ^{ds} ^{dt} ^{du} ^{dv} ^{dw} ^{dx} ^{dy} ^{dz} ^{ea} ^{eb} ^{ec} ^{ed} ^{ee} ^{ef} ^{eg} ^{eh} ^{ei} ^{ej} ^{ek} ^{el} ^{em} ^{en} ^{eo} ^{ep} ^{eq} ^{er} ^{es} ^{et} ^{eu} ^{ev} ^{ew} ^{ex} ^{ey} ^{ez} ^{fa} ^{fb} ^{fc} ^{fd} ^{fe} ^{ff} ^{fg} ^{fh} ^{fi} ^{fj} ^{fk} ^{fl} ^{fm} ^{fn} ^{fo} ^{fp} ^{fq} ^{fr} ^{fs} ^{ft} ^{fu} ^{fv} ^{fw} ^{fx} ^{fy} ^{fz} ^{ga} ^{gb} ^{gc} ^{gd} ^{ge} ^{gf} ^{gg} ^{gh} ^{gi} ^{gj} ^{gk} ^{gl} ^{gm} ^{gn} ^{go} ^{gp} ^{gq} ^{gr} ^{gs} ^{gt} ^{gu} ^{gv} ^{gw} ^{gx} ^{gy} ^{gz} ^{ha} ^{hb} ^{hc} ^{hd} ^{he} ^{hf} ^{hg} ^{hh} ^{hi} ^{hj} ^{hk} ^{hl} ^{hm} ^{hn} ^{ho} ^{hp} ^{hq} ^{hr} ^{hs} ^{ht} ^{hu} ^{hv} ^{hw} ^{hx} ^{hy} ^{hz} ^{ia} ^{ib} ^{ic} ^{id} ^{ie} ^{if} ^{ig} ^{ih} ⁱⁱ ^{ij} ^{ik} ^{il} ^{im} ⁱⁿ ^{io} ^{ip} ^{iq} ^{ir} ^{is} ^{it} ^{iu} ^{iv} ^{iw} ^{ix} ^{iy} ^{iz} ^{ja} ^{jb} ^{jc} ^{jd} ^{je} ^{jf} ^{jj} ^{jk} ^{jl} ^{jm} ^{jn} ^{jo} ^{jp} ^{jq} ^{jr} ^{js} ^{jt} ^{ju} ^{jv} ^{jw} ^{jx} ^{ky} ^{kz} ^{la} ^{lb} ^{lc} ^{ld} ^{le} ^{lf} ^{lg} ^{lh} ^{li} ^{lj} ^{lk} ^{ll} ^{lm} ^{ln} ^{lo} ^{lp} ^{lq} ^{lr} ^{ls} ^{lt} ^{lu} ^{lv} ^{lw} ^{lx} ^{ly} ^{lz} ^{ma} ^{mb} ^{mc} ^{md} ^{me} ^{mf} ^{mg} ^{mh} ^{mi} ^{mj} ^{mk} ^{ml} ^{mm} ^{mn} ^{mo} ^{mp} ^{mq} ^{mr} ^{ms} ^{mt} ^{mu} ^{mv} ^{mw} ^{mx} ^{my} ^{mz} ^{na} ^{nb} ^{nc} nd ^{ne} ^{nf} ^{ng} ^{nh} ⁿⁱ ^{nj} ^{nk} ^{nl} ^{nm} ⁿⁿ ^{no} ^{np} ^{nq} ^{nr} ^{ns} ^{nt} ^{nu} ^{nv} ^{nw} ^{nx} ^{ny} ^{nz} ^{oa} ^{ob} ^{oc} ^{od} ^{oe} ^{of} ^{og} ^{oh} ^{oi} ^{oj} ^{ok} ^{ol} ^{om} ^{on} ^{oo} ^{op} ^{oq} ^{or} ^{os} ^{ot} ^{ou} ^{ov} ^{ow} ^{ox} ^{oy} ^{oz} ^{pa} ^{pb} ^{pc} ^{pd} ^{pe} ^{pf} ^{pg} ^{ph} ^{pi} ^{pj} ^{pk} ^{pl} ^{pm} ^{pn} ^{po} ^{pp} ^{pq} ^{pr} ^{ps} ^{pt} ^{pu} ^{pv} ^{pw} ^{px} ^{py} ^{pz} ^{qa} ^{qb} ^{qc} ^{qd} ^{qe} ^{qf} ^{qg} ^{qh} ^{qi} ^{qj} ^{qk} ^{ql} ^{qm} ^{qn} ^{qo} ^{qp} ^{qq} ^{qr} ^{qs} ^{qt} ^{qu} ^{qv} ^{qw} ^{qx} ^{qy} ^{qz} ^{ra} ^{rb} ^{rc} rd ^{re} ^{rf} ^{rg} ^{rh} ^{ri} ^{rj} ^{rk} ^{rl} ^{rm} ^{rn} ^{ro} ^{rp} ^{rq} ^{rr} ^{rs} ^{rt} ^{ru} ^{rv} ^{rw} ^{rx} ^{ry} ^{rz} ^{sa} ^{sb} ^{sc} ^{sd} ^{se} ^{sf} ^{sg} ^{sh} ^{si} ^{sj} ^{sk} ^{sl} sm ^{sn} ^{so} ^{sp} ^{sq} ^{sr} ^{ss} st ^{su} ^{sv} ^{sw} ^{sx} ^{sy} ^{sz} ^{ta} ^{tb} ^{tc} ^{td} ^{te} ^{tf} ^{tg} th ^{ti} ^{tj} ^{tk} ^{tl} tm ^{tn} ^{to} ^{tp} ^{tq} ^{tr} ^{ts} ^{tt} ^{tu} ^{tv} ^{tw} ^{tx} ^{ty} ^{tz} ^{ua} ^{ub} ^{uc} ^{ud} ^{ue} ^{uf} ^{ug} ^{uh} ^{ui} ^{uj} ^{uk} ^{ul} ^{um} ^{un} ^{uo} ^{up} ^{uq} ^{ur} ^{us} ^{ut} ^{uu} ^{uv} ^{uw} ^{ux} ^{uy} ^{uz} ^{va} ^{vb} ^{vc} ^{vd} ^{ve} ^{vf} ^{vg} ^{vh} ^{vi} ^{vj} ^{vk} ^{vl} ^{vm} ^{vn} ^{vo} ^{vp} ^{vq} ^{vr} ^{vs} ^{vt} ^{vu} ^{vv} ^{vw} ^{vx} ^{vy} ^{vz} ^{wa} ^{wb} ^{wc} ^{wd} ^{we} ^{wf} ^{wg} ^{wh} ^{wi} ^{wj} ^{wk} ^{wl} ^{wm} ^{wn} ^{wo} ^{wp} ^{wq} ^{wr} ^{ws} ^{wt} ^{wu} ^{wv} ^{ww} ^{wx} ^{wy} ^{wz} ^{xa} ^{xb} ^{xc} ^{xd} ^{xe} ^{xf} ^{fg} ^{xh} ^{xi} ^{xj} ^{xk} ^{xl} ^{xm} ^{xn} ^{xo} ^{xp} ^{xq} ^{xr} ^{xs} ^{xt} ^{xu} ^{xv} ^{xw} ^{xy} ^{xz} ^{ya} ^{yb} ^{yc} ^{yd} ^{ye} ^{yf} ^{yg} ^{yh} ^{yi} ^{yj} ^{yk} ^{yl} ^{ym} ^{yn} ^{yo} ^{yp} ^{yq} ^{yr} ^{ys} ^{yt} ^{yu} ^{yv} ^{yw} ^{yx} ^{yy} ^{yz} ^{za} ^{zb} ^{zc} ^{zd} ^{ze} ^{zf} ^{zg} ^{zh} ^{zi} ^{zj} ^{zk} ^{zl} ^{zm} ^{zn} ^{zo} ^{zp} ^{zq} ^{zr} ^{zs} ^{zt} ^{zu} ^{zv} ^{zw} ^{zx} ^{zy} ^{zz}

V. 5. If David had been destroyed by his fierce enemies, God would have been dishonoured: but his marvellous deliverance and advancement would be honourable to the name of the Lord; and even angels in heaven, as well as men on earth, would glorify him on that account. (Notes, xxi. 13. Matt. vi. 9. 13.)

V. 6. Marg. Ref.—Notes, vii. 14—16. ix. 15, 16.

V. 7—11. The Psalmist here suddenly changes his language from deep complaints to exulting praises. His heart, delivered from desponding fears, was prepared, and fixed in a determination to praise God, and to employ his tongue and all his musical powers in that service: with this he would awaken the morning, or begin the day; and he would render his worship as publick as he possibly could, that both the Israelites and the surrounding nations might hear.—This may with peculiar propriety be applied to Jesus, as risen from the dead, and exulting in the view of the glory which would redound to God in the conversion of the Gentiles. (Notes, 5. xxii. 22—28. xl. 9, 10. cviii. 1—5.)—*The people.* (9) ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^{aa} ^{ab} ^{ac} ^{ad} ^{ae} ^{af} ^{ag} ^{ah} ^{ai} ^{aj} ^{ak} ^{al} ^{am} ^{an} ^{ao} ^{ap} ^{aq} ^{ar} ^{as} ^{at} ^{au} ^{av} ^{aw} ^{ax} ^{ay} ^{az} ^{ba} ^{bb} ^{bc} ^{bd} ^{be} ^{bf} ^{bg} ^{bh} ^{bi} ^{bj} ^{bk} ^{bl} ^{bm} ^{bn} ^{bo} ^{bp} ^{bq} ^{br} ^{bs} ^{bt} ^{bu} ^{bv} ^{bw} ^{bx} ^{by} ^{bz} ^{ca} ^{cb} ^{cc} ^{cd} ^{ce} ^{cf} ^{cg} ^{ch} ^{ci} ^{cj} ^{ck} ^{cl} ^{cm} ^{cn} ^{co} ^{cp} ^{cq} ^{cr} ^{cs} ^{ct} ^{cu} ^{cv} ^{cw} ^{cx} ^{cy} ^{cz} ^{da} ^{db} ^{dc} ^{dd} ^{de} ^{df} ^{dg} ^{dh} ^{di} ^{dj} ^{dk} ^{dl} ^{dm} ^{dn} ^{do} ^{dp} ^{dq} ^{dr} ^{ds} ^{dt} ^{du} ^{dv} ^{dw} ^{dx} ^{dy} ^{dz} ^{ea} ^{eb} ^{ec} ^{ed} ^{ee} ^{ef} ^{eg} ^{eh} ^{ei} ^{ej} ^{ek} ^{el} ^{em} ^{en} ^{eo} ^{ep} ^{eq} ^{er} ^{es} ^{et} ^{eu} ^{ev} ^{ew} ^{ex} ^{ey} ^{ez} ^{fa} ^{fb} ^{fc} ^{fd} ^{fe} ^{ff} ^{fg} ^{fh} ^{fi} ^{fj} ^{fk} ^{fl} ^{fm} ^{fn} ^{fo} ^{fp} ^{fq} ^{fr} ^{fs} ^{ft} ^{fu} ^{fv} ^{fw} ^{fx} ^{fy} ^{fz} ^{ga} ^{gb} ^{gc} ^{gd} ^{ge} ^{gf} ^{gg} ^{gh} ^{gi} ^{gj} ^{gk} ^{gl} ^{gm} ^{gn} ^{go} ^{gp} ^{gq} ^{gr} ^{gs} ^{gt} ^{gu} ^{gv} ^{gw} ^{gx} ^{gy} ^{gz} ^{ha} ^{hb} ^{hc} ^{hd} ^{he} ^{hf} ^{hg} ^{hh} ^{hi} ^{hj} ^{hk} ^{hl} ^{hm} ^{hn} ^{ho} ^{hp} ^{hq} ^{hr} ^{hs} ^{ht} ^{hu} ^{hv} ^{hw} ^{hx} ^{hy} ^{hz} ^{ia} ^{ib} ^{ic} ^{id} ^{ie} ^{if} ^{ig} ^{ih} ⁱⁱ ^{ij} ^{ik} ^{il} ^{im} ⁱⁿ ^{io} ^{ip} ^{iq} ^{ir} ^{is} ^{it} ^{iu} ^{iv} ^{iw} ^{ix} ^{iy} ^{iz} ^{ja} ^{jb} ^{jc} ^{jd} ^{je} ^{jf} ^{jj} ^{jk} ^{jl} ^{jm} ^{jn} ^{jo} ^{jp} ^{jq} ^{jr} ^{js} ^{jt} ^{ju} ^{jv} ^{jw} ^{jx} ^{ky} ^{kz} ^{la} ^{lb} ^{lc} ^{ld} ^{le} ^{lf} ^{lg} ^{lh} ^{li} ^{lj} ^{lk} ^{ll} ^{lm} ^{ln} ^{lo} ^{lp} ^{lq} ^{lr} ^{ls} ^{lt} ^{lu} ^{lv} ^{lw} ^{lx} ^{ly} ^{lz} ^{ma} ^{mb} ^{mc} ^{md} ^{me} ^{mf} ^{mg} ^{mh} ^{mi} ^{mj} ^{mk} ^{ml} ^{mm} ^{mn} ^{mo} ^{mp} ^{mq} ^{mr} ^{ms} ^{mt} ^{mu} ^{mv} ^{mw} ^{mx} ^{my} ^{mz} ^{na} ^{nb} ^{nc} nd ^{ne} ^{nf} ^{ng} ^{nh} ⁿⁱ ^{nj} ^{nk} ^{nl} ^{nm} ⁿⁿ ^{no} ^{np} ^{nq} ^{nr} ^{ns} ^{nt} ^{nu} ^{nv} ^{nw} ^{nx} ^{ny} ^{nz} ^{oa} ^{ob} ^{oc} ^{od} ^{oe} ^{of} ^{og} ^{oh} ^{oi} ^{oj} ^{ok} ^{ol} ^{om} ^{on} ^{oo} ^{op} ^{oq} ^{or} ^{os} ^{ot} ^{ou} ^{ov} ^{ow} ^{ox} ^{oy} ^{oz} ^{pa} ^{pb} ^{pc} ^{pd} ^{pe} ^{pf} ^{pg} ^{ph} ^{pi} ^{pj} ^{pk} ^{pl} ^{pm} ^{pn} ^{po} ^{pp} ^{pq} ^{pr} ^{ps} ^{pt} ^{pu} ^{pv} ^{pw} ^{px} ^{py} ^{pz} ^{qa} ^{qb} ^{qc} ^{qd} ^{qe} ^{qf} ^{qg} ^{qh} ^{qi} ^{qj} ^{qk} ^{ql} ^{qm} ^{qn} ^{qo} ^{qp} ^{qq} ^{qr} ^{qs} ^{qt} ^{qu} ^{qv} ^{qw} ^{qx} ^{qy} ^{qz} ^{ra} ^{rb} ^{rc} rd ^{re} ^{rf} ^{rg} ^{rh} ^{ri} ^{rj} ^{rk} ^{rl} ^{rm} ^{rn} ^{ro} ^{rp} ^{rq} ^{rr} ^{rs} ^{rt} ^{ru} ^{rv} ^{rw} ^{rx} ^{ry} ^{rz} ^{sa} ^{sb} ^{sc} ^{sd} ^{se} ^{sf} ^{sg} ^{sh} ^{si} ^{sj} ^{sk} ^{sl} sm ^{sn} ^{so} ^{sp} ^{sq} ^{sr} ^{ss} st ^{su} ^{sv} ^{sw} ^{sx} ^{sy} ^{sz} ^{ta} ^{tb} ^{tc} ^{td} ^{te} ^{tf} ^{tg} th ^{ti} ^{tj} ^{tk} ^{tl} tm ^{tn} ^{to} ^{tp} ^{tq} ^{tr} ^{ts} ^{tt} ^{tu} ^{tv} ^{tw} ^{tx} ^{ty} ^{tz} ^{ua} ^{ub} ^{uc} ^{ud} ^{ue} ^{uf} ^{ug} ^{uh} ^{ui} ^{uj} ^{uk} ^{ul} ^{um} ^{un} ^{uo} ^{up} ^{uq} ^{ur} ^{us} ^{ut} ^{uu} ^{uv} ^{uw} ^{ux} ^{uy} ^{uz} ^{va} ^{vb} ^{vc} ^{vd} ^{ve} ^{vf} ^{vg} ^{vh} ^{vi} ^{vj} ^{vk} ^{vl} ^{vm} ^{vn} ^{vo} ^{vp} ^{vq} ^{vr} ^{vs} ^{vt} ^{vu} ^{vv} ^{vw} ^{vx} ^{wy} ^{wz} ^{xa} ^{xb} ^{xc} ^{xd} ^{xe} ^{xf} ^{fg} ^{xh} ^{xi} ^{xj} ^{xk} ^{xl} ^{xm} ^{xn} ^{xo} ^{xp} ^{xq} ^{xr} ^{xs} ^{xt} ^{xu} ^{xv} ^{xw} ^{xy} ^{xz} ^{ya} ^{yb} ^{yc} ^{yd} ^{ye} ^{yf} ^{yg} ^{yh} ^{yi} ^{yj} ^{yk} ^{yl} ^{ym} ^{yn} ^{yo} ^{yp} ^{yq} ^{yr} ^{ys} ^{yt} ^{yu} ^{yv} ^{yw} ^{yx} ^{yy} ^{yz} ^{za} ^{zb} ^{zc} ^{zd} ^{ze} ^{zf} ^{zg} ^{zh} ^{zi} ^{zj} ^{zk} ^{zl} ^{zm} ^{zn} ^{zo} ^{zp} ^{zq} ^{zr} ^{zs} ^{zt} ^{zu} ^{zv} ^{zw} ^{zx} ^{zy} ^{zz}

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

Protection from man’s *injustice* must be sought from the Lord’s *mercy*; and the most eminent believers need frequently to reiterate the publican’s prayer, “God be merciful to me, a sinner.” But an inward consciousness, that

our souls trust in the Lord, may enable us in the most imminent dangers, to expect, that our calamities will at length be over-past: and, in the mean time, by faith and prayer, we must make the shadow of his almighty wings our refuge.—If we have fled from the wrath to come unto Jesus Christ, we are interested in all his merits, grace, and victories; and in all the precious promises and glorious perfections of our God: and he, who has *performed* all things requisite to the salvation of his people, will in answer to our prayers *perform* all things for us, and in us, which are needful to our enjoyment of it. It is true that the sons of men, among whom we live, are often savage as lions, and fierce as the flaming fire: their teeth seem to be spears and arrows, and their slanderous tongues, sharp swords: and Satan, a still more subtle, powerful, and cruel enemy, would swallow us up. But notwithstanding their snares and pits, their stratagems and assaults, we are safe, if we belong to the Lord. The Redeemer was far more exposed to their rage and malice, and by their wicked hands was crucified and slain: yet the Lord sent from heaven and raised him from the dead, and advanced him to his glorious throne: and he will, through him, send forth his mercy and truth, and graciously accomplish his promises; he will rescue our souls from all tempters and persecutors; and angels shall join with men in beholding and celebrating his glory in our salvation. Let us then seek to have our hearts fixed on him, and prepared for his spiritual worship; to celebrate the praises of his boundless mercy and unfailing faithfulness, and to “glorify him with body and spirit, which are his.” Let us assuredly expect and wait for the completion of what concerneth us: and let us earnestly pray, that the Lord may be exalted above the heavens, and his glory above all the earth, by extending the blessings of his gospel through every part of every land, in all the world. (Notes, lxvii.)

NOTES.

PSALM LVIII. Title. Note, lvii, title.

V. 1, 2. It is conjectured that Saul instituted a legal

i il. 5. Job xv. 14.
Prov. xxii. 15.
Is. xlviii. 8. Eph.
ii. 3. iv. 18.

* Heb. *from the belly*, xxii. 10. Is. xlv. 3.

g cxi. 3. Ec. x. 11.
Rom. iii. 13.
Jam. iii. 8.

† Heb. *according to the likeness of*, Matt. iii. 7. xxiii. 33.

i Jer. viii. 17.

z Or, *asp.* Job xx. 14. 16. Is. xi. 8.

§ Or, *be the charmer never so cunning*, Deut. xviii. 11. Is. xix. 3.

k iii. 7. x. 15. Job iv. 10, 11. xxix. 17. Ez. xxx. 21, &c.

l xvii. 12. xci. 13. Num. xxiii. 24. Is. xxxi. 4. Hos. v. 14. Mic. v. 8.

m xxii. 14. lxiv. 7. 8. cxii. 10. Ex. xv. 15. Josh. ii. 9, 11. 2 Sam. xvii. 10. Is. xiii. 7.

3 The wicked are 'estranged from the womb: they go astray * as soon as they be born, speaking lies.

4 Their ^gpoison is [†]like the poison of a ^hserpent; *they are* like ⁱthe deaf adder *that* stoppeth her ear;

5 Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, ^jcharming never so wisely.

6 ^kBreak their teeth, O God, in their mouth; break out the great teeth of ^lthe young lions, O LORD.

7 Let them ^mmelt away as waters *which* run continually: *when* he bendeth *his bow to shoot* his arrows, let them be as cut in pieces.

8 As a snail *which* melteth, let *every one of them* ⁿpass away: *like* ^othe untimely birth of a woman, *that* they may not see the sun.

9 Before your pots can feel ^pthe thorns, he shall take them away ^qas with a whirlwind, ^rboth living, and in *his* wrath.

10 ^sThe righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall ^twash his feet in the blood of the wicked.

11 So that a man shall say, ^uVerily *there is* ^va reward for the righteous: *verily* he is a God that judgeth in the earth.

10. Rom. vi. 21, 22.
2 Pet. iii. 4—10.

u ix. 16. lxiv. 9. lxvii. 4. lxxxiii. 18. xcvi. 13. Mal. ii. 17.

n xxxvii. 35, 36.
Matt. xxiv. 35.
Jam. i. 10.

o Job iii. 16. Ec. vi. 3.

p cxviii. 12. Ec. vii. 6.

q lv. 23. lxxiii. 19.
—20. Job xviii. 18. xx. 5, &c.

r Prov. i. 27. xiv. 32. Is. xvii. 14. xl. 24. Jer. xxiii. 19.

s Heb. *as living as wrath*, Num. xvi. 30.

t lii. 6. lxiv. 10. lxviii. 1—3. cviii. 42. Judg. v. 31. Prov. xi. 10. Rev. xviii. 20. xix. 1—6.

u lxviii. 23. Job xxix. 6. Rev. xiv. 20.

v lxxiii. 13—15. xcii. 15. Mal. iii. 14. Rom. ii. 5.

* Heb. *fruit of the*, &c. Is. iii. 1.

process against David; and, by corrupting the assembly of the elders, obtained an iniquitous sentence of treason against him, in order to cover his malicious persecution. Thus the Sanhedrim and the people of the Jews, and Pilate, condemned Jesus to be put to death. In both cases, the persons concerned *inwardly designed* and loved wickedness; and, while they pretended to weigh the cause in the balance of justice, they used their power to commit violence, even after having deliberately considered the nature and consequences of their conduct: and this was the more heinous, as it was perpetrated by the magistrates placed over the people of God, "in the *land*" where his name was worshipped, and his oracles made known. In respect of their conduct, therefore, the Psalmist makes a most solemn appeal to their consciences, and expressly charges them with extreme guilt. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, lxxxii. 1—7.)

V. 3—5. The Psalmist here traced back the base conduct of his persecutors, (as he had done his own crimes, *Note*, li. 5, 6,) to the source of original depravity; which had neither been counteracted by proper discipline, nor subdued by regenerating grace.—All wickedness springs from the *alienation* of the heart from God, being "estranged" from him: and children very soon manifest evil tempers, and contract habits of lying and of other vices. If therefore they grow up, without change or restraint, and escape with impunity, or are even encouraged in wickedness, as Saul's courtiers and judges were; they will at length be hardened in sin, and ready to perpetrate any villainy. The most hateful dispositions are found as natural to them, and as fatal to others, as the poison of a serpent. It was indeed commonly allowed, that some kind of musick, or skilful incantations, would disarm the rage of serpents, in general: yet one species of adder seemed to be *deaf*, or as if she stopped her ears against the most skilful strains of those who attempted to charm her: thus no arguments, persuasions, or services of David, could mollify the envenomed malice of Saul and his party against him.—In like manner the heavenly discourses and the beneficent miracles of Jesus did not disarm the rage of that "generation of vipers" against him: (*Notes*, cxi. 1—3. *Matt.* iii. 7—10. xxiii. 29—33:) and sinners still stop their ears, and close their hearts against conviction or per-

suation, while they rush forward in rebellion and enmity against God and his cause. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, Ec. x. 11—15. *Jer.* viii. 17.)

V. 6—9. David's enemies were strong and fierce as young lions: he therefore prayed that *their teeth might be broken*, even their strongest teeth, their *grinders*, with which they were ready to devour him: that so they might be disabled from doing mischief. (*Notes*, xxvii. 1—3. *lvi.* 1, 2. *lvii.* 4.) They overwhelmed him like an inundation: but he desired it might prove like a land-flood, which is soon wasted. They were about to shoot at him: but he would have their bows, or their arrows, to be shivered to pieces, and become like straw, and do no execution; and he prayed that they might waste insensibly as the snail, which leaves its substance all along its track; and that they might come to nothing, like an abortion. He also predicted, that their prosperous rage, (which resembled the crackling of thorns under a pot,) would soon be extinct, and produce no effect: while the Lord in his wrath would hurry them into speedy destruction; as a furious whirlwind drives a living man down a precipice, or into a dreadful pit. This seems the meaning of the passage; but the original is somewhat obscure to us. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10, 11. David's cause was that of true religion; and though he would not avenge himself, he knew that the Lord would, and with terrible displays of his power and wrath. Then the righteous would rejoice, not in the misery of Saul and his party, but in the display of the divine glory, and in the triumphs of truth and piety over ungodliness and iniquity: nay, the most terrible circumstances of their ruin would add to the comfort and purity of the righteous; as if a man should wash his feet in the blood of those, who had trampled upon every thing sacred: while all, who witnessed these events would be constrained to confess, "Verily there is a reward," (or *fruit*,) "for the righteous; verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth." (Both the word for "God," and that translated "that judgeth," are in the plural. *Note*, *Gen.* i. 1.)—All this was most signally verified in the destruction of Jerusalem, after the Jews had crucified their Messiah: and it has had, and will have, repeated accomplishments, in the establishment of true Christianity upon the ruins of its opposers, but the day of judgment will be its grand and final accom-

PSALM LIX.

David, in great danger, prays to be saved from his enemies, complains of their cruelty, but still trusts in God, 1—10. He prays for and predicts their confusion and ruin, and resolves to praise God continually, 11—17.

To the chief Musician, * Al-taschith, Michtam of David; ^a when Saul sent, and they watched the house to kill him.

^b DELIVER me from mine enemies, O my God; ^t defend me from them that rise up against me.

2 Deliver me from the workers of

iniquity, and ^e save me from bloody men.

3 For, lo, ^d they lie in wait for my soul: ^e the mighty are gathered against me; ^f not for my transgression, nor for my sin, O LORD.

4 They ^g run and prepare themselves without my fault: ^h awake to ⁱ help me, and behold.

5 Thou therefore, O LORD God of hosts, ^j the God of Israel, awake to ^k visit all ^l the heathen: ^m be not merciful to any wicked transgressors. Selah.

6 They ⁿ return at evening: they

^a Or, Destroy not, a golden Psalm
^b Judg. xvi. 2, 3
^c Sam. xix. 11, &c. 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33.

^d vii. 1, 2. xviii. 48. lxxi. 4. cxliii. 12. Luke i. 74. 75. 2 Tim. iv. 17, 13.
^e Heb. set me on high. xii. 5. xci. 14. Is. xxxiii. 16.

^c xxvi. 9. xxvii. 2
^d x. 9, 10. xxxvii. 32, 33. xxxviii. 12. lvi. 6. 1 Sam. xix. 1. Prov. xii. 6. Mic. vii. 2. Acts xxiii. 21.
^e ii. 2. Acts iv. 26, 27
^f vii. 3—6. lxix. 4. 1 Sam. xxiv. 11. xxvi. 18. John xv. 25.
^g 1 Sam. xix. 12—24. Prov. i. 16. Is. lix. 7. Acts xxiii. 15. Rom. iii. 15.
^h v. 6. xxxv. 23. xlv. 23. Is. li. 9.
ⁱ Heb. meet.
^j Gen. xxxiii. 20. Ex. iii. 15.
^k Ex. xx. 5.
^l ix. 15. liv. 3. Is. i. 10. Am. ix. 7. Rom. ii. 28, 29. ix. 6.
^m vii. 12, 13. lv. 15. Is. xxvii. 11. Ez. xviii. 27, 28. Jam. ii. 13. 14. 1 Sam. xix. 11.

plishment. (Notes, xcvi. 11—13. Is. xxvi. 20, 21. xxxiv. lxiii. 1—6. Mal. iii. 13—18. Rev. xiv. 14—20. xviii. 20—24. xix. 1—6. 17—21.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

Injustice established by law, and decreed by judges, is more malignant than any other.—It is grievous to behold the sons of men preying upon their own species; but more so to see the congregation of those, who profess to be the children of God, combining against the remnant of his true people. We may very properly appeal to the consciences of such iniquitous judges, whether indeed they speak righteously and decide uprightly. But the malice, avarice, or pride of their hearts prevails against their convictions; and their iniquity is intentional, deliberate, and determined.—While we behold the effects of natural depravity in the atrocious crimes of others; we should be humbled by recollecting, that the principles of them all are in our hearts also. We ought therefore to be thankful to the Lord for merciful restraints; earnest in seeking renewing grace; watchful over ourselves; and patient under the effects of our fallen nature in others. We may see, in our children, the wickedness of the world in embryo: their dislike to religion, their ingenuity at inventing lies, their pride, obstinacy, vanity, envy, and anger, are rank weeds, which if neglected, will overspread their minds, and prevent the growth of every good thing. It is our duty therefore to bestow much pains upon their education; and above all to pray for converting grace to make them new creatures.—But, though the poison of a serpent is within us, we may prevent in great measure its breaking forth to the injury of others. When the Saviour's instructions, reasonings, and persuasions are duly regarded, the very serpent becomes harmless and gentle like the dove. (Note, Is. xi. 6—9.) But those, who refuse to hear him that speaks to them in strains of heavenly wisdom, must perish miserably and eternally; nor can all nature furnish images adequately to represent their dreadful doom. Though the righteous are not “glad at calamities,” yet they must rejoice to see the cause of God triumphant, and men on every side convinced that there is a reward for the righteous, and “a God who judgeth the earth.” They must therefore exult on some occasions, in the ruin of terrible persecutors: they will in due time rejoice at the destruc-

tion of all antichristian corrupters of the faith: and at last, they will witness the perdition of ungodly men with unmingled joy, and sing, “So let all thine enemies perish, “O LORD.” (Notes, lxviii. 1—3. Judg. v. 31. Esth. viii. 15—17. ix. 17—32. Prov. xi. 10, 11.)

NOTES.

PSALM LIX. Title. (Notes, 1 Sam. xix. 11—18.) In this Psalm David expresses what his thoughts and affections were, when Saul sent officers to watch his house all night, and to slay him when he came out of his doors in ‘the morning.’ Bp. Patrick.—His triumphant confidence in God in this extreme danger, and his anticipated fervour of gratitude, for the deliverance which he fully expected, shew a peculiarly pious and happy state of mind, in such trying circumstances.

V. 1, 2. (Marg. Ref.) Defend. (1) Or, “Thou shalt “set me on high, &c.” The clause is future, and implies the strongest assurance of safety, and advancement above all enemies, grounded on the special promises of God. (Notes, xii. 5, 6. xxvii. 4—6. xci. 14—16. Is. xxxiii. 15, 16.)

V. 3, 4. David had not in any thing offended Saul, but was persecuted by him and his adherents, for his good deeds, not for his sins: and in this he typified the suffering, but perfectly holy Jesus. (Notes, vii. 3—5. xxvii. 1—3. 1 Sam. xviii. 12—16. xix. 1—7. John xv. 22—25.)

V. 5. Heathen.] גוֹיִם, nations, Gentiles. (Notes, 8. x. 16. Is. i. 10—15. Jer. ix. 25, 26. Am. ix. 7—10.)—Be not merciful, &c.] The Lord’s mercy and patience, towards the inveterate enemies of his cause, appeared to David ruinous to the interests of true religion in Israel: but the words are also a prediction of that judgment “without “mercy,” which will be executed upon all the implacable opposers of Christ and his people.—Those who repent cease to be “wicked transgressors,” and “perfidious “workers of iniquity;” none of the impenitent will find mercy: and as far as it can be ascertained, that this is the awful case of any persons, we are not required to pray for them; nor forbidden to pray against them, that by the righteous judgment of God, they may be prevented from doing further mischief. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Tim. iv. 14, 15. 1 John v. 16—18. Rev. vi. 9—11.)

V. 6. David’s persecutors remitted their pursuit of his life, during the day-time; but in the evening they returned

o Prov. xv. 2. make a noise like a dog, and go round
marg. Matt. xii. 34.
p lv. 2. lvii. 4. about the city.

7 Behold, °they belch out with their
mouth: °swords are in their lips; for
q x. 11. 13. lxxiii. 11. xciv. 7—9. who, say they, doth hear?

8 But °thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at
them; thou shalt have all °the heathen
r ii. 4. xxxvii. 13. in derision.
1 Sam. xix. 15,
16. Prov. i. 26.
s 5. Matt. xviii. 17.

9 Because of °his strength will I
wait upon thee: for God is my °De-
fence.
t xviii. 1, 2. xxvii. 1. 14. xlv. 1.
lxii. 5. 6. 11. Is. xii. 2. xxvi. 3, 4.
xl. 31. Matt. vi. 13.

10 °The God of my mercy shall
u 17. 2 Cor. i. 3. prevent me: God shall °let me see
Eph. ii. 4, 5. my desire upon mine °enemies.
1 Pet. v. 10.

11 °Slay them not, lest my people
forget: °scatter them by thy power;
x xxi. 3. lxxix. 8. Is. lxxv. 24. 1 Thes. iv. 15.
y liv. 7. xci. 8. xcii. 11. cxii. 8.
1 Sam. xxvi. 10. 2 Sam. i. 11, 12. 17. Jer. xvii. 16. Luke xix. 41—44. Rom. x. 2, 3. † Heb. observers. v. 8. liv. 5. marg. lvi. 6. z Gen. iv. 12—15. Judg. i. 6, 7. Ec. ix. 5. Ez. xii. 15, 16. xiv. 22, 23. a xlv. 11. lii. 5. Lev. xxvi. 33. Deut. iv. 27. xxviii. 64. xxx. 3, 4. Ez. xii. 15. Luke i. 51, 52. xxi. 24.

and °bring them down, O Lord, °our
Shield.

12 °For the sin of their mouth and
the words of their lips, let them even
be °taken in their pride: and for
°cursing and lying which they speak.

13 °Consume them in wrath, con-
sume them, that they may not be: and
°let them know that God ruleth in
Jacob, unto the ends of the earth.
Selah.

14 And °at evening let them return;
and let them make a noise like a dog,
and go round about the city.

15 Let them °wander up and down
°for meat, and °grudge °if they be not
satisfied.

iv. 4, 5, 9, 10. v. 9, 10. Matt. xxiv. 7, 8. § Or, if they be not satisfied, then they will stay all night. 1 Is. lvi. 11. Mic. iii. 5.

to hunt their prey, with menaces and reproaches, as the hound makes a noise when upon the scent after the hunted animal: thus they compassed the city to prevent his escape. The Scribes and Pharisees also chose the night for the season of their machinations against the Son of David. (Notes, Matt. xxvii. 1, 2. John xviii. 1—3.)

V. 7. The reviling menaces and proud boastings, which were vented from the furious malice of these persecutors, wounded David's peace and reputation like swords, and subserved their designs of murdering him: nor would they have dared to utter such notorious falsehoods, if they had not disbelieved the being of a God, or their accountability to him. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, lv. 20, 21. lvii. 4.)

V. 8. (Notes, ii. 1—6.)—In this Psalm, (Note, 5,) and in other places, the Israelites, who set themselves against the man “after God's own heart,” are called “the heathen:” and in like manner the Jews, when they had crucified the Son of David, and persisted in refusing to submit to him, were excluded from the church of God, and have ever since been treated as a part of the Gentile world; except as marked with more striking indications of the divine displeasure. (Notes, Is. lxxv. 13—15. Hos. iii. 4, 5.)

V. 9. “The more strong and the more malicious Saul is, the more will I look unto thee; ... for thou, O God, art my sure Refuge in my greatest distresses.” Bp. Hall.—Some, however, suppose that the Psalmist, when he says, “Because of his strength,” refers to the almighty power of God, as the ground of his cheerful confidence. (Marg.—Note, 1, 2.)

V. 10. God, who had always shewn mercy and loving kindness to his servant, would certainly come to his aid in this emergency, in some way beyond all human expectation; so that when he seemed to stand afar off, he would shew himself present, to keep his enemies from hurting him. He would also exceed the hope of his friends; and even prevent him, by answering his prayers, while he was employed in offering them. (Is. lxxv. 24.) Thus God would cause David to look on his enemies without dismay, and to behold their disappointment.—His conduct, when he heard of Saul's death, implies, that he

had not desired, though he had foreseen, the woeful day. (Marg. Ref.—Note, liv. 7.)

V. 11—13. The rejection of the Jewish nation, their long continued dispersion, and their preservation as a distinct people, reminding men all over the earth of God's vengeance on those who reject his gospel, and proudly despise and blaspheme his Son; (while every successive generation allows the deeds of their fathers, by their enmity against Christianity;) form such a striking accomplishment of this passage, that we must conclude the Holy Spirit intended these events in them: though it is probable that David meant the disgrace, degradation, and gradual extirpation of Saul's family, for their opposition to the Lord's Anointed, and all their imprecations and calumnies against him. Other obstinate opposers of genuine Christianity may also be intended. (Marg. Ref.)—“They shall be taken in their pride, &c.” (12) “And they” (or, men) “shall know, unto the ends of the earth, that God ruleth, &c.” (13) Had the nation of Israel been wholly extirpated for their crimes, especially for crucifying their Messiah, and their obstinate and persevering opposition to him and his cause; or had they been incorporated with the Gentiles, among whom they were dispersed; the awful event would in time have been forgotten, and many important benefits to the cause of true religion prevented. But their continuance through successive ages, a separate people, scattered amidst all nations, has been, and is, a most important proof that Christianity is of God; and will doubtless make way for still more surprising events, in their restoration, and the consequences of it to the world at large. (Notes, Num. xxiii. 9. Jer. xxx. 10, 11. Hos. iii. 4, 5. Rom. xi. 11—15. 22—32.)

V. 14, 15. These verses may mean, that the punishment of David's persecutors would be answerable to their crimes: their clamours against him would be followed by howlings of distress, like those of the dog that is starving with hunger: they would in vain compass the city to find food, and would grudge all that went beside them. (Marg. Ref.—Note, 6.)—The extreme famine in Jerusalem, when besieged by the Romans; and the state of the Jewish nation ever since, as destitute of the Bread of life, might be

in 9, 10. xxi. 13. 16 But ^m I will sing of thy power;
 cvi. 8. cxlv. 11. yea, I will ^a sing aloud of thy mercy
 Ex. xv. 6. Job in the morning: ^p for thou hast been
 xxxvii. 23. my Defence and Refuge ^a in the day
 n xxi. 7. xxxvi. of my trouble.
 5. lxxxvi. 13. Rom. xv. 9.
 lxxxix. 1. ci. 1. Eph. i. 6, 7.
 o v. 3. xxx. 5. cxliii. 8. 1 Sam. xix. 11, 12.

17 Unto thee, ^r O my Strength, will
 p iv. 1. lxi. 2, 3. I sing: ^s for God is my Defence, and
 1 Sam. xvii. 37. the God of my mercy.
 2 Cor. i. 10. Eph. iii. 20.

q lxxvii. 2. cxvi. 1
 —5. cxxxviii. 7.
 Jer. xxx. 7.
 Heb. v. 7.
 r xviii. 1. xvi. 1.
 s 9, 10.

PSALM LX.

David complains of the heavy judgments, which God had inflicted on Israel, 1—3. He takes courage from present successes to pray for more complete deliverance, and to exult in the prospect of subjugating

all his enemies; according to the promises of God to him, 4—12.

To the chief Musician upon ^a Shushan-eduth, ^{*} Michtam of David, to teach;
^b when he strove with Aram-naharaim, and with Aram-zobah, when Joab returned, and smote of Edom in
^c the valley of salt twelve thousand.

O God, ^d thou hast cast us off, ^e thou hast ^f scattered us, thou hast been displeased; ^g O turn thyself to us again.

2 Thou hast ^h made the earth to

a lxxx. title.
 * Or, a golden
 Psalm. lix. title.
 b 2 Sam. viii. 3.
 12, 13. x. 16.
 1 Chr. xviii. 3, 12.
 13. xix. 16—19.
 c 2 Kings xiv. 7.
 2 Chr. xxv. 11.
 d 10. xlv. 9. lxxxiv.
 1. lxxxix. 38.
 cviii. 11. 1 Chr.
 xxviii. 9. Rom.
 xi. 1, 2.
 e lix. 11. 1 Sam.
 iv. 10, 11. 17.
 xiii. 6, 7. 11. 19.
 —22. xxxi. 1—7.
 f Heb. broken.
 g lxxxix. 9. lxxx. 3.
 7. 19. lxxxv. 4.
 xc. 13.
 h civ. 32. cxiv. 7.
 2 Sam. xxii. 8.
 Job ix. 6. Is. v.
 25. Jer. iv. 24.
 x. 10. Am. viii.
 8. Hab. iii. 10.
 Matt. xxvii. 51.

alluded to.—But some think, that David here again describes the conduct of his enemies, as foretelling and rejoicing in their disappointment; and that having repeated what he said before, adds what should be translated, “They wander up and down to devour *me*: and if they be not satisfied, they tarry all night.” The words are throughout in the future tense, and may properly be thus rendered: “Surely they shall not be satisfied, though they tarry all night.” (*Title.—Marg.*)

V. 16. *In the morning.*] (*Note, title.*) David was confident, that in the morning, when his enemies expected to devour him, he should in perfect safety be loudly singing the praises of God. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 17. *Marg. Ref.—Note, 1 Pet. v. 10, 11.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When we suffer for well-doing, we are conformed to our Redeemer, and have an evidence of our acceptance with God. We should indeed greatly fear suffering as “evil-doers, or busy-bodies in other men’s matters;” but we ought not to be either afraid or ashamed of the hatred of the workers of iniquity, when “they prepare themselves, and are gathered together against us, without our fault.” (*Notes, Matt. v. 10—12. 1 Pet. iii. 13—18. iv. 12—16.*) They may be both mighty and bloody; their words may be as swords, and their actions may correspond with them: but the Lord will awake, and behold, and hasten to the help of his servants.—In vain did Saul and his mighty men seek the life of David: they could not prevent his advancement to the throne, but they occasioned their own ignominy and ruin. Nor could the rulers of the Jews, by crucifying Jesus, prevent his glorification; but they thus hastened their own destruction: and neither tempters nor persecutors can succeed any better, in lying in wait for the soul of the believer. The serpent and his seed bruised the heel of the Redeemer, but he will crush their head. (*Note, Gen. iii. 14, 15.*) “Because of the LORD’s strength,” his servants may then confidently wait on him: and if we trust in him, as the God of our mercy, and have recourse to him in every temptation and tribulation, he will assuredly be our Defence against all those who rise up against us. In proportion as we are conscious, that we are not “wicked transgressors,” who continue impenitent in known sin, we may be satisfied that our cause is of God.—The predictions, which we read, con-

cerning the vengeance to be executed on all the implacable enemies of Christ and his kingdom, and upon all the impenitent and unbelieving; and the accomplishment of many of them in this present world; should impress our minds with an awe of the divine Majesty and purity, and with dread of all iniquity.—The destruction of Jerusalem, and the state of the Jewish nation for much above seventeen hundred years, when viewed in connexion with that awful imprecation upon themselves and their children, which accompanied their malice and lying testimony against Christ, and with their cry, “Crucify him, crucify him;” should make us tremble at the thought of lies and imprecations, which are the offspring of pride and hatred; (*Notes, Matt. xxvii. 19—25;*) and still more, lest we should at last be found despisers or abusers of his gospel. But we should also pray for the conversion of that people; that they may at length know, that Jesus is Lord and God, and that “he ruleth in Jacob, and unto the ends of the earth.” Our prayers, however, for our personal enemies and the opposers of our holy faith, should be attended with solemn warnings: for no mercy will be shewn to obstinate and impenitent transgressors; but they will be eternal monuments of the Lord’s abhorrence of sin, while his wrath will be unto them as a devouring, yet unquenchable fire. But the trials of the upright will terminate in joy and praise: when the night of affliction is over, they will sing of the Lord’s power and mercy in the morning. (*Note, xxx. 5.*) He is their Defence and Refuge in the time of their trouble: let them now, therefore, in assured faith and hope, praise him for those mercies, for which they will rejoice in him and praise him for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM LX. *Title.* “Shushan-eduth” seems to mean, ‘a psalm of testimony set to an instrument of six strings.’ The psalm was intended to testify, and *teach*, the danger of opposing the servants of God, and the happiness of uniting with them.—“Aram-naharaim,” or *Syria of the two rivers*, that is, Syria between the Tygris and the Euphrates, denotes Mesopotamia; and Aram-zobah, Syria to the west of the Euphrates. (*Notes, Gen. xxiv. 10 2 Sam. viii. 13, 14.*)—*Valley of salt.*] *Marg. Ref. c.*

V. 1—3. When Saul and his sons were slain, the Philistines triumphed, and the Israelites were scattered and

^h *lxxxix.* 40. tremble; ^h thou hast broken it: ⁱ heal the breaches thereof; for it shaketh.
³ Thou hast ^k shewed thy people hard things: thou hast made us ⁱ to drink the wine of astonishment.
⁴ Thou hast given ^m a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed ⁿ because of the truth. Selah.
⁵ ^o That thy beloved may be delivered; ^p save *with* thy right hand, and hear me.
⁶ ^q God hath spoken in his holiness; ^r I will rejoice, ^s I will divide ^t Shechem, and mete out ^u the valley of Succoth.
⁷ ^x Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine; Ephraim also is ^y the strength of mine head; ^z Judah is my lawgiver;
⁸ ^a Moab is my wash-pot; ^b over Edom will I cast out my shoe; Philistia, ^c triumph thou because of me.
⁹ ^e Who will bring me *into* the ^f strong city? who will lead me into Edom?
¹⁰ ^d Wilt not thou, O God, which ^e hadst cast us off? and thou, O God, which ^f didst not go out with our armies?
¹¹ ^g Give us help from trouble: for ^h vain is the ⁱ help of man.
¹² Through God ^j we shall do valiantly: for he *it is that* shall ^k tread down our enemies.

^l *lxxxix.* 19. 35. cviii. 7—13. cxxxii. 11. 2 Sam. iii. 18. v. 2. Jer. xxiii. 9. Am. iv. 2. ^r lvi. 4. cxix. 162. 2 Sam. vii. 18—20. Luke i. 45—47. ^s Josh. i. 6. 2 Sam. ii. 8, 9. v. 1—3. ^t Gen. xii. 6. *Shechem.* Josh. xx. 7. xxiv. 1. 32. ^u Josh. xiii. 27. ^x Josh. xvii. 1. 5, 6. 1 Chr. xii. 19. 37.

^y Deut. xxxiii. 17. Sam. xxviii. 2.
^z Gen. xlix. 10.
^a 2 Sam. viii. 2.
^b 1 Chr. xviii. 1, 2.
^c Gen. xxv. 23. xxvii. 40. Num. xxiv. 18. 2 Sam. viii. 14. 1 Chr. xviii. 13.
^d Or, triumph thou over me (by an irony). cviii. 9. 2 Sam. v. 17, &c. viii. 1. xxi. 15—22.
^e Judg. i. 12. 24. 25. 1 Chr. xi. 6. 17—19.
^f Heb. city of strength. 2 Sam. xi. 1. xii. 26. &c. d xx. 7. xlv. 5—9. cxviii. 9, 10. Is. viii. 17. xii. 1, 2. e i. cviii. 11. Jer. xxxiii. 24—26.
^g Deut. i. 42. xx. 4. Josh. vii. 12. x. 42. 1 Sam. iv. 6. 7. 10. 11. 1 Chr. x. 1, &c. g xxv. 22. cxxx. 8. h cxv. 1—3. cxlvi. 3. Is. xxx. 7. xxxi. 3.
ⁱ Heb. salvation. lxii. 1. i xviii. 32—42. cxliv. 1. Num. xxiv. 18, 19. Josh. i. 9. xiv. 12. 2 Sam. x. 12. 1 Chr. xix. 13. k xlv. 5. Is. x. 6. lxiii. 3. Zech. x. 5. Mal. iv. 3. Rev. xix. 15.

dismayed. (Note, 1 Sam. xxxi. 7.) The setting up of Ishbosheth over the ten tribes, and the consequent division and civil war, made the land to tremble, broke its force, and exposed it to the common enemy. Thus the people of God, for their sins, were shewed "hard things," and made to drink the wine of astonishment, as if they had been his enemies. (Notes, lxxv. 8. Is. li. 17—23. Jer. xxv. 15—17. Lam. iv. 21, 22. Hab. ii. 15—17. Matt. xx. 20—23. xxvi. 36—39.) For the wound made by a skilful surgeon may be as painful, as that made by a mortal foe; though it be given with a contrary intention, and save life instead of destroying it. (Notes, Job v. 18, 19. Is. xxx. 26. Hos. vi. 1—3.)—When the Israelites supported Saul, whom God had rejected, and who was evidently given up to the most furious passions, and to adopt the most ruinous measures; when to please him they concurred in persecuting David, the Lord's anointed, whose wisdom and courage, as well as exemplary piety, loyalty, and patriotism, entitled him to their highest esteem and confidence; and when after Saul's death they, at Abner's instance, adhered to Ishbosheth, and carried on war against David, in direct opposition to the known will of God; they seemed to be perfectly infatuated, as if they had drunk some intoxicating poison, which had bereaved them of their senses, and so filled them with terror and amazement, that they knew not what they did. (Note, 2 Sam. ii. 9. 12, 13. iii. 17—21. v. 1, 2.)

V. 4. David, as anointed by God and advanced to the throne, was a banner given to the pious remnant of Israel: and it was displayed, that they might resort to it, and under his authority and command, expect the performance of the Lord's faithful promises, and the triumphing of his truth. (Notes, xx. 5. Ex. xvii. 15, 16.)—In this especially he was a type of Christ, and his kingdom and salvation. (Notes, Is. xi. 11—16. xlix. 22, 23. lix. 16—19. lxii. 10—12. John xii. 27—33, v. 32.)

V. 5. David was beloved of God, as his name signifies; (Notes, 1 Sam. xvi. 10, 11. Ez. xxxiv. 23—31;) and he was a type of his "beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased." But the words in the original are plural, and

evidently relate to Israel as the Lord's chosen and beloved people: (Marg. Ref.) and the verse contains the intercession of David for his subjects; prefiguring, in this, our heavenly Advocate, who never fails to plead in behalf of all, however heretofore rebellious, who bow to the sceptre of his grace, and come to God by him. (Note, Heb. vii. 23—25. 1 John ii. 1, 2.)

V. 6—12. (Notes, lxxxix. 19—37. cviii. 6—13. 2 Sam. vii.) God had, by ordering David to be anointed, as Saul's successor in the kingdom, virtually promised him the throne over all Israel; as he had to Israel the dominion over the adjacent countries. The promises had been in part fulfilled, as they related to David. Shechem, Succoth, Gilead, and Manasseh, were in his possession. These had been subject to Ishbosheth; who had also been supported by Ephraim, that powerful tribe, which was now become the guardian of David's government and person: the legislative authority was transferred to the tribe of Judah, where it would continue till the coming of the Messiah: and while Israel, being willingly subject to David's equitable government, shared its blessings; the neighbouring nations were about to be forced into submission. Moab would soon be reduced to bondage, and employed in the lowest menial services. David also fully expected in a short time to vanquish Edom, and take possession of it, by casting his shoe over it; or treading it under his feet and crushing its strength, as it had been predicted: (Marg. Ref. b.) and let Philistia now triumph over Israel as in times past, if it could. This appears to be an ironical challenge and defiance. (Marg.) These conquests, however, were not yet completed. Bozrah of Edom, or some other strong city, (perhaps Rabbah of the Ammonites,) yet remained unsubdued: but David would not rely on his own valour and conduct, nor on those of his captains or allies, for completing his conquests; but on the Lord, who had before "cast off his people," but was now returned to them, and fought for them: and their enemies would soon perceive the difference between the armies of David, which JEHOVAH accompanied to the battle, and those of Saul, when JEHOVAH had doomed him to destruction.

PSALM LXI.

David encourages himself by past experience, to persevere in prayer, 1—3. Because of former, and in the prospect of future mercies, he purposes to praise and serve God for ever, 4—8.

To the chief Musician upon ^a Neginah,
A Psalm of David.

HEAR my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer.

2 ^c From the end of the earth will I

cry unto thee, when ^d my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to ^e the Rock that is higher than I.

3 For ^f thou hast been a Shelter for me, and a ^g strong Tower from the enemy.

4 ^h I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: ⁱ I will ^j trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.

5 For thou, O God, ^k hast heard my vows: thou hast given ^l me ^m the heritage of those that fear thy name.

d xliii. 5. iv. 6. lxxvii. 3. cxli. 3. cxliii. 4. Mark xiv. 33, 34. Luke xxii. 44. e xviii. 46. xxvii. 5. xl. 2. lxii. 2. 6. ls. xxxii. 2. f iv. 6, 7. cxvi. 2. cxl. 7. ls. xlv. 3, 4. 2 Cor. i. 10. g xviii. 2. Prov. xviii. 10. h 7. xv. 1. xxiii. 6. xxvii. 4. xc. 1. xci. 1. xcii. 13. Rev. iii. 12. i xvii. 8. lxiii. 7. xci. 4. Ruth. ii. 12. Matt. xxiii. 37. j Or, make my refuge. lvii. 1. lxii. 7. cxli. 4. k Heb. vi. 16. l lvi. 12. lxxv. 1. lxxvi. 19. m l xvi. 5, 6. cxv. 13. Mal. iii. 16—18. Acts x. 35.

a iv. vi. liv. lv. titles.

b v. 1—3. xvii. 1. b xxviii. 2. lv. 1. 2. cxxx. 2. Phil. iv. 6. c xlii. 6. cxxxix. 9, 10. Deut. iv. 29. Jon. ii. 2—4.

Judah is my lawgiver. (7) The prophecy of dying Jacob is here evidently referred to. (Note, Gen. xlix. 10.)

The help. (11) ^{אין עז}. "Vain is the salvation of man." (Marg.—Notes, lxii. 1, 2. 5—7. Is. xii. 2. xlv. 20—25.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The anger of God against sin is the sole cause of all misery, personal or publick, in families, churches, and nations, which has been, is, or shall be endured, in time or to eternity.—Professing churches are often cast off, and deprived of their privileges for their sins; nations tremble and are broken for the same cause; yea, the earth, and creation itself, groans under the load of man's guilt. (Note, Rom. viii. 18—23.) Even the true believer, when he commits iniquity, will sometimes be shewed heavy things, and made to drink of the wine of astonishment, till anguish and dismay for a time seize upon him. In all these cases, there is no remedy, but by returning to the Lord with repentance, faith, and prayer; and beseeching him to return to us, and heal the breaches which sin has made. Blessed be his name, "he hath given a banner," in the cross of Christ, to those who fear his name; that resorting thither, and receiving mercy, they may enlist under him who now fills the mediatorial throne, and so wage successful war against the enemies of their souls. Oh, may this banner be every where displayed, that all nations on the face of the earth may embrace the truth, and experience the faithfulness of God to his promises!—He, who exalted the Saviour by his own right hand to the throne of glory, will hear his intercession for all who pray in his name, and who are beloved for his sake; and save them also by his almighty power. He, who is in Christ a new creature, may rejoice in all the precious promises, which God "hath spoken in his holiness," and by his Holy One; and may consider the whole ransomed inheritance as his own reversion: and the present privileges to which he is called, and the sanctifying and comforting influences of the Spirit which he experiences, are the sure earnest of heavenly glory. If Christ be our's, all things are our's; mercy, grace, peace, wisdom, righteousness, strength, and victory, life and death, angels and men, earth and heaven are our's; and all things shall, in one way or other, be rendered subservient to our eternal good. (Notes, Rom. viii. 28—39. 1 Cor. iii. 18—23.) We are not, however, as yet made complete conquerors; and no true believer will abuse these truths, to the allowed indulgence of sloth or vain confidence.—We are still called to put on, and use our spiri-

tual armour, and to prepare for fresh conflicts, perhaps more trying than any which we have yet experienced: (Notes, Eph. vi. 10—18:) trusting, however, in God to lead us forth and support us, and to give us strength in every time of trouble, we may do valiantly and tread down all our enemies, and we shall ere long obtain the conqueror's crown. But vain is the help or salvation of man, or of creatures, even far more in things spiritual and eternal, than in our temporal concerns: so that those who trust and pray to saints and angels, and expect salvation from them; will be overcome by the enemy and finally perish.—But our Mediator, through whom we come to the Father, and trust in him, is "Emmanuel," God over all "blessed for evermore;" and believers, when strong in faith, "can do all things, through Christ who strengtheneth them." (Notes, 2 Cor. xii. 7—10. Phil. iv. 10—13.) The church also, over which oppressors have so often insulted, as if the Lord had cast her off, shall speedily triumph over them all: and while those who willingly submit to our anointed King shall share his glories, all his foes shall be put under his feet. (Note, 1 Cor. xv. 20—28.)

NOTES.

PSALM LXI. V. 1, 2. This psalm seems to have been composed, when David was driven by Absalom's rebellion, like an exile, beyond Jordan, to the extremities of the promised land, and far from the sanctuary of God. (Notes, xli. 1—3. xlii. 1—8. xliii. lxiii. 1—4. 2 Sam. xv. 13—15. 23—30.) His heart was overwhelmed with complicated distresses, as by an inundation. The divine mercy, support, and protection formed the rock, on which he desired to rest his soul, out of the reach of the tempestuous waves, which dashed and raged below: yet he was like the shipwrecked mariner, who is exposed to the raging billows, from which he would be secured, if he could reach the summit of a rock that is close to him; but it is far too high for him to climb it without help. Thus David found, that he could not by faith and hope ascend the "Rock of salvation," and be established on it, unless the Lord led him to it and helped him to ascend it, and to stand firm upon it. (Marg. Ref.—Note, xl. 1—5.)

V. 3. 'Nothing doth more strengthen our faith, than the remembrance of God's succour in times past.' (Marg. Ref.—Notes, iii. 3—5. lxxi. 17, 18. cxvi. 2. 1 Sam. vii. 12 xvii. 34—37. 2 Cor. i. 8—11.)

V. 4, 5. The Psalmist, though now driven away from
2 I

* Heb. *shalt add days to the days of the king.* xxi. 4, 6. lxxii. 15—17. Is liii. 10.
 † Heb. *generation and generation.* lxxxix. 36, 37.
 m xli. 12. Is. ix. 6, 7. Luke i. 33. Heb. vii. 21—25. ix. 24.
 n xl. 11. lvii. 3. Gen. xxiv. 27. xxxii. 10. Prov. xx. 28. Mic. vii. 20. Luke i. 54, 55.
 o xxx. 12. lxxix. 13. cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2. p lxx. 1. lxxv. 13—16.

6 Thou * wilt prolong the king's life: and his years as † many generations.

7 He shall ^m abide before God for ever: O ⁿ prepare mercy and truth, which may preserve him.

8 So will I ^o sing praise unto thy name for ever; ^p that I may daily perform my vows.

PSALM LXII.

David avows his confidence in God, and warns his enemies of their danger, 1—7. He exhorts the people to trust in the Lord; and not in men, nor in iniquity, nor in riches, 8—10: for power and mercy belong to God, 11, 12.

To the chief Musician, to * Jeduthun, †
 A Psalm of David.

* **TRULY** ^b my soul [†] waiteth upon God: ^c from him *cometh* my salvation.

a xxxix. lxxvii. titles. 1 Chr. xvi. 41, 42. xxv. 1, 2. Or, Only. 2, 5, 6.
 b xxv. 5. xxvii. 14. xxxiii. 20. xl. 1. cxxxiii. 2. cxxx. 5, 6. Is. xxx. 18. xl. 31. Luke ii. 25. 38. Jam. v. 7.
 † Heb. is silent. xxxvii. 7. lxx. 1. marg.
 c xxxvii. 39. lxxviii. 19, 20. cxxi. 2. Is. xii. 2. Jer. iii. 23. Luke ii. 30—32.

the courts of God, rested assured that he should be restored again to them, and perpetually enjoy the comfort and benefit of publick ordinances: (Note, xxvii. 4—6:) but he seems also to have looked through the shadow of the earthly sanctuary, to “the holy places not made with hands,” and to have exulted in hope of the eternal felicity of heaven; as now abiding under the covert of the Almighty, and being “kept by his power through faith unto salvation.” For it can hardly be supposed, that he meant his temporal authority, which was given to him alone, by that “heritage of those that fear the name of God,” which had been given him in common with other pious persons, in answer to his earnest prayers and solemn vows.

For ever. (4) For ages (עוֹלָמִים). This must imply far more, than the one age, which David lived on earth, and which at the time when this was written was drawing near to a close. (Notes, cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2.)—Wings.] (Marg. Ref.—Note, Ruth ii. 11, 12.) ‘Wings of the cherubim,’ say some. These indeed covered the mercy-seat. (Notes, Ex. xxv. 10—21.) But they were placed in the holy of holies, and inaccessible to the worshippers, and were emblems of the angels looking into the mysteries of redemption, and joining in the worship of the redeemed. (Notes, 1 Pet. i. 10—12. Rev. v. 11—14.)

V. 6, 7. David might here mean himself as king of Israel: though apparently deposed, he trusted, that he should yet live, and reign over the people of God, for some time to come; and his kingdom would be continued in his posterity to future generations, according as God had mercifully promised, and would faithfully perform.—But the King Messiah, as descending from him, who was to reign for ever over the house of Israel, and by whom the mercy and truth prepared for sinful men was to be conferred, seems to have been especially intended. (Note, John i. 17.) Whatever became of David's personal interests, he rejoiced in the prospect of the Messiah's kingdom; and prayed for the faithful performance of God's gracious promises, which form the stability of his mediatorial throne.—The Chaldee paraphrast expounds ‘this passage of Messiah only; ‘Thou shalt add days to ‘the days of King Messiah; his years shall be as the ‘generation of this world, and of the world to come.’ Bp. Horne.

V. 8. Marg. Ref.—Note, lxxv. 13—16.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When removed from other comforts, we should more earnestly seek consolation from God; and when cares, fears, sorrows, or temptations, like a wild deluge, over-

whelm our hearts, our cries unto him should be more fervent than ever.—No outward situation can exclude us from communion with God through Jesus Christ; but without divine assistance, we can neither climb, nor take shelter in, that Rock of salvation: when therefore we perceive that there is safety in him and none in ourselves, we should pray fervently for the Holy Spirit of promise, that we may by his gracious teaching and assistance, “believe to the saving of our souls.” As genuine experience is acquired, encouragement will abound: for we shall more readily trust in the covert of his wings, when he has been heretofore “a Shelter for us, and a strong Tower from our enemies.”—When we have the opportunity we should keep close to the ordinances of God: and we should remember, that he hears our vows, and witnesses our pious desires, intentions, and engagements; and therefore we should daily perform them. If he have given us the goodly “heritage of those that fear his name,” (Note, cvi. 4, 5,) we shall have enough: our anointed King is alive for evermore; and all his true subjects shall live by him and with him, and thus “abide before God for ever.” Being made partakers of that grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ, we may rejoice and sing praise unto him, whatever be our outward circumstances: and while, according to our engagements, we are daily employed in his pleasant service, we may cheerfully hope to sing praises to him for ever and ever.

NOTES.

PSALM LXII. Title. Jeduthun was first chosen to be one of the chief musicians, when the ark was removed to mount Zion: (Notes, 1 Chr. xvi. 37—43. xxv. 1—6:) and, as this psalm is inscribed to him, some have thought, that it relates to Absalom's rebellion, and not to the persecution which David endured from Saul. But, as several other psalms, which certainly were composed before David came to the throne, are inscribed to “the chief Musician;” we must suppose, that when the Psalmody at the sanctuary was appointed, David delivered to the chief musicians the psalms which he had previously written, as well as those which he afterwards from time to time composed.—Internal evidence does not clearly shew to which season of distress the Psalmist referred; as his language seems equally suited to either of them.—‘There are no petitions at all in this psalm, nor any thanksgivings: but only expressions of David's faith and confidence in God.’ Bp. Patrick. It may be added, ‘joined with exhortations and encouragements to others, to trust in God, and pour out prayer before him.’

V. 1, 2. The word rendered “waiteth” signifies

^d 6. xviii. 2. xxi. ¹ xxvii. 1. lxxiii. 25, 26. Deut. xxxii. 30, 31. Is. xxxvi. 4. xxxii. 2. ² He only is my Rock and my Salvation; *he is my* * Defence; * I shall not be greatly moved.

³ How long will ye ^s imagine mischief against a man? ^h ye shall be slain all of you: ⁱ as a bowing wall *shall ye be, and as a tottering fence.*

⁴ They only ^k consult to cast him down from his excellency; ^l they delight in lies: ^m they bless with their mouth, but they curse ^t inwardly. Selah.

⁵ My soul, ^o wait thou only upon God; for ^p my expectation is from him.

⁶ He only is ^a my Rock and my Salvation: *he is my* Defence; * I shall not be moved.

Salvation: *he is my* Defence; * I shall not be moved.

⁷ In God is my salvation and ^t my glory: ^u the Rock of my strength, *and my Refuge, is in God.*

⁸ Trust in him at all times; ye people, ^v pour out your heart before him: ^z God is a Refuge for us. Selah.

⁹ Surely ^a men of low degree *are* vanity, *and* ^b men of high degree *are* a lie: to be ^c laid in the balance, they *are* ^d altogether *lighter* than vanity.

¹⁰ Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery; if ^e riches increase, ^f set not your heart *upon them.*

¹¹ My soul, wait on the Lord: for my expectation is from him: *he is my* Defence; * I shall not be moved.

silent. (Marg.) "Yet my soul keepeth silence unto God." "Though Satan tempted him to murmur against God, yet he bridled his affections, and, resting upon God's promise, he beareth his cross patiently." "The prophet abode manifold temptations, but resting on God, he overcame them all."—David was conscious, that, in calm submission and well-grounded confidence he sought and expected protection and deliverance from God. He therefore steadily adhered to the line of duty; believing it "good both to hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD." (Note, Lam. iii. 26—30.) And he rested assured, that though his enemies might for a while give him disturbance, and in some degree prevail, yet he should not be "greatly moved," or materially injured, either in his temporal or spiritual concerns. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 5—7. xxxvii. 23, 24. 2 Cor. iv. 8—12.)

V. 3, 4. The Psalmist, having avowed his confidence in God, expostulates with his enemies, warns them of their danger, and exposes their wickedness.—Saul and his party, envious of David's reputation, incessantly plotted against his life; and aimed to exclude him from the royal dignity, to which God had appointed him; and they greatly desired to see him disgraced by some evident misconduct. They "delighted in lies," both when they falsely accused him, and when they deceitfully spoke as friends to him: but by this they would only provoke God to cut them off by a violent death; and they would be overturned, like a wall, which first bulges out and totters, and then falls down at once. (Notes, Is. xxx. 12—14. Ez. xiii. 10—16.)—In like manner, Absalom, Ahithophel, and the other conspirators, artfully formed their measures for driving, with disgrace, their aged monarch from that honourable station to which God had raised him; (Note, lv. 20, 21;) and they covered their treachery and malice with fair pretences: but they also brought on themselves swift and dreadful destruction.—The opposition of the Jews, and other enemies, to Christ and his cause, springs from similar motives, is conducted in the same manner, and has had, or will have, the same event. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 5—7. The Septuagint render the fifth verse, "Never-

"theless, my soul, submit to God; for my patience is from him:" and no doubt quiet submission to God, as well as expectation of deliverance, happiness, and honour from him alone, in his own time and manner, was meant.—The repetitions, with some variation, of these verses are peculiarly animated: and the Psalmist, by thus dwelling on the ground of his encouragement, baffled his temptations, and found his faith and hope invigorated. (Note, 1, 2.) He says before, "I shall not be greatly moved" (2); now, "I shall not be moved."

V. 8—10. The Psalmist, having risen above the disquietude and fear to which he had been tempted, next gives counsel and caution to the people in general, as he had before awfully warned his persecutors. He exhorts them to "trust in God at all times," whatever their outward circumstances or inward conflicts might be; and by fervent prayer to pour out their hearts before him, (Marg. Ref. y,) and they would find him a secure Refuge in every danger.—But as for men, no confidence could be reasonably placed, either on the fickle multitude, who might be induced to murder, one day, the very person whom they almost idolized the day before; or on the great, who generally made promises which they never performed, and raised expectations which they never intended to answer: so that even vanity itself seemed heavier in the balance than all of them together. Yet to trust in oppression, or injustice and robbery, would be still more foolish and wicked. "Be not so vain as to trust to ill-gotten goods: for if your riches increase by honest means, they are not things wherein to place either your confidence and hope, or your love and joy." Bp. Patrick. (Note, Job xxxi. 24—28.) "He who is made vain and covetous by money, however honestly gotten, renders that a curse to one, which was designed a blessing to many; and drowns himself in the spring, which should have watered all around him." Bp. Horne.—The old translation of this last verse seems more literal than the present version. "Trust not in oppression, nor in robbery: be not vain: if riches increase, set not your heart thereon." According to the construction of the pointed copies of the Hebrew Bible, the verse seems more properly divided thus: "Trust

h Job xxxiii. 14.
xl. 5.
i lxxviii. 34, 35. Is.
xxvi. 4. Matt.
vi. 13. xxviii. 18.
John xix. 11.
Rev. xix. 1.
* Or, strength.

k lxxxvi. 15. ciii.
8. 17. Ex. xxxiv.
6, 7. Dan. ix. 9.
18. Mic. vii. 18.
l Job xxxiv. 11.
Prov. xxiv. 12.
Jer. xxxii. 19.
Ez. xviii. 30.
xxxiii. 20. Matt.
xvi. 27. Rom. ii.
6. 2 Cor. v. 10.
Eph. vi. 8. Col.
iii. 25. 1 Pet. i.
17. Rev. xxii.
12.

11 God hath ^h spoken once; twice have I heard this; ⁱ that ^{*} power *belongeth* unto God.

12 Also unto thee, O Lord. *belongeth* ^k mercy: for ^l thou renderest to every man according to his work.

PSALM LXIII.

David earnestly thirsts for God, and longs to behold his glory at the sanctuary, 1, 2. Regarding the love of God more than life, he determines to rejoice in praising him, 3—5. By meditation and prayer, he

risers to full assurance of protection, success, and exulting joy in God; and predicts the ruin of his enemies, 6—11.

A Psalm of David, ^a when he was in the wilderness of Judah.

O God, ^b thou *art* my God; ^c early will I seek thee: ^d my soul thirsteth for thee, ^e my flesh longeth for thee, ^f in a ^{*} dry and thirsty land where no water is;

f Ex. xvii. 3. Is. xxxv. 7. xli. 18. Matt. xii. 43. water. Is. xxxii. 2.

a 1 Sam. xxii. 5.
xxiii. 14—16. 23.
—25. xxvi. —2.
2 Sam. xv. 28.
b xxxi. 14. xlii.
11. xci. 2. cxviii.
28. cxliii. 10.
Ex. xv. 2. Jer.
xxxii. 1. 33.
Zech. xiii. 9.
John xx. 17.
c v. 8. lxxxviii. 34.
Job vii. 5. Prov.
i. 27, 28. viii. 17.
Hos. v. 15. Matt.
vi. 33.
d xlii. 1, 2. lxxxiv.
2. cxix. 81.
cxliii. 6. John
vii. 37. Rev. vii.
16, 17.
e cii. 3—5. Cant.
v. 8.
* Heb. weary land without

“not in oppression nor in robbery; be not vain in riches, “when they increase; set not your heart upon them.” (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxxix. 5—11. lii. 6, 7. cxlvi. 3—6. Jer. ix. 23, 24. xvii. 5—8. 1 Tim. vi. 6—10. 17—19.)

Men of low degree, &c. (9) מְנַחֵם בְּנֵי אִשִּׁי... Note, xlix. 1—4, v. 2.

V. 11, 12. God had solemnly declared, as it were, once for all, and the Psalmist had repeatedly heard it; (Note, Job xxxiii. 14—18;) or he had “heard these two things;” that power and mercy belong to God. ‘So that the wicked ‘shall feel thy power, and the godly thy mercy.’—The Lord can punish and destroy, he can save and bless, as he pleases: all created power is from him, and limited by him; and no creature can do more harm or good, than he is pleased to appoint, or permit. (Note, Matt. vi. 13.) Mercy also belongs to him: and his recompensing the defiled and imperfect services of believers, and blotting out all their transgressions for the Redeemer’s sake, and so punishing none but the unbelieving and impenitent, is a full proof of his abundant mercy, and an encouragement to trust in him. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xxxiv. 5—7. Rev. xxii. 10—12.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

The lively believer, conscious of sincerity, can without hesitation avow, “Truly my soul waiteth upon God.” From the Lord, “his Defence and Salvation,” he expects present safety and eternal felicity; he considers all creatures as instruments in his hands; and he waits for promised blessings in the path of duty, and in the use of appointed or allowed means. (Notes, Matt. iv. 3—7.)—Yet, however blamelessly he may conduct himself, he must expect a measure of the same enmity, with which the world treated his Saviour; when every device was framed, every deceit used, and every slander propagated, to “cast him “down from his excellency.” But the doom of David’s persecutors, and of the crucifiers of Christ, may be expected by all, who endeavour to tempt his people to sin, or to vilify their characters: and none will be punished more severely, than those who deceive men with “good “words and fair speeches;” (Note, Rom. xvi. 17—20;) who “delight in lies,” who “bless with their mouth, but “curse inwardly.” Let us however, having fairly warned and expostulated with such infatuated persons, wait only upon God, and expect all our happiness from him: then shall we not “greatly be moved,” either to anger, to pride, or to despondency, by the malice or flattery of the ungodly: nay, when our faith grows strong, we shall be confi-

dent of *not being moved at all* to our real hurt: and meditation and prayer are blessed means of invigorating faith and hope. (Notes, Acts xx. 22—24.)—When we are rendered joyful and bold, in reliance on God under peculiar trials, we have an important advantage in exhorting our brethren to similar confidence. We may and ought to “trust in him at all times,” in persecution, temptation, affliction, and at the approach of death: for this is our privilege, and honourable to God, and it will lead us to “pour out our hearts before him;” laying open all our fears, sorrows, and wants, as to our bosom Friend; (Note, 1 Sam. i. 12—16, v. 15;) and making him our Refuge from every danger and foe: and we shall renounce other confidences, that we may singly depend on him. Those who refuse to do this, will find at length, that their dependence on men, whether on the *many* or the *great*, will terminate in disappointment and shame: and woe be to those who trust in iniquity and oppression; who accumulate wealth by evading good laws, or oppressing under the colour of bad ones, or setting all law and justice at defiance; while the miseries of multitudes ripen individuals for the vengeance of heaven. Indeed *reliance* on increasing riches, however obtained, is idolatry, and totally inconsistent with the life of faith.—Yet the idea of increased wealth is associated with that of augmented felicity, in almost every human heart: and it is extremely difficult to possess riches without trusting in them and setting the heart upon them. (Note, Matt. xix. 23—26. P. O. 23—30.) The true and consistent believer, however, receives *all* from God; and uses it to his glory, as a steward who must render an account. (Notes and P. O. Luke xvi. 1—13.) These things God has spoken, and we have heard: may we then never forget that power *belongeth* only to him: may we trust in his mercy and grace; and abound in his work, expecting a gracious recompense from him alone!

NOTES

PSALM LXIII. *Titlc.* It is generally and probably supposed, that David composed this most fervent and devout Psalm, when pursued by Saul in the deserts of Judah. (Marg. Ref.) Some, however, think that it was written at a later period; namely, when he fled from Absalom, and before he passed over Jordan. (Notes, 2 Sam. xv.)

V. 1—4. The Psalmist, banished from the courts and ordinances of God, considered himself as a weary traveller, in a desolate and parched land, when ready to perish by thirst. And his earnest desire after communion with God

g xxvii. 4. cv. 4. 2 ^s To see thy power and thy glory,
 cxlv. 11. Ex. so as I have seen thee ^h in the sanc-
 xxxiii. 18, 19. tuary.
 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22. 2 Cor. iv. 4—6.
 h lxviii. 24. lxxiii. 17, 18. lxxvii. 13, 14. xcvi. 6. 3 Because ⁱ thy loving-kindness is
 cxxxiv. 2. better than life, ^k my lips shall praise
 i iv. 6. xxi. 6. xxx. thee.
 5. Phil. i. 23. k xxx. 12. li. 15. 4 Thus ^l will I bless thee while I
 lxvi. 17. Hos. live: ^m I will lift up my hands in thy
 xiv. 2. Rom. vi. name.
 19. xii. 1. 1 Cor. 5 ⁿ My soul shall be satisfied as *with*
 vi. 20. Heb. xiii. n xvii. 15. xxxvi. 7—9. lxxv. 4. civ. 34. Cant. i. 4. Is. xxv.
 15. Jam. iii. 5—10. 6. Jer. xxxi. 4.

and his worshippers at the sanctuary, seems to have affected his body, as well as his soul; perhaps spoiling his rest and appetite, and impairing his health and vigour. (Notes, xlii. 1—3. lxxxiv. 1—3.)—He resolved, however, having chosen the LORD for his God, to seek him early, diligently, and with decided preference.—‘The true Christian dedicates to God ‘the sweet hour of prime.’ He ‘opens the eyes of his understanding together with those ‘of his body, and awakes each morning to righteousness. ‘He arises with an inextinguishable thirst after those comforts which the world cannot give; and has immediate ‘recourse, by prayer, to the Fountain of the water of life, ‘ever longing to behold the divine power and glory in the ‘sanctuary above, of which he has been favoured with ‘some glimpse, in the services of the church below.’ *Bp. Horne*.—Many explain the words, “To see thy power “and glory, &c.” of the ark, which was the symbol of the Lord’s powerful, glorious, and gracious presence with his people. But the ark itself was concealed from sight; nor does it appear that, in the days of David, there was in general any *external* display of the divine glory at the sanctuary. It may therefore be supposed, that he referred to the *internal* and spiritual views, which, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, he had experienced of the perfections and glory of God, while attending on those ordinances; which both commemorated the wonderful works of the Lord for his people Israel, and typified the salvation of the promised Redeemer. These contemplations and discoveries, had often excited his admiring and adoring love and gratitude, and animated his confidence and joy in God; which made him regret exceedingly the loss of such pleasant and profitable opportunities. This enjoyment of the love of God, as an anticipation of heavenly felicity, he valued more than life itself; and therefore he was fully determined to employ himself, and all his powers of body and soul, in praising the Lord, as long as he lived, and wherever he was driven; (Notes, li. 12, 13. cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2;) confidently expecting, that the sweet experience which he recollected, would thus be renewed to him, even if banished from the outward means of grace. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5. ‘The remembrance of thy favour is more sweet ‘unto me, than all the pleasures and dainties of the world.’—The Psalmist waited for the pleasure of communion with God, with more ardent desire, than any epicure ever anticipated the enjoyment of sensual pleasure; and the remembrance of God, during the night, cheered his soul, when dangers or cares disturbed his rest. (*Marg. Ref.*—Notes, Cant. i. 4.)—Can any candid man read this Psalm,

* marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise *thee* ^o with joyful lips:

6 When ^p I remember thee upon my bed, *and* meditate on thee in the *night-watches*.

7 ^q Because thou hast been my help, therefore ^r in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.

8 My soul ^s followeth hard after thee: ^t thy right hand upholdeth me.

iii. 2. Is. xxvi. 9. Matt. xi. 12. Luke xiii. 24. xviii. 5—7. t xxxvii. 24. lxxiii. 23. xciv. 18. Cant. ii. 6. Is. xli. 10. xlii. 1. Phil. ii. 12, 13. Col. i. 29.

* Heb. *fatness*.
 o xliii. 4. lxxi. 23.
 cxviii. 14, 15.
 cxxxv. 3. cxlix.
 1—3. Ezra iii.
 11—13 Rev. xix.
 5—7
 p xlii. 8. lxxvii.
 4—6. cxix. 55.
 147, 148. cxxxix.
 17, 18. cxlix. 5.
 Cant. iii. 1, 2.
 Lam. ii. 19.
 q liv. 3, 4.
 r v. 11. xxi. 1. lvi.
 1. 1 Sam. xvii.
 37. 2 Cor. i. 10.
 s lxxiii. 25. cxlii.
 6, 7. Gen. xxxii.
 26—28. 2 Chr.
 xxxi. 21. Cant.
 t xxxvii. 24. lxxiii. 23.

and then speak of true devotion, as merely *intellectual*, a *dispassionate* exercise of the understanding, without any warm emotions or vehement affections of the heart? Weighed in the balance of such phlegmatick Christians, the man after God’s own heart must be numbered among enthusiasts: for, though his devotion was most rational, it certainly was most fervent and enraptured; and in fact the more rational on that very account.

V. 6—8. David’s recollection of past protection and deliverance, which occupied his thoughts as he lay sleepless in his bed, during the watches of the night, encouraged him, not only to rely on the power, truth, and love of God, in his extremest dangers, but to rejoice in this confidence under his sharpest afflictions.—His soul cleaved unto God, as the child clings about its kind parent, when alarmed or in pain; and “followed hard after him,” earnestly seeking nearer communion and conformity; being upheld by the power of divine grace, in thus pressing forward in his heavenly course. (Note, lxxiii. 23—28.)—The fervour of David’s devotion, whether pouring out his soul in earnest prayer, with vigorous exercises of faith and hope; or celebrating the praises of God with admiring love, joyful gratitude, and glowing zeal for his honour and glory; seems especially to have procured him the honourable distinction of “the man after God’s own heart.”—The following verses from Dr. Watts well support the animation of the leading parts of this exquisitely beautiful psalm:

With heart, and eyes, and lifted hands,
 For thee I long, to thee I look;
 As travellers, in thirsty lands,
 Pant for the cooling water-brook.

With early feet I love t’ appear
 Among thy saints, and seek thy face;
 Oft have I seen thy glory there,
 And felt the power of sov’rign grace.

Nor fruits nor wines that tempt our taste,
 Nor all the joys our senses know,
 Could make me so divinely blest,
 Or raise my cheerful passions so.

My life itself without thy love,
 No taste of pleasure could afford;
 ’Twould but a tiresome burthen prove,
 If I were banish’d from the Lord.

Amidst the wakeful hours of night,
 When busy cares afflict my head,
 One thought of thee gives new delight,
 And adds refreshment to my bed.

I’ll lift my hands, I’ll raise my voice,
 While I have breath to pray or praise;
 This work shall make my heart rejoice,
 And spend the remnant of my days.

u xxxv. 4. 26.
xxxviii. 12. xl.
24. lxx. 2. 1 Sam.
xxv. 29.

x ix. 17. lv. 15.
23. lxxxvi. 13.
Num. xvi. 30.
—33. 1 Sam.
xxviii. 19. Job
xl. 13. Is. xiv.
9. 15. 19. Ez.
xxxii. 18—32.
Acts i. 25.

• Heb. *Make him
run out, like
water, by the
hands of the
sword.* 1 Sam.
xxvi. 10. xxxi.
1—6. Jer. xviii. 21. Ez. xxxv. 5.
z ii. 6. xxi. 1. 1 Sam. xxiii. 17. xxiv. 20.
lxv. 16. Zeph. i. 5. Heb. vi. 13.

9 But those ^u *that* seek my soul to
destroy *it*, shall ^x go into the lower
parts of the earth.

10 ^{*} They shall fall by the sword;
they shall be ^y a portion for foxes.

11 But ^{*} the king shall rejoice in
God; every one that ^a sweareth by him
shall glory: but ^b the mouth of them
that speak lies shall be stopped.

y Ez. xxxix. 4. 17—20. Rev. xix. 17, 18.
a Deut. vi. 13. Is. xix. 18. xlv. 23.
b xxxi. 18. Rom. iii. 19. Tit. i. 10, 11.

V. 9—11. The Psalmist while employed in these devout exercises, clearly foresaw the disgraceful end of his persecutors. They would perish and go under the earth, as if swallowed up by it, with Dathan and Abiram; (*Note, Num. xvi. 28—34;*) or, falling by the sword, they would be left unburied, for food to the foxes with which the land abounded. This was probably the case with many, who fell at Gilboa.—He also foresaw himself, as advanced upon the throne, to be king of Israel; and as rejoicing in God, and not in his outward dignity, or the ruin of his enemies: while every one, who cordially *sware allegiance to him*, or who, as worshippers of God, *swore with solemnity by his name*, would glory in the advancement of his servant; and all who falsely accused him, or attempted to deceive him, would effectually be confuted and silenced. (*Marg. Ref. z—b.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The true believer is convinced, that nothing in this world can satisfy the desires of his immortal soul; and he therefore expects happiness from the eternal God, as his God and Portion. (*Notes, Deut. xxxiii. 27—29.*) When his soul is in a healthy and prosperous state, an inextinguishable thirst after the discoveries of the glory of the Lord, and the experience of his grace and love, lead him to seek him early, every day, with the best of his time and the prime of his affections. He likewise greatly values publick ordinances; and when confined from them, or constrained to live among those who know not God, he regrets his loss; feels as one banished into a parched wilderness; and, with a mixture of pleasure and pain, recollects, how he “has seen the power and glory of God in “his sanctuary.” (*Note, xlii. 4, 5.*) This uneasiness, to which he is occasionally liable, arises from the same source as another part of his experience, which is habitual, especially when faith and hope are most in exercise: the world itself appears to him a weary desert, and he longs for the joys of heaven, of which he has had some foretastes in the ordinances of God on earth. Yet, even in this wilderness wells of salvation are opened: (*Note, Is. xii. 3:*) his gracious thirst is in part allayed: and the want of stated means of grace sometimes excites more vigorous desires, and more earnestness in waiting on God in secret. The believer in this frame of mind values the loving kindness of God more than life; and is even willing to depart hence that he may fully enjoy it. (*Note, Phil. i. 21—26. P. O. 21—30.*) This foretaste and prospect tune his heart and lips to praise the Lord, and to rejoice in the midst of tribulation: and he desires, as a sweet solace during his weary pilgrimage, “to bless the LORD while he lives, and

PSALM LXIV.

David, praying for deliverance, describes the malice and subtlety of his enemies, 1—6. He predicts their ruin, and the effects of it on the beholders, 7—10.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

^a **H**EAR my voice, O God, in my prayer: ^b preserve my life from fear of the enemy.

2 ^c Hide me from the ^d secret coun-

a xxvii. 7. lv. 1, 2.
cxxx. 1, 2. cxli.
i. cxliii. 1—3.
Lam. iii. 55, 56.
b xvii. 8, 9. xxxi.
13—15. xxxiv.
4. lvi. 2—4. Acts
xviii. 9, 10.
xxvii. 24.
c xxvii. 5. xxxi.
20. cxliii. 9. Is.
xxxii. 2.
d lvi. 6. cix. 2, 3.
1 Sam. xxii. 22,
23. 2 Sam. xvii.
2—4. Jer. xi. 19
xviii. 23. Matt.
xxvii. 3, 4. Acts
xxiii. 14, 15.
xxv. 3.

“to lift up his hands in his name.”—Then the pleasures of the world lose their attraction: “for his soul is satisfied, as with marrow and fatness,” while joyfully praising and thinking upon God: and such contemplations at once excite his gratitude, increase his confidence, and animate him in seeking conformity and nearness to the Lord; aspiring after still greater attainments, as feeling himself upheld by the power of the Almighty.—To mount with David towards heaven, in these exalted strains of devotion and zeal, should be our holy ambition: true Christians can in some measure, and at some times, appropriate his emphatical language; but, alas! we too commonly have to complain, “that our souls cleave to the dust.” (*Note, cxix. 25.*) Let us then be more instant in prayer, that we may be quickened according to his word of promise.—The enemies of such Christians, as have been feebly described, are also enemies of Christ our King: present disgrace and eternal ruin will be their certain doom, if they persist in their enmity; and the lies, with which they blaspheme the Redeemer, or slander his people, or deceive one another, shall be silenced in anguish and despair. But our King having now entered upon “the joy set before him,” all who bow before him, and swear fealty to him, shall rejoice and glory in God with him; and obtain an honour and happiness infinitely superior to that of the most exalted throne on earth. And if the Israelites had reason to rejoice in their king; how much more should we glory in our “King of righteousness and peace!” (*Note, Heb. vii. 1—3.*)

NOTES.

PSALM LXIV. V. 1. *From fear, &c.*] ‘Defend us, thy humble servants, in all assaults of our enemies; that we, surely trusting in thy defence, may not fear the power of any adversaries, through the might of Jesus Christ.’ *Liturgy, 2 Col. Morn. Prayer.*—‘That we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in rest and quietness.’ *2 Col. Even. Prayer.*—God as effectually answers these petitions by increasing our faith, as by removing the danger. ‘A victory gained by the fear of God over the fear of man, is a necessary step, and a happy prelude, to a full and final triumph over every enemy of our salvation.’ *Bp. Horne. (Notes, lv. 4—8. lvi. 3, 4. Acts xviii. 9—11.)*

V. 2, 3. It is probable, that the secret consultations of Saul and his courtiers against David, and the deceitful and violent measures which they adopted in order to destroy him, gave occasion to this Psalm.—Open reproaches and false accusations wound like a sword in close fight:

^e ii. 2. iii. Luke xxiii. 18—23.
^f lviii. 4. Prov. xii. 18. xxx. 14. Is. liv. 17. Jer. ix. 3. Jam. iii. 6—8.

sel of the wicked; ^a from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity;

3 Who ^f whet their tongue like a sword, and ^g bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words;

4 That they may ^h shoot in secret at the perfect: ^k suddenly do they shoot at him, and fear not.

5 They ^l encourage themselves in an evil ^m matter: ⁿ they commune ^o of laying snares privily; they say, ^p Who shall see them?

6 They ^q search out iniquities; ^r they accomplish ^s a diligent search: both

^o xxxv. 11. 1 Sam. xxii. 9—13. xxiv. 9. xxv. 10. Dan. vi. 4, 5. Matt. xxvi. 59—66. John xviii. 29, 30. xix. 7.
^t Or, we are consumed by that which they have thoroughly searched.

secret detraction slays like an arrow shot from a distance, or in the dark, or by one concealed from view. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4, 5. David was not only an upright character; but he was perfectly innocent of those crimes which were laid to his charge: (*Notes*, vii. 3—5. xvii. 1—5:) yet his enemies, not having the fear of God before their eyes, and being hardened against the dread of consequences, propagated their calumnies secretly, but very rapidly; encouraging one another, and consulting together in what way to ensnare and destroy him; fully expecting to escape detection, and acting as if God himself did not see them, or would not call them to account for their wickedness. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, x. 2—11. xxxvi. 1. lix. 7.)—^a Envy and malice crucified the Son of God: but during the course of the proceedings against him, you hear only of ^a zeal for the law, and loyalty to Cæsar. *Bp. Horne.*

V. 6. This verse may be rendered perhaps more literally, “They search out iniquities: we are consumed by that which has been thoroughly searched out: (*marg.*)” “for the inward part and the heart of man is deep.” Saul and his partisans searched to find out some real or apparent iniquity, which David had committed, in order to cover the malice of their persecution: and they sedulously contrived new methods of perpetrating their crimes. Their intentions, however, were carefully concealed; and the malice, dissimulation, and wickedness of their hearts, were deep and unfathomable. (*Notes*, v. 9. Jer. xvii. 9, 10. Rev. ii. 24—28.)

V. 7—10. While the persecutors were levelling their arrows, and about to shoot suddenly at David; God would unexpectedly cut them off; and their mortal wounds would be inflicted at once, while they were promising themselves complete success. (*Note*, vii. 8—13.) Their blasphemies, perjuries, imprecations, and slanders, would, as an immense load of guilt, fall on them, and sink them into destruction. (*Notes*, Prov. xii. 13. xiii. 3. xviii. 6, 7.) Their doom would be so dreadful, that the spectators would flee away, lest they should be involved in it: (*Num.* xvi. 34:) and all who heard of it would fear to imitate their conduct; be constrained to acknowledge the hand of God; and, learning useful instruction from the awful dispensation, would cause others to understand it. Thus the benefit, derived from it by numbers, would illustrate the

^p the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep.

7 But ^q God shall shoot at them with an arrow; ^r suddenly ^s shall they be wounded.

8 So shall they make ^t their own tongue to fall upon themselves: ^u all that see them shall flee away.

9 And all men ^v shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for ^w they shall wisely consider of his doing.

10 ^x The righteous shall be glad in the LORD, and shall trust in him; and all ^y the upright in heart shall glory.

^{xi} 13. ^x lviii. 11. cvii. 42, 43. Is. v. 12. Ez. xiv. 23. Hos. xiv. 9. ^z xvii. 11. cxii. 2. 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. Gal. vi. 14.

wisdom and goodness of God, as well as his justice, in his severity towards these wicked men: while “all the upright in heart” would be glad and glory in him. (*Marg. Ref.*)—The dreadful imprecation of the Jews, when demanding our Lord’s crucifixion, “His blood be on us and on our children,” has indeed fallen upon them. (*Note*, Matt. xxvii. 24, 25.)—The destruction of Jerusalem filled the beholders with terror, and forced them to acknowledge that it was the work of God. Even Titus, the Roman emperor, confessed that he had fought and conquered by the favour of the Almighty; and the nation of the Jews, scattered through the world, affords a most instructive lesson to every land, and to all succeeding generations.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The continuance or renewal of our trials will render the repetition of the same petitions requisite: but varied expressions may often be affecting and useful to ourselves and others.—When faith in God triumphs over the fear of powerful and malicious men, our prayers are certainly heard, and final deliverance from the danger will in due time follow.—The most blameless will be reviled, and the most useful hated, by such men as took secret counsel, or made open insurrection, against the perfect and divine Saviour; and whetted their tongues, and shot their sarcasms, against him, before they shed his blood.—Such transgressors are often inwardly alarmed with the dread of consequences: but they encourage each other, till they flatter themselves with the hopes of impunity, and despise the all-seeing eye of God. Actuated by the most malignant enmity, with deep dissimulation “they search out iniquities,” that they may pretend zeal for God’s glory, while they are murdering his people: (*Notes*, Matt. xxvi. 57—68:) but all their malice will rebound upon themselves, and God himself will fight against them and destroy them; and all who behold their doom, especially in a future state, will reverence his power and justice in it. But it is our wisdom now to fear because of the judgments of God, and to flee from the wrath to come; to declare and consider his works, and to shun the rock on which others have split. For the righteous alone can rejoice and trust in this holy Lord God: and all who uprightly rely on his mercy, and seek to know and do his will, shall glory in him as their Salvation and eternal Portion.

PSALM LXV.

a xxi. 13. cxv. 1, 2.

• Heb. is silent.

lxvii. 1. marg.

b lxxvi. 2. lxxviii.

68, 69. 1 Chr. xi.

7. xv. 29. xvi.

41, 42. xxv. 1.

• c. Rev. xiv. 1

—3.

c lvi. 12. lxxvii. 11.

cxvi. 17, 18.

d lxvi. 19. cii. 17.

cxlv. 18, 19.

1 Kings xviii. 29.

37. 2 Chr. xxxiii.

13. 1s. lxx. 24.

Jer. xxix. 12, 13.

Dan. ix. 17—19.

Luke xi. 9, 10.

Acts x. 31. 1 John

v. 14, 15.

e xxii. 27. lxvi. 4.

lxxxvi. 9. 1s.

xliv. 6. lxvi. 23.

John xii. 32.

Rev. xi. 15.

† Heb. Words, or

Matters, of in-

quity.

f xxxviii. 4. xl. 12.

David praises God, for answering prayer, taking away sin, blessing his chosen, and performing wonders in their behalf, 1—5; and for his providential goodness and bounty, 6—13.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm and Song of David.

PRAISE * waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion: and * unto thee shall the vow be performed.

2 O ^d thou that hearest prayer, * unto thee shall all flesh come.

3 [†] Iniquities ^f prevail against me: as

2 Sam. xii. 7—13. Mic. vii. 8, 9. Rom. vii. 23—25. Gal. v. 17.

for ^g our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.

4 ^h Blessed is the man whom thou ⁱ choosest, and ^k causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: ^l we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.

5 By ^m terrible things ⁿ in righteousness wilt thou answer us, ^o O God of our salvation; ^p who art ^q the Confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are ^r afar off upon the sea:

n cxlv. 17. Rom. ii. 5. Rev. xv. 3, 4. xvi. 5. xix. 1—3. o lxviii. 19, 20. p 1s. xlv. 22. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Rom. xv. 10—12. q 1s. li. 5. lx. 5. lxvi. 19. Zeph. ii. 11. Zech. ix. 10. Eph. ii. 17, 18.

g li. 2, 3, 7. lxxix.

9. 1s. i. 18, 19.

vi. 7. Zech. xiii.

1. John i. 29.

Heb. ix. 14.

1 John i. 7—9.

Rev. i. 5.

h xxxiii. 12. lxxxiv.

4.

i iv. 3. lxxviii. 70.

71. cvi. 4, 5.

cxxxv. 4. Eph.

i. 4, 5. 2 Thes.

ii. 13, 14.

k xv. 1. xxxiii. 6.

xxiv. 7. Rev. iii.

12.

l xvii. 15. xxxvi.

8. lxxiii. 5. Jer.

xxxi. 12—14. 25.

Rev. vii. 16, 17.

m xli. 3, 4.

n xlv. 4. xlvii. 2.

3. lxvi. 3. lxxxvi.

3—9. Deut. iv.

34. x. 21. 1s.

xxxvii. 36.

NOTES.

PSALM LXV. V. 1. Some expositors think that this Psalm was composed after the famine of three years, which occurred towards the close of David's reign; when God had heard the prayer of his people, and was intreated for the land: and the concluding part of it renders that opinion highly probable. (Notes, 2 Sam. xxi. 1—14.) 'It becomes us, O God, ... to praise thee in thy sanctuary, (though we cannot worthily express, but must rather *silently* adore, thy incomparable excellencies;) and to pay the vows which we made unto thee in the time of our distress.' Bp. Patrick.—The old testament church waited in silent expectation for the coming of the Messiah, and the accomplishment of the promises relating to him, prepared then to burst forth into vocal praises, and to perform her vows. Zion was the centre of her worship, and the type of the true church, whence alone cordial praises are rendered by any of our fallen race. (Note, Rev. xiv. 1—5.)

V. 2. The readiness of the Lord to answer prayer, and all that pertains to "the throne of grace," and the "way of access" for sinful men, through the atonement and mediation of the Great High Priest, to the glory of the justice and mercy of God, as prefigured by the institutions of the law of Moses, with the invitations to draw near, and the precious promises to encourage men to do so, when extensively made known on earth, would induce men of all nations to come and worship him on his mercy-seat in Zion: and the answer of the church's prayer, in the coming of the Messiah, would make way for the propagation of the gospel among the gentiles; till at length all the human race shall come to God, as his suppliants. These events the Psalmist evidently predicted. Indeed all men, in every age, should be invited to come to God on the throne of grace; and if they accept the invitation, as they certainly ought to do, they will by no means be rejected. (Notes, Heb. iv. 14—16. vii. 23—25.)

V. 3. 'Nor need their sins,' (the sins of those who come to God,) 'discourage them: for thou hadst matter enough of that kind against me, to have hindered the prevalence of my prayer, if thou hadst charged my iniquities upon me. But thou hast been graciously pleased to forgive not only me, but all thy people their trans-

'gressions.' Bp. Patrick. 'O God, our iniquities stand in the way of thy mercies, and prevail strongly against all the endeavours of my reformation: but, do thou both mercifully forgive, and powerfully remedy, our offences.' Bp. Hall. 'He imputeth it to his sins, and to the sins of the people, that God, who was accustomed to assist them, withdraweth his succour.'—The Psalmist evidently experienced, as the apostle afterwards, that "when he would do good, evil was present with him:" and the mercy and grace of God, through the promised Saviour, to take away both the guilt and the power of sin, were his only support. (Notes, Rom. vii. 13—25.) Longing and hoping for this deliverance from guilt and depravity, he determined to persist in waiting on God, seeking his glory, expecting his help, and celebrating his praises.

V. 4. Here the Psalmist seems to congratulate the priests and Levites on their happiness, in being chosen to the sacred office of ministering to God in holy things, as their constant employment. But this was only an emblem of the spiritual priesthood, the chosen of God, to whom David belonged, though he was a king, and of the tribe of Judah: and therefore he joins himself with those who would be satisfied with the rich provisions of the sanctuary, the spiritual communion with God, of which the feasts on the peace-offerings were an external sign and sacramental prefiguration. (Notes, xxvii. 4—6. xxxvi. 5—9. lxxxiv. 4, 5. 8—12. Lev. iii. 1.)

V. 5. The terrible judgments, which God in righteousness inflicted upon Pharaoh, the Egyptians, the Canaanites, and the other enemies of Israel, were answers to the prayers of his people: the dreadful judgments on the Philistines, Syrians, and others who opposed David, were the same: and so were the terrible things, by which the Christian dispensation was introduced, and the foundations of idolatry overturned. 'Thou wilt declare thyself to be the pre-server of thy church, in destroying thine enemies, as thou didst in the Red Sea.—It is however evident, that the terrible judgments executed on those, both Jews and Gentiles, who opposed the establishment of Christianity, were especially predicted: because these happened at that season, when the "God of salvation" became the "Confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that were afar off upon the sea;" and in those regions which were called "the isles of the sea." (Is. xi. 11. xxiv. 15.)

6 Which ^r by his strength setteth fast the mountains; ^{being} ^s girded with power:

7 Which ^t stilleth the noise of the seas, ^u the noise of their waves, and ^x the tumult of the people.

8 They also that dwell ^y in the uttermost parts are ^z afraid at thy tokens: thou makest the ^a outgoings of the morning and evening to ^b rejoice.

9 Thou ^c visitest the earth, ^d and waterest it: ^e thou greatly enrichest it with ^f the river of God, *which* is full of water: ^g thou preparest them

^r xxv. 2. cxix. 90. Mic. vi. 2. Hab. iii. 6.
^s xciii. 1. 1 Sam. ii. 4. Is. li. 9.
^t lxxxix. 9: cvii. 29. Jon. i. 4. 15. Matt. viii. 26, 27.
^u xciii. 3, 4. civ. 6—9. Job xxxviii. 8—11.
^y ii. 1—4. lxxvi. 10. Is. xvii. 12, 13. John xviii. 6, 7.
^z xlvi. 5, 6. lxxvi. 3. cxix. 2. cxxxv. 9. Ex. xv. 14—16. Josh. ii. 9—11. Hab. iii. 3, &c. Acts v. 38, 39. Rev. xi. 13.
^a xix. 5. lxxiv. 16. civ. 20—23. cxxxvi. 8. Gen. viii. 22. Deut. iv. 19. Job xxxviii. 12.
^b Or, sing. 13. cxlviii. 3.
^c civ. 13, 14. Deut. xi. 11, 12. Ruth i. 6. Job xxxvii. 6—13. Jer. xiv. 22. Acts xiv. 17.
^d Or, after thou hadst made it to desire rain. lxxiii. 1. c. 11. lxxviii. 9, 10. civ. 13—15. cxlvii. 8, 9. Job v. 10, 11. Jer. v. 24. Joel ii. 23—26. d. xlvi. 4. Rev. xxii. 1.
^e civ. 15. cvii. 37. Gen. xxvi. 12. 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.

V. 6, 7. That almighty God, who created and preserves the lofty mountains; who sets bounds to the tempestuous sea, and rules its waves in the most furious storms; who divided the Red Sea before Israel, and with it overwhelmed Pharaoh and his host; still protects his church: and, by the same power, he restrains the madness of enraged multitudes, of haughty tyrants, or combined nations, and calms their fury or crushes their power, whenever they attempt any thing contrary to his wise, faithful, and merciful designs.—Who can read these verses without thinking of Him who “rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, Peace, “be still; and the wind ceased and there was a great “calm?” and who said to the furious company that came to apprehend him, “I am he,” and “they went “backward and fell to the ground?” (*Notes, Matt. viii. 23—27. John xviii. 4—9.*)

People. (7) ^{לְאֻמִּים} (*plural*), *peoples, nations*.

V. 8. Several of the appearances in nature excited a fear of the divine power among the heathen: while the ordinary course of providence caused them to rejoice; even from the most eastern regions, whence the morning-sun appears, to the most western whither he retires when it is evening. The reports also of the judgments of God, on the enemies of Israel, excited consternation in distant nations; and the glad tidings of his salvation have made, or will make, the inhabitants of every land to rejoice.

V. 9. “Thou visitest the land, and causest it to desire, “and greatly enrichest it;” or, “after thou hast made it “to desire rain, &c.” (*Marg.*)—“The river of God,” in this connexion, evidently denotes those abundant and constant supplies of water, with which the Lord replenishes and fructifies the earth, as a large river waters the country through which it flows: but under that emblem the pouring out of the Spirit, after the ascension of Christ, and the blessed effects that followed, seem to have been predicted. (*Notes, Is. xlv. 3—5. Rev. xxii. 1.*)

V. 10. “Do thou water the ridges abundantly, do thou “cause the rain to descend into the furrows, &c.” This verse seems to be a prayer for the blessing.—Thus the land is made ready for the seed, after man has properly tilled it; and when he has sown the corn, the Lord causes it to grow and ripen. In like manner, while his ministers use

corn, when thou hast so provided for it.

10 Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly; thou [†] settlest the furrows thereof: thou [‡] makest it soft with showers: [§] thou blessest the springing thereof.

11 Thou [¶] crownest the year ^{||} with thy goodness; and ^h thy paths drop ⁱ fatness.

12 They ^k drop upon the pastures of the wilderness; and the little hills ^{*} rejoice on every side.

13 ^l The pastures are clothed with flocks: the valleys also are covered over with corn: ^m they shout for joy, they also sing.

[†] Or, causest rain to descend into the furrows thereof.
[‡] Heb. dissolvest it.
[§] cxlvii. 8. 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7.
[¶] v. 12. *marg.* ciii. 4. Prov. xiv. 18. Heb. ii. 7—9.
^{||} Heb. of thy goodness.
^h xxv. 10. civ. 3. Joel ii. 14. 21—26. Hag. ii. 19. Mal. iii. 10.
ⁱ xxxvi. 8. Rom. xi. 17.
^k civ. 10—13. Job xxxviii. 26, 27.
^{*} Heb. are girded with joy. 6. Is. lv. 9—13. lxi. 10, 11.
^l civ. 24—28. Zech. ix. 17. Acts xiv. 17.
^m xcvi. 11—13. xcvi. 7—9. Is. xxxv. 1, 2. 10. li. 9. lv. 12. Jer. xlviii. 33.

appointed means, and sow the seed of divine truth; God both prepares the hearts of the hearers, and gives the increase.

V. 11. ‘The herbs, fruits, and flowers, produced by the ‘earth, are...as a beautifully variegated crown, set upon ‘her head, by the...great Creator.’ *Bp. Horne*. Every year also is thus crowned by his bounty. Wherever the Lord passes, he scatters abundance around his paths; and the clouds, which are called his chariots, drop down fatness on the earth. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12, 13. Nothing can be more beautifully descriptive of a fruitful country, in a favourable season, than these verses: while the poetical representation of the “little “hills girding themselves with gladness;” and of pastures and valleys clothed with flocks of sheep and covered with crops of corn, exulting and shouting for joy, has peculiar animation.—The same metaphors are often used for the happy effects of the gospel, when successfully preached, especially in places before enveloped in darkness. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, xcvi. 11—13. xcvi. 7—9. Is. xlii. 10—12. lv. 12, 13.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our God reveals himself upon a mercy-seat, ready to hear and answer the prayers of all, who come to him by faith in Jesus Christ; men in general are invited to come unto him, and seek his face; and in due time all the inhabitants of the earth shall become his worshippers. As the Lord fulfils his promises, the church reiterates his praises: the new-testament church renders that praise, and performs those vows, which the old-testament church engaged for, when waiting and praying for the coming of the promised Redeemer; future generations shall praise him for hearing our prayers for the predicted success of the gospel through the earth; and every believer will render him praises, as he graciously fulfils his promises. Thus “praise waiteth for our God in Zion;” and thus are “the vows performed,” which continually accompany the prayers of his people, and indeed are implied in them. And we may urge this as a cogent plea for the granting of our petitions, seeing it will redound to his glory. Nor can either the number or prevalency of those iniquities, for which we are humbled, invalidate the plea, when we come

PSALM LXVI.

The Psalmist exhorts all men to observe the works of God, and to praise him, with solemn awe and lively gratitude, 1—9. He shews how God had tried and delivered his people, 10—12. He determines to perform his vows; and declares how God had answered his prayers, 13—20.

To the chief Musician, A Song or Psalm.

in the Redeemer's name: because, "as for our transgressions, he will purge them away," "to the praise of the glory of his grace."—Blessed indeed is that man, whom the Lord chooses, and by his Spirit causes to approach him, in humble faith and prayer; and who, finding acceptance with him, learns to delight in his courts and ordinances, as the rest of his soul.—We may find that satisfaction in the goodness of his house, which others in vain expect from the world: and, while we see these blessings spring from his special love and choice, we may rejoice at the prospect of the eternal completion of them in his holy temple above. It is, however, only through that blessed One, who was chosen to approach unto the Father, and to abide in the true tabernacle as our Advocate, that we sinners can expect or experience this felicity: and through him, "the God of our salvation" is become "the Confidence of all the ends of the earth;" even of us Britons, who are indeed "afar off upon the sea," at a very great distance from the land, in which the sacred oracles were first given. But these blessings, communicated to mankind in answer to the prayers of his people, have been attended with terrible vengeance upon opposers: still more dreadful things will accompany the further prevalence of the gospel: and the complete salvation of the church will be attended by the eternal destruction of the ungodly. Nay, the Lord often answers the prayers of his people, with such convictions, rebukes, and corrections, as are for the time very terrifying to them.—But let us trust his power, truth, and love; and submit to his righteousness. The "strength, which setteth fast the mountains," upholds the believer: the word, which "stilleth the stormy ocean," can silence the tumult and rage of our most numerous and potent enemies: and he, who enriches the earth with such abundant and varied liberality, can neither want sufficiency nor bounty to feed the souls of his people. We should then adore the *tokens* of his power, in taking righteous vengeance on his enemies, and rejoice in beholding it displayed in mercy. We should, with wonder, gratitude, and praise, behold and participate the abundance, which, by the wise and kind providence of God, is diffused through the earth: and, while we see year after year crowned with the goodness of the Lord, so that the hills and valleys, covered with corn and cattle, seem to proclaim and rejoice in their Creator's praise; we should remember our unworthiness, be thankful for our portion, and use it to the glory of the Giver; admire and imitate his bounty to the indigent, as we are able, and his goodness to the wicked and ungrateful children of men; and pity and pray for those, who abuse these gifts to the dishonour of the Giver.—But these temporal mercies, to us unworthy crea-

MAKE a joyful noise unto God, * all ye lands:

2 ^b Sing forth the honour of his name; make his praise glorious.

3 Say unto God, ^c How terrible *art thou* in thy works! ^d through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies [†] submit themselves unto thee.

v. 13. o xlvii. 2. lxxv. 5. lxxvi. 12. Ex. xv. 1—16. 21. Judg. v. 2—4. 20—22. Is. ii. 19. lxiv. 3. Jer. x. 10. d xviii. 44. xxii. 28, 29. lxxviii. 30. lxxxii. 15. feigned obedience. Heb. lie. lxxviii. 35, 36.

a lxxxii. 1. scv. 1. 2. xcviii. 4. c. 1. 1 Chr. xv. 28. * Heb. all the earth. xcvii. 1. cxviii. 1, 2. cl. 6. 1 Chr. xvi. 23. 24. Is. xxiv. 16. b xlviii. 6, 7. lxxii. 18. xcvii. 3—10. cv. 2, 3. cvi. 2. cvii. 15. 22. 1 Chr. xxix. 10 —13. Neh. ix. 5. Is. vi. 3. xii. 4—6. xlix. 13. Rev. iv. 8—11. † Or, yield

tures, shadow forth more important blessings. The rising of "the Sun of righteousness," and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, that "River of God" full of the waters of life and salvation, render the hearts of sinners, which before were hard, barren, and worthless, fruitful in every good work; and change the face of nations, far more than the sun and rain do the face of nature. Wherever the Lord passes, by the preaching of his gospel, attended by his Holy Spirit, "his paths drop fatness;" and numbers of every description are taught to rejoice in him and praise him. These blessings have already been extended to many nations, which were far off: may we unite in fervent prayers and vigorous, persevering, and self-denying endeavours, that they may descend upon the pastures of the wilderness, the heathen world, and the poor benighted Jews; and that the whole earth may hear and embrace the gospel: and may all, who are favoured with the means of grace, bring forth abundantly "those fruits of righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father."

NOTES.

PSALM LXVI. *Title.* The double title, "A Song, a Psalm," is supposed by some to mean, *a very joyful song of praise.*—The name of David is not affixed to this psalm; and various opinions have been entertained concerning the time, author, and occasion of it; but it is highly probable, that it was written by David, when established on the throne, and made victorious over his enemies on every side.

V. 1—3. The Psalmist earnestly excites all the inhabitants of the *land*, (the noun is singular, though the verb is plural,) to exert their powers to the utmost, in celebrating openly and with exultation the works, and honouring the name, and making glorious, or *a glory*, the praises, of God: or, accounting it their honour, to glorify him who had remarkably interposed in their behalf; and had executed such terrible punishment on their enemies, that many who inwardly disliked them and their religion, being alarmed by the power of his works, had reluctantly submitted themselves, and professedly, yet insincerely, become the worshippers of JEHOVAH. This was the effect produced by the gospel in the first ages, when numbers, by the miracles wrought, and the judgments of God inflicted on the Jews and other opposers of Christianity, feigned submission to the divine Saviour, and embraced Christianity, without any real change of heart or character. (*Marg.*—xviii. 44. *marg.*—Notes, lxxviii. 36, 37. 2 Sam. xxii. 43—51, v. 45.)

Submit. (3) יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה, shall lie.

^e xxii. 27. lxxv. 5. ⁴ ^e All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Selah.

^f 16. xlii. 8. cxi. 2. cxxvi. 1—3. Num. xxiii. 23. ^g 3. xcix. 3. Ez. i. 18. ^h lxxviii. 13. cvi. 8—10. cxiv. 5—7. cxxxvi. 13, 14. Ex. xiv. 21, 22. Is. lxiii. 13, 14. ⁱ cvi. 11, 12. Ex. xv. 1, &c. Rev. xv. 2, 3. ^k lxii. 11. Dan. iv. 35. vi. 26, 27. Matt. vi. 13. xxviii. 18. ^l xi. 4. xxxiii. 13. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. ^m ii. 10—12. lli. 1—5. lxxiii. 3—12. lxxv. 4, 5. Ex. xviii. 11. Job ix. 4. Is. x. 7—16. xxxvii. 28, 29. Dan. v. 20—28. ⁿ Deut. xxxii. 43. Rom. xv. 10, 11. ^o 2. xlvii. 1. Jer. xxxiii. 11. Rev. v. 11—14. xix. 1, 5, 6. ^p xxii. 29. 1 Sam. xxv. 29. Acts xvii. 28. Col. iii. 3, 4. ^q xxxvii. 23, 24. lxii. 2, 6. xciv. 18. cxii. 6. cxxi. 3. cxxv. 3. 1 Sam. ii. 9. ^r xvii. 3. Deut. viii. 2. 16. xlii. 3. Prov. xvii. 3. Is. xlviii. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. ^s Job xix. 6. Lam. i. 13. iii. 2, &c. Matt. vi. 13. ^t Deut. xxxiii. 11. x cxxix. 1—3. Is. i. 23. ^u Is. xliii. 1, 2. Acts xiv. 22. 1 Thes. iii. 3, 4. ^v xxxiii. 19. xl. 2, 3. Job xxxvi. 16. Luke xvi. 25. Jam. v. 11. Rev. vii. 14, &c. ^w Heb. moist. cvii. 35—37. Is. xxxv. 6, 7. ^x li. 18, 19. c. 4. cxviii. 19. 27. Deut. xii. 11, 12. Heb. xlii. 15. ^y xxii. 25. lvi. 12. cxvi. 14. 18. Ec. v. 4. Jon. ii. 9. Nah. i. 15. ^z Heb. opened. Judg. xi. 35, 36. Num. xxx. 2. 8. 12. ^a Gen. xxviii. 20—22. xxxv. 2. 1 Sam. i. 11. 2 Sam. xxii. 7. ^b Heb. marrow. Jer. xli. 5. ^c 2 Sam. vi. 13. 17—19. 1 Chr. xvi. 1—3.

^h He turned the sea into dry land: they went through the flood on foot: there did we rejoice in him.

^k He ruleth by his power for ever; his eyes behold the nations: let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah.

^l O bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard:

^p Which * holdeth our soul in life, and suffereth not our feet to be moved.

^q xxxvii. 23, 24. lxii. 2, 6. xciv. 18. cxii. 6. cxxi. 3. cxxv. 3. 1 Sam. ii. 9. ^r xvii. 3. Deut. viii. 2. 16. xlii. 3. Prov. xvii. 3. Is. xlviii. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. ^s Job xix. 6. Lam. i. 13. iii. 2, &c. Matt. vi. 13. ^t Deut. xxxiii. 11. x cxxix. 1—3. Is. i. 23. ^u Is. xliii. 1, 2. Acts xiv. 22. 1 Thes. iii. 3, 4. ^v xxxiii. 19. xl. 2, 3. Job xxxvi. 16. Luke xvi. 25. Jam. v. 11. Rev. vii. 14, &c. ^w Heb. moist. cvii. 35—37. Is. xxxv. 6, 7. ^x li. 18, 19. c. 4. cxviii. 19. 27. Deut. xii. 11, 12. Heb. xlii. 15. ^y xxii. 25. lvi. 12. cxvi. 14. 18. Ec. v. 4. Jon. ii. 9. Nah. i. 15. ^z Heb. opened. Judg. xi. 35, 36. Num. xxx. 2. 8. 12. ^a Gen. xxviii. 20—22. xxxv. 2. 1 Sam. i. 11. 2 Sam. xxii. 7. ^b Heb. marrow. Jer. xli. 5. ^c 2 Sam. vi. 13. 17—19. 1 Chr. xvi. 1—3.

V. 4. The words rendered "all the earth" may mean *all the land*: yet the verb is plural, and all the inhabitants are meant.—The passage, however, is not so evidently a prophecy of a more enlarged dispensation than that of Moses, as many are which occur in these psalms; yet even these were entirely overlooked by the Jews in the time of Christ. In like manner the clearest and most explicit predictions, that the kingdom of Christ shall at length be established all over the earth, are little attended to by professed Christians in general; but they will most certainly be at length accomplished. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5. 'He toucheth the slothful dulness of man, who is cold in the consideration of God's works.' (*Notes*, xlv. 8, 9. cxi. 2—4. cxxvi. 1—3.)

V. 6. The miraculous passage of Israel through the Red Sea, which overwhelmed the Egyptians, and their secure march through the divided streams of Jordan, to possess Canaan and extirpate the inhabitants, are celebrated in this verse. All Israel rejoiced in the temporal benefits thus conferred on them; but the true church rejoiced in God their Saviour and Friend, and the display of his glory in these events. Israel, as the visible church, was considered as one body, which rejoiced and exulted on that occasion.—Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, led the song of joyful praise of Israel on the banks of the Red Sea; and transmitted both the benefits, and the grateful and triumphant remembrance of them, to the next generation. (*Notes*, cvi. 6—14. Ex. xv. 1—21.) Thus from age to age the church rejoiced and blessed God, in concert with those who were eye-witnesses of his wonderful works.

V. 7. (*Note*, 2 Chr. xvi. 7—10.) 'He observes the motions of all nations, who may learn, by the Egyptians and Canaanites, that they who contemn his authority, in vain endeavour to exalt themselves;...for they shall certainly be abased.' *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 8—10. (*Marg. Ref.*) The dangers and distresses, by which Israel had been tried and proved as in a furnace, during their bondage in Egypt, and afterwards in the time

10 For thou, O God, hast proved us; thou hast tried us, as silver is tried.

11 Thou broughtest us into the net; thou laidest affliction upon our loins.

12 Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads: we went through fire and through water; but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.

13 I will go into thy house with burnt-offerings; I will pay thee my vows,

14 Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.

15 I will offer unto thee burnt-sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of rams; I will offer bullocks with goats. Selah.

of the judges, and during some parts of Saul's reign, seemed to threaten the destruction of their existence as a nation: yet God had wonderfully preserved and delivered them; as a man's life is saved from imminent danger, or his health established after some very dangerous disease, or his steps upheld on the slippery brink of a precipice. The astonishing preservation of the Jews as a separate people, during their long continued dispersions and oppressions to this day; when it shall be crowned (as assuredly it shall be,) by their conversion to Christianity and restoration to the promised land; will constitute a still more extraordinary instance of the watchful care of Providence over that people, who in this particular may be regarded as a type both of the church and of individual believers. (*Notes*, Num. xxiii. 9. Deut. iv. 29—31. xxviii. 46. Jer. v. 15—18. xxx. 10, 11. Hos. iii. 4, 5.)

V. 11, 12. The Lord had, for wise, righteous, and merciful reasons, brought Israel into a net, by inducing them to go down into Egypt, and settle in that country. Their oppressors, having thus entangled them, laid heavy burdens on their loins, using them like beasts of burden. Nay, they were so powerful, cruel, and haughty, that they seemed to ride over their heads; and, having thrown them down, to trample them under foot. (*Notes*, cxxix. 1—3.) Yet from this situation, in which they "went through fire and water," through fiery trials, and seas and rivers, God had brought them to rest and great prosperity in Canaan. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, Is. xliii. 1, 2. Zech. xiii. 8, 9.)

V. 13, 14. The Psalmist, having stirred up the people to praise God for his general mercies to Israel, avows his intention of celebrating, with sacrifices and oblations, those deliverances which he had lately received, both personal and publick; and thus to perform the vows which, in the most open and solemn manner, he had made in the season of great danger and affliction. (*Notes*, xxii. 25. lvi. 12. cxvi. 17—19. Gen. xxviii. 20—22. xxxv. 1. Num. xxx. 2. Ec. v. 4—7. Jon. i. 11—16.)

V. 15. This verse may be literally rendered, "I will

g 5. xxxiv. 2. 11. 16. 1 Tim. i. 15. 16. 1 John i. 3. h xxxii. 23. 24. xxxii. 5, 6. lxxi. 20. 1 Cor. xv. 8 —10. i xxx. 8. xxxiv. 3, 4. 6. cxvi. 1, 2. 12. k xxx. 1. cxlv. 1. l Job xxvii. 8, 9. Prov. xv. 8, 29. xxi. 13. xxviii. 9. Is. i. 15. John ix. 31. Jam. iv. 3.

16 ^g Come *and* hear, all ye that fear God, ^h and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.

17 ⁱ I cried unto him with my mouth, and ^k he was extolled with my tongue.

18 ^l If I regard iniquity in my

heart, the Lord will not hear *me*:

19 *But* ^m verily God hath heard *me*: he hath attended to the voice of my prayer. m vi. 9. xxxiv. 6. cxvi. 1, 2. Lam. iii. 55, 56. Heb. v. 7. 1 John iii. 20—22.

20 Blessed *be* God, ⁿ which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me. n li. 11. lxxxvi. 12, 13. 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15.

“offer unto thee the burnt-sacrifices of fatlings, even rams, with incense; I will offer bullocks and goats:” That is, ‘I will liberally provide for every part of the service at the tabernacle.’—“The incense of rams” conveys no clear meaning. (*Note, Ex. xxx. 34—38.*)

V. 16. The psalm, being given to the chief musician, was made publick, and all might read it: but the Psalmist especially called the attention of those who feared God, or were truly pious persons, to the concluding part; as they alone were prepared to enter into the spirit of it, to derive instruction from his experience, and to glorify God on his account. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 5, 6.*)

V. 17. That dependence on God, and expectation from him, and those spiritual affections, which are employed in believing prayer, are honourable to his power, truth, and love; so that he is extolled or magnified by them. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 18, 19. It is probable, that the Psalmist had not only been reproached with his past transgressions, but also charged with hypocrisy, and a secret course of habitual sin: but God had indeed answered his prayers, in a remarkable manner, ‘which brought along with it a testimony of my sincerity, far more valuable than my kingdom. For had I been guilty of such crimes, or entertained so much as a thought of them, as my enemies charged me withal, the Lord, who hates iniquity, would have denied me my request.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—The original is, “If I looked at iniquity with my heart;” that is, if I thought of it with affection and desire. He that “regards iniquity,” entertains the thoughts of it as a man does a welcome visitant. He provides for their entertainment, is reluctant to part with them; and, as far as he can safely, he seeks and seizes the occasion of practising the sin, which he thus thinks of with satisfaction. This evidences the love and dominion of sin; is inconsistent with true repentance; and, if connected with a profession of religion, it is a clear evidence of hypocrisy.—In this case God will not accept or answer a man’s prayers. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Prov. xxviii. 9. Is. i. 10—15. John ix. 27—34, v. 31.*) But if the consciousness of sin in the heart, or the intrusion of evil thoughts, create uneasiness, and a desire to be rid of them; if they be like the presence of an impertinent, intruding visitant, or that of a dun to a moneyless debtor; this is an argument of sincerity in repentance, faith, and regard to God and his will; and God delights in the prayer of the upright. (*Notes, cxix. 113. Prov. xv. 8, 9.*) So that evident answers to solemn and particular prayers are divine attestations to a man’s integrity.

V. 20. *Notes, xl. 11, 12. l. 7—15. cxvi. 1, 2.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The glorious perfections and works of God should induce all men in every land to delight in praising him, in “singing forth the honour of his name, and in making

“his praise glorious;” accounting it their highest honour thus to adore and glorify him: and nothing but human depravity prevents this reasonable and delightful employment from being as universal on earth as in heaven. But neither his exuberant goodness, nor his terrible judgments, nor the greatness of his power, can bring his enemies to more than a *forced* or *feigned* submission, except effectual grace new create their hearts unto holiness. In this way, however, great multitudes have been, by the gospel, brought to be his willing servants and spiritual worshippers, and at length all the inhabitants of the earth shall sing his praise.—It is very proper that sinners should be excited to “come, and behold the works of God, “and how terrible he is in his doing toward the children “of men:” that, observing how “he ruleth by his power,” over those who do not become his willing subjects; and how he beholds the nations, to hinder the rebellious from exalting themselves; they may see the necessity of seeking the favour of him whose wrath is so destructive; and, considering the deliverances vouchsafed his people, they may desire to share their privileges. His servants also should consider his wonderful works, that they may be excited to bless their God, and “cause the voice of his “praise to be heard:” and in redemption by the death of Christ, and the glories which followed that grand event, they have far more surprising and affecting subjects to contemplate, than Israel’s deliverance from Egyptian bondage.—The Lord not only preserves our temporal life, but maintains that spiritual life which he has communicated: nor will he suffer the feet of his servants to be moved, to their utter casting down, by any of the difficulties of their path, or assaults of their enemies. (*Note, 1 Sam. ii. 9.*) Yet he will try their faith, by affliction, as silver is tried in the fire; that it may be proved genuine and be further purified. (*Notes, 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. iv. 12—16.*) Oppressions and persecutions, and even temptations, are on this account permitted as benefits to our souls: they indeed spring from the malice of men or devils; but we must receive them, as prescribed by our God to effect his gracious purposes.—Through various convictions, conflicts, and troubles, the slave of Satan escapes from his galling yoke, and obtains peace and joy in believing: and “through “much tribulation” the believer “must enter into the “kingdom of God.”—While our praises unite with those of the whole church of God, for *general* mercies vouchsafed from age to age; and our prayers, for all that yet remains to be done; we must by no means overlook our own concerns. Under every trouble we should cry unto the Lord with our mouth and from our heart; and take occasion, from our distressing situation, more solemnly to engage ourselves to his service. Then he will deem himself honoured by our worship: and when we obtain deliverance, we must “pay the vows, which our mouth hath “spoken in the day of our distress.”—The sacrifice

PSALM LXVII.

A prayer for an increase of blessings to the church ;
that all nations may know and rejoice in God's salva-
tion, and submit to his righteous government, 1—7.

To the chief Musician on ^a Neginoth,
A Psalm or Song.

GOD be merciful unto us, and ^c bless
us, and ^d cause his face to shine ^e upon
us. Selah.

^f 2 ^e That ^f thy way may be known

of the death of Christ has superseded the legal oblations, by which the ancient believers expressed their grateful zeal: but we must offer continually the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving; our bodies must be presented as a living sacrifice unto the Lord, while our souls are as consecrated priests to him; and without grudging we must expend our substance “in doing good” to our brethren, and to all men as we have opportunity; “for with such sacrifices our “God is well pleased:” and the commemoration of the Redeemer’s atoning sacrifice, according to his holy institution, is especially that sacrifice of thanksgiving, which is our bounden duty.—Besides the general example of gratitude for our mercies, which we publicly exhibit; we should more particularly declare to those who fear God, what he has done for our souls, and how he has heard and answered our prayers: *they* alone are capable of understanding our experience, and they will be edified and encouraged by it, and will join with us in prayer and praise; and this will turn to our mutual comfort, and to the glory of God. But without uprightness in our professed repentance, faith, and love, we cannot share these spiritual privileges: if we love iniquity in our hearts, though we refrain from the gross practice of it, the Lord will reject our hypocritical supplications. But the feeblest petition of the repenting sinner, coming from a broken heart, will by no means be despised: and when we pray “in simplicity and “godly sincerity,” our requests will be evidently answered; and this will “turn unto us for a testimony,” increasing our assurance of the Lord’s love to us, and exciting our gratitude to him, who “hath not turned away our prayer, nor “his mercy from us.”

NOTES.

PSALM LXVII. V. 1—3. It is probable that David composed this psalm; perhaps on the same occasion as the foregoing.—It may be considered either as a *prayer*, or as a *prophecy*: but the whole, being in the future tense, is more naturally interpreted as a prediction, than as a supplication. Most versions indeed render it as a prayer, and in this sense it is exceedingly animated: yet it may be questioned, whether the method of explaining the language of *direct prophecy*, as *longing and praying for the event*, have not darkened the evidence from prophecy for the divine inspiration of scripture; and damped the expectations, exertions, and prayers of pious persons for the enlargement of the church. Prophecy may easily be converted into prayer for its accomplishment: but the prayers even of inspired persons must not be considered as prophecies.—The believing remnant of the old-testament church

upon earth, ^g thy saving health among
all nations.

3 ^h Let the people praise thee, O
God; let all the people praise thee.

4 ⁱ O let the nations be glad, and
sing for joy: ^k for thou shalt judge the
people righteously, ^l and [†] govern the
nations upon earth. Selah.

5 ^m Let the people praise thee, O
God; let all the people praise thee.

6 *Then* ⁿ shall the earth yield her in-

[†] Heb. *lead*. Is. lv. 4. m 3. Matt. vi. 9, 10. n lxxxv. 9—12. Lev. xxv. 4.
Is. i. 19. xxx. 23, 24. Ez. xxxiv. 26, 27. 1 Cor. iii. 6—9.

here predicts that God would continue and complete his mercies to them, and bless them, shining on them as the enlightening, cheering, fertilizing sun, and smiling on them as a loving Father. (Notes, iv. 6—8. Num. vi. 24—26.)—The effect of this would be, a general prevalence of truth and righteousness, of love, peace, joy, and all the fruits of the Spirit: and when the visible church became thus pure, united, and happy, it would powerfully conduce to its enlargement; till “the way of the LORD” would be known on earth, and that salvation, which heals the distempered souls of men, would reach all nations; and all the “gentiles would glorify God for his mercy.”—“The people “shall praise thee, O God; the people shall praise thee, “all of them.” (Notes, cxvii. Rom. xv. 8—13.)—This psalm is adopted into the liturgy of our church; and when it is read and attended to with understanding and affection, the prophecy is in part fulfilled. The substance also of these verses, as a petition, is inserted in the excellent prayer ‘for all sorts and conditions of men:’ though the order being reversed, the connexion between the purity and peace of the church, and its enlargement into all lands, is not so clearly maintained.—The coming of Christ, “the Sun of Righteousness, who arose” on the land of Israel, “with healing in his wings;” the success of the gospel in the primitive ages, and the future conversion of the nations to Christ; seem to have been predicted in the most unequivocal manner: nor can the *prophecy* be considered as *fulfilled*, while any part of the world remains in pagan, Mohammedan, or Jewish darkness; or while any part of the church continues in bondage to antichristian tyranny and superstition, or corrupted with heresy, and miserably divided, as, alas! it is at present.—*Thy saving health.* (2) Literally, “Thy salvation.” (Notes, Is. xlix. 5, 6. Luke ii. 25—32. iii. 4—6.)

V. 4. This is literally, “The nations shall be glad and “sing for joy, &c.” By the knowledge of God through the gospel, all peoples, nations, and languages shall certainly at length rejoice in his righteous government, and in the prospect of his righteous judgment. And the establishment of his kingdom throughout the earth, will fill the world with righteousness, and terminate all iniquity, oppression, fraud, licentiousness, and impiety. (Notes, Is. ii. 2—5. xi. 6—9. Rev. xx. 4—6.)

V. 6, 7. These verses are translated as a *prediction*, the rest as a *prayer*; yet the original is uniformly the future tense, and the language of express prediction. (Notes, 1—4.)—The *increase* is that which God gives, while his faithful servants plant and water; (Note, 1 Cor. iii. 4—9;

crease; and God, even ^o our own God, shall bless us.

7 ^p God shall bless us; and ^a all the ends of the earth shall ^r fear him.

PSALM LXVIII.

David prays for, or predicts, the confusion and destruction of the wicked, and the joy of the righteous, 1—3. He praises the mercy and majesty of God, especially as shewn in bringing Israel out of Egypt into Canaan, 4—14. Under the type of the ark of God taking possession of Zion, and the prosperity of Israel, he predicts the ascension of Christ, the rapid success of the gospel, and the punishment of obstinate opposers, 15—31. He exhorts all nations to praise the God of Israel, 32—35.

To the chief Musician, a Psalm or Song of David.

^a LET God arise, let his enemies ^b be

scattered: let them also ^c that hate him flee ^{*} before him.

2 ^d As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; ^e as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish ^f at the presence of God.

3 But ^g let the righteous be glad; let them ^h rejoice before God; yea, let them ⁱ exceedingly rejoice.

4 ^j Sing unto God, sing praises to his name: extol him that ^k rideth upon the heavens by ^l his name JAH, and rejoice before him.

5 ^m A Father of the fatherless, and ⁿ a Judge of the widows, is God ^o in his holy habitation.

6 ^p God setteth the solitary in ^q fa-

Hos. xiv. 3. n lxxii. 2. 4. Deut. x. 18. Job xxix. 12, 13. Is. i. 23. Jer. v. 28. Luke xviii. 2—7. Eph. v. 1. o xxxiii. 14. 2 Chr. vi. 2. xxx. 27. Is. lvii. 15. lxxv. 1. Acts vii. 48, 49. p cvii. 41. cxlii. 9. 1 Sam. ii. 5. Gal. iv. 27. ^q Heb a house.

for our God blesses us, when he thus prospers the work of his ministers: and we are assured, that he will do this more and more, till the remotest regions, till China, Japan, Peru, with every region of unexplored Africa, and every island of the earth, shall remember themselves, fear the Lord, and become his worshippers.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The church on earth still greatly needs the mercy of God, and further blessings from him in performance of his promises. When he shines upon his people, and fills them with light, purity, and consolation, it exceedingly tends to spread the knowledge of his salvation. (Note, Acts ix. 31.)—None, except narrow-minded zealots for a party, would wish to confine the blessings of the gospel within any other limits, than the whole extent of the earth. Those who have experienced the salutary efficacy of this invaluable medicine, would have all their fellow-sinners to share their felicity: and they, who delight in praising God, would have all people to rejoice in him, and praise him with them; for his precepts are as equitable, as his mercies are abundant. Thus the examples, prayers, and endeavours of zealous Christians make known the ways of God on earth.—When the expected Redeemer came, the gospel was preached to the Gentiles, and the earth at large began to give her increase. But alas! only a small part of mankind have hitherto embraced Christianity; but few *real* Christians comparatively are found even in the purest Christian countries; and lamentable divisions and offences prevail even among that remnant. We have therefore still need to pray, that ‘our own God would fulfil his gracious promises, and enlarged predictions; and be merciful to his church, and bless it with increasing knowledge, purity, and love; that, every thing being removed, which tarnishes the beauty of the Christian religion, or weakens the endeavours of Christians to spread the gospel, his salvation may be diffused through all nations; that our Redeemer may establish his righteous kingdom over all mankind; that they may yield a revenue of praise and glory to his name; and that all the ends of the earth may worship him in spirit and truth, in reverence and godly fear.’ Amen.

NOTES.

PSALM LXVIII. V. 1—3. This psalm is supposed to have been written and used, when the ark was carried up to Mount Zion.—The first of these verses evidently refers to the words used by Moses, at the removal of the ark: (Num. x. 35, 36:) but the sacred name JEHOVAH, used in that passage, is here changed for ELOHIM, or God; and the future tense in the first clause is substituted instead of the imperative, the language of *prediction* for that of *prayer*. Indeed the old version, more literally than the present, renders the whole of these verses as a prophecy, “God will arise, and his enemies shall be scattered, &c.,” for all the verbs are future. (Notes, v. 10, 11. lxxvii. 1—3.)—The Psalmist looked back to the former mercies of God to Israel, and predicted further prosperity to his people, now the symbol of God’s presence had taken possession of its appointed residence among them.—The presence of God with Israel had dissipated the force and projects of those who hated him and them, as the cloud of smoke is dispersed by the wind, or as the wax is liquefied by the fire. And while the wicked had perished at his presence, the righteous had expressed their admiring gratitude and joy, in every imaginable way. Thus it had been of old; thus it would certainly be in future times; and thus the worshippers prayed that it might be, then and at all times.

V. 4. *Rideth upon the heavens.*] (Notes, 31—33. Deut. xxxiii. 26.) Or, as some render the words, “Rideth through the deserts,” (צִיְוֹן), as the Protector of Israel.—JAH is an abbreviation of JEHOVAH, and signifies *self-existence* and *eternity*. This name is used very frequently, in conjunction with *Hallelu*, forming the word *Hallelujah*; that is, ‘Praise JAH,’ or ‘JEHOVAH.’ (18. Heb. Notes, Ex. iii. 14, 15. vi. 2, 3.) He, who derives his being from none, but gives being to all, is engaged by promise and covenant to protect and bless his people; who on that account, as well as on many others, are called on to extol and rejoice in him.

V. 5, 6. The God of immutable and eternal majesty and glory, whose ark, the symbol of his presence, abode

q cvii. 10, 14. milies: ^a he bringeth out those which
cxlvi. 7. Is. lxi. are bound with chains: but ^r the rebel-
l. Acts xii. 6, &c. lious dwell in a dry land.

r cvii. 34, 40. 7 O God, ^s when thou wentest forth
Deut. xxviii. 23, before thy people, when ^t thou didst
24. Hos. ii. 3 march through the wilderness; Se-
Mal. i. 3. lah:
cxiv. 1, &c. Ex. xii. 21. Deut. iv. 34. Judg. iv. 14. Hab. iii. 3.
t Judg. v. 4. Mic. ii. 13. Hab. iii. 12.

u lxxvii. 18. cxiv. 8 The "earth shook, ^{*} the heavens
7. Is. lxiv. 3. also dropped at the presence of God:
Heb. xii. 26. even ^y Sinai itself was moved at the
Rev. xi. 19. presence of God, ^z the God of Israel.

x Judg. v. 4, 5. 9 Thou, O God, ^a didst ^{*} send a plen-
y Ex. xix. 18. tiful rain, whereby thou didst [†] confirm
Deut. v. 23—25. thine inheritance, when it was weary.
z 35. xli. 13. Is. xlv. 3.

a lxxv. 9, &c. lxxvii. 16, 17. lxxviii. 24—27. Deut. xi. 10, 11. Ez. xxxiv. 26.

† Heb. confirm it.

in the sanctuary of Israel, (as typical of the human nature of Jesus Christ, his true temple in which he will dwell for ever;) was the condescending Patron of orphans, widows, and all destitute persons. Those who had lost their relations in Egypt and the wilderness, and were left as lonely individuals, were brought into other families in Israel, and settled in Canaan: the people, who had been in cruel bondage to Pharaoh, were set at liberty: but, as the surviving rebellious Egyptians inhabited a country desolated by divine judgments; so the rebellious Israelites dwelt during forty years in the barren wilderness.—The calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the unbelieving Jews, seem likewise to have been predicted: while the general plan of divine Providence is briefly described. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7, 8. When JEHOVAH, displaying his glory from the pillar of fire and cloud, conducted Israel in triumph out of Egypt, and through the wilderness; the whole creation appeared to stand in awe of the Creator, who thus manifested his glory, as the God of Israel.—The earth trembled, the heavens poured down impetuous showers, while the sea divided to open a path for Israel, and returned to overwhelm their pursuers. (*Notes, Ex. xiii. 21, 22. xiv, xv. 1—21.*)—But especially, when the people were encamped before Sinai, that mountain shook to its foundations, at the presence of Israel's God. (*Notes, Ex. xix. 16—20. Judg. v. 4, 5.*)

V. 9, 10. The awful displays of JEHOVAH's glory were not more extraordinary, than his gracious interpositions in behalf of his people. In order to provide for their urgent wants, "he commanded the clouds from above, and opened "the doors of heaven; and rained down manna upon them "to eat." "He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and "feathered fowl like as the sand of the sea." (cv. 40—42. *Notes, lxxviii. 17—31. Ex. xvi. 13—36.*) Thus they were plentifully supplied, and their hearts were confirmed, or strengthened and encouraged, when wearied with marching through the wilderness. They dwelt in the midst of their provisions: and the poorest of them were as sufficiently provided for, as if they had inhabited Canaan, when rendered most fruitful by the early and latter rains.—The word rendered "congregation," seems to mean *any living thing*; and to mark out in one general term, the immense multitude of living creatures, which were in this astonishing manner continually maintained. The Septuagint renders it, "Thy living creatures."—Considering the psalm as

10 ^b Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: ^c thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.

11 ^d The Lord gave the word: great was the ^e company of those that published it.

12 ^f Kings of armies ^g did flee apace: and ^h she that tarried at home divided the spoil.

13 Though ⁱ ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as ^j the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.

g lxxxi. 6. Ex. i. 14. 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. xii. 2. Eph. ii. 1—3. Tit. iii. 3. 19. cv. 37. cxlix. 4. 1 Kings iv. 20, 21. Ez. xvi. 9—14. Luke xv. 16. 22. Eph. v. 26, 27. Rev. i. 5, 6.

b lxxiv. 1, 2, 19. Ex. xix. 5, 6. Num. xvi. 3. 1 Pet. v. 3. c Deut. xxvi. 5, 9, 10. xxxii. 8—14. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Job v. 10, 11. Luke i. 53. d xl. 3. Ex. xiv. 15. xvii. 9, &c. Judg. iv. 6, &c. Eph. iv. 11. e Heb. army. 25. Ex. xv. 20, 21. Judg. v. 1, &c. Rev. xiv. 13, 14. f Ex. xiv. 25. Num. xxxi. 8, 9. Josh. x. 16. 42. xii. 7, &c. Judg. v. 19. Rev. vi. 15. xix. 17—20. g Heb. did flee, did flee. h lxxiv. 1. Num. xxxi. 27. 1 Sam. xxx. 24. i lxxiv. 1. h lxxiv. 1. Num. xxxi. 27. 1 Sam. xxx. 24. j lxxiv. 1. Num. xxxi. 27. 1 Sam. xxx. 24.

predictive and descriptive of the Ascension of the Saviour, our thoughts are naturally led to the events that followed; and many parts of it are peculiarly applicable to those events. In this view, how weary and barren was the visible church at the death of Christ! But what a gracious and refreshing rain was soon sent down upon it, in the pouring forth of the Spirit at the day of Pentecost and afterwards! What provision was then made for the poor souls, who had long waited for redemption in Israel, or who had groped in darkness in other lands! (*Notes, lxxii. 1—7.*)

V. 11, 12. In many instances the Lord himself "gave "the word," commanding the Israelites to march against their enemies, or to go forward regardless of them: and when he had given his people the victory, he put into their mouths the word of praise and thanksgiving. Then "great "was the army of those that published it."—The word rendered "published," is feminine: and the Psalmist seems to allude to the custom of the women in companies, joining to celebrate the successes of the nation with songs of praise and triumph, as Miriam and the women of Israel, and Deborah, and others did. (*Notes, Ex. xv. 1—21. Judg. v.*)—So decided were their victories, that while the kings commanding numerous and powerful armies fled, with the greatest precipitation, but in vain; the spoil which was taken was so large, that even the women who remained at home received a share of it. (*Marg. Ref.*)—Thus when our Lord, having risen as a Conqueror from the grave, gave the word to preach his gospel, great numbers were raised up to publish the glad tidings: opposing rulers and empires fell before them; (*Notes, Rev. vi. 1, 2. xii. 7—12;*) and millions have shared the blessings, who have been exempted from the persecutions and sufferings, which apostles and evangelists endured.—It is also remarkable, that the whole of these verses is in the future tense; and therefore, though properly applied, as the language of poetry, to past events, it may well be considered as prophetic likewise.—"The Lord will give the "word, &c."

V. 13. Israel making bricks in Egypt, and lodging like slaves between the rows of the kilns, or furnaces, being covered with clay and smoke, appeared very mean: but when possessed of Canaan, during the reigns of David and Solomon, they appeared in beauty and splendour; and still more so, as "they were a holy people unto the LORD."—Thus the slaves of Satan, when converted to Christ,

14 ⁱWhen the Almighty scattered kings ^{*}in it, ^kit was *white* ^las snow in Salmon.

15 ^mThe hill of God *is as* the hill of Bashan; an high hill, *as* ⁿthe hill of Bashan.

16 ^oWhy leap ye, ye high hills? *this is* ^pthe hill *which* God desireth to dwell in; yea, the LORD will dwell *in it* for ever.

17 ^qThe chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, *even* ^rthousands of angels: the Lord *is* among them ^s*as in* Sinai, in the holy *place*.

18 ^tThou hast ascended on high, ^uthou hast led captivity captive: ^vthou hast received gifts ^wfor men; yea, ^xfor the rebellious also, ^ythat the LORD God might dwell *among them*.

19 ^zBlessed *be* the Lord, *who* ^adaily loadeth us *with benefits*, even the God of our salvation. Selah.

20 *He that is* ^bour God, *is* the God of salvation; and ^cunto God the Lord *belong* ^dthe issues from death.

ix. 13. Luke xxiv. 47. Acts ii. 23. 36. 38—41. ix. 17. 1 Tim. i. 13—15. Tit. iii. 3—7. y cxxxii. 13, 14. 2 Chr. vi. 18. Is. lvii. 15. Ez. xlviii. 35. John xiv. 17. 23. 2 Cor. vi. 16. Rev. i. 20. ii. 1. xxi. 3. z lxxii. 17—19. ciii. 1, &c. Eph. i. 3. a xxxii. 7. cxxxix. 17, 18. Lam. iii. 23. b Is. xii. 2. xlv. 17—22. Hos. i. 7. John iv. 22. c cxviii. 17, 18. Deut. xxxii. 39. 1 Sam. ii. 6. John v. 21. 23. 28, 29. xi. 25, 26. Heb. ii. 14, 15. Rev. i. 18. d Prov. iv. 23.

dwell upon mount Zion: thus the Messiah ascended into heaven, attended with an innumerable company of angels; and thus he shall at length come to judge the world. (Marg. Ref. q.)—The original word (רַבְּבָיִם) does not seem to mean angels; yet they are evidently intended. The marginal reading *many thousands* is more literal. ‘Thou—sands of repetition;’ or ‘thousands again and again repeated.’ Among these the Lord manifested himself, as he had done “in Sinai, in the holy place.” (Notes, Ex. iii. 4, 5. xix. 16—20.)

V. 18. When the ark was placed upon mount Zion, the tabernacle was enriched with the spoils of the vanquished nations, which were there deposited for the benefit of the Israelites, notwithstanding their rebellions, that “the LORD God might dwell among them:” and of these spoils the temple was chiefly built. (Notes, 2 Sam. viii. 9—11. 1 Chr. xxvi. 28. xxix. 3—9.)—But the ascension of Christ must here be meant, who is thus proved to be JEHOVAH. When he ascended into heaven, he led captive Satan, sin, and death, which had held all men in captivity; and he received, as the recompence of his death upon the cross, all those gifts which were needful, in order to the conversion of sinners, and completing the salvation of believers: these he continually bestows on those for whom he received them; even on rebellious men, that “the LORD God may dwell among them,” as their Friend and Father. The apostle cites this passage, and explains it in respect of the gifts bestowed by the risen and ascended Saviour. (Notes, Eph. iv. 7—13.) He does not, however, take it from the Septuagint, but gives the sense in other words.—To *receive* a gift for another, implies *giving* it.—Some render the word translated “for men,” *in man*, as referring to the human nature of Christ.—The original name, or title, of God is here “JAH ELOHIM.” (Note, 4.)

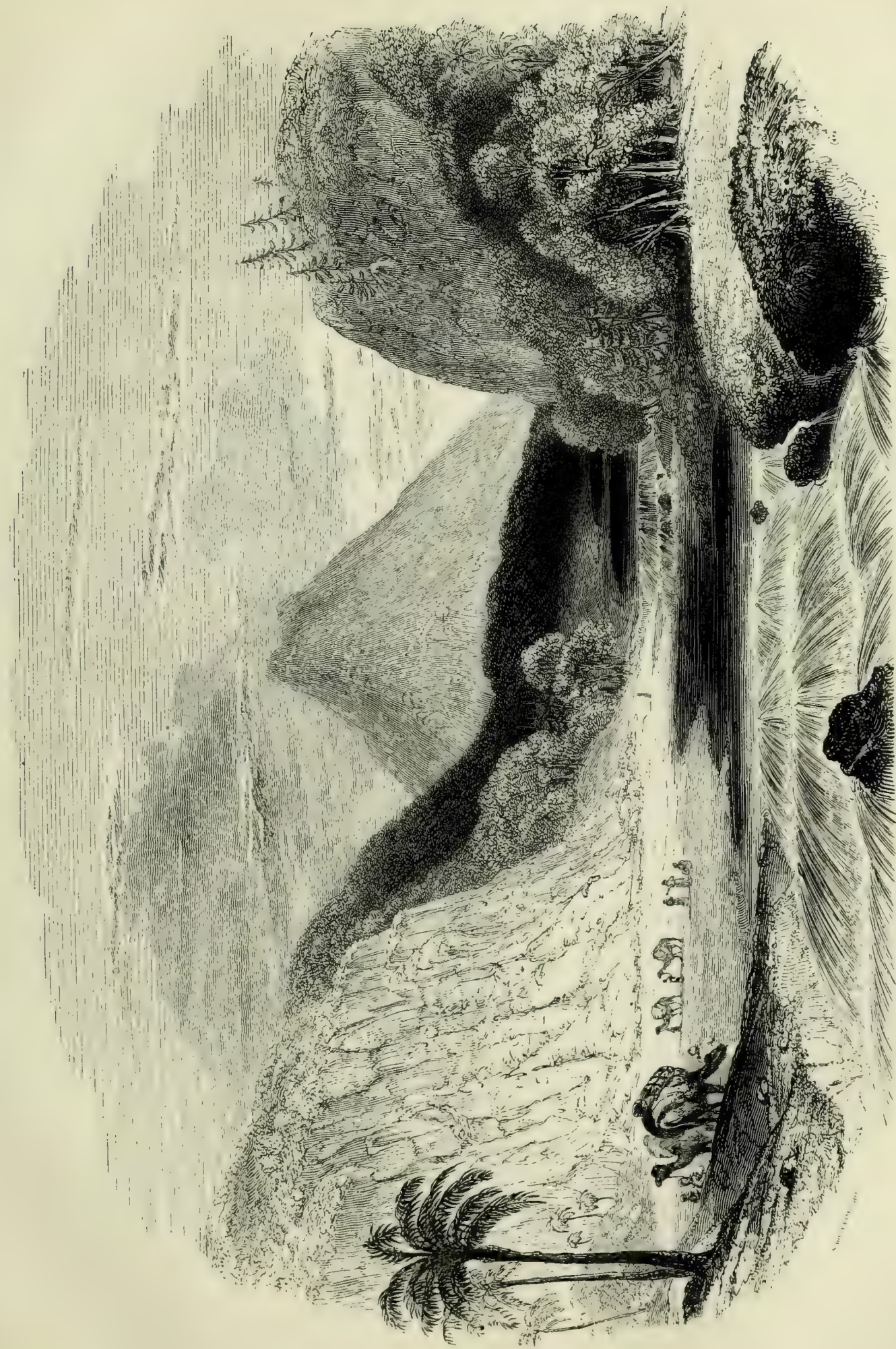
V. 19, 20. The preceding review of the Lord’s dealings with his people, and the prophetick foresight of far greater benefits, (Note, 1 Pet. i. 10—12,) caused the Psalmist to break forth abruptly into adoring praises.—This must have had great effect, when sung by the numerous bands which attended the ark, accompanied with instrumental musick, in great variety and perfection. (Note, 1 Chr. xvi. 34—36.)—The God of salvation, day by day, or every day, heaped benefits on his people, and, as it were, loaded them with favours; and therefore it was but reasonable, that he should be praised every day.—Unto him, even God the Lord,

being justified and sanctified by him, begin to look comely and honourable: and when they shall arrive in heaven, all remains of their sinful estate shall disappear, and they shall be as “the wings of a dove covered with silver, and “her feathers with yellow gold.” (Note, cxlix. 4. P. O.—Notes, 1 Cor. xv. 45—54. 2 Thes. i. 5—10.)

V. 14. When the Almighty scattered and destroyed the kings of Canaan for the church of Israel, (the dove mentioned in the preceding verse, the words being feminine,) it not only became very honourable; but was likewise so purified from sin, and adorned with holiness, that it appeared white like the top of Salmon when covered with snow. (Notes, li. 7. Is. i. 16—20.)—The generation which fought under Joshua was peculiarly excellent: (Notes, Josh. v. 2—8. xxii. 34:) and under the Judges, and in after ages, they were generally reformed, before they were delivered and made victorious.—But the original is in the future tense, and seems an evident prediction, under allusions to these past events, of the purity of the church, and the success of the gospel, in the primitive ages, and at the approach of the millennium. The nineteenth chapter of the Revelation seems to be a prophetick exposition of this verse, far more striking than any which can be found in the history of Israel.

V. 15, 16. It is supposed that this part of the psalm was sung, when the company attending the ark came within view of mount Zion.—If the former of these verses be read with notes of interrogation, the passage may be thus rendered, “The hill of God, *is it* the hill of Bashan? “The hill with craggy eminences, the hill of Bashan? “Why leap ye so,” (or, ‘why look ye askance with envy;’) “ye hills with craggy eminences? This is the hill which “God desireth for his habitation; yea, JEHOVAH will dwell “in it perpetually.”—The apostrophe is exceedingly animated and poetical, viewed in this light. God had preferred Zion to the loftiest mountains, as the place of his permanent residence, and the type of his true church in which he will dwell to eternity. (Notes, lxxviii. 67—69. lxxxvii. 1—6.)

V. 17. The God of Israel is here described as a mighty Prince and Conqueror coming to his palace, to take possession of his throne, with a very large army of chariots and horsemen; as his thousands of angels were a far more splendid retinue, than ever attended the greatest monarch. Thus he descended upon mount Sinai; thus he would



BASHAN, AND THE HILL OF BASHAN.

NUMB. xxxii. 33. DEUT. iii. 10-14. JOSH. xvii. 1.

PSALM lxxviii. 15. JER. i. 19. MIC. vii. 14.

^e ex. 6. Hab. iii. 13. Mark xii. 4. ^f 18. vii. 12. Prov. i. 24. &c. Ez. xxviii. 27—30. Luke xiii. 5. Heb. ii. 1—3. xii. 25. Rev. ii. 14—16. ^g Num. xxi. 33. Is. xi. 11—16. xlix. 22. ^h Ex. xiv. 22. 29. Is. li. 10, 11. Jer. xxiii. 5—8. Ez. xxxvi. 24. Hos. i. 10, 11. ⁱ lviii. 10. ^j Heb. red. ^k 1 Kings xxi. 19. xxii. 38. 2 Kings ix. 33—37. Rev. xix. 17—21. ^l xxiv. 7—10. xlvii. 5—7. 2 Sam. vi. 12—17. 1 Chr. xiii. 8. xv. 16—24. ^m lxxxvii. 7. cl. 3. —5. Rev. xiv. 2, 3.

21 But ^e God shall wound the head of his enemies, *and* the hairy scalp ^f of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses.

22 The Lord said, ^g I will bring again from Bashan, ^h I will bring *my* people again from the depths of the sea:

23 That ⁱ thy foot may be ^j dipped in the blood of *thine* enemies, *and* the tongue of thy dogs in the same.

24 ¶ They have seen thy goings, O God; ^k *even* the goings of my God, my King, in the sanctuary.

25 The singers went before, ^m the

players on instruments *followed* after; ⁿ *among them were* the damsels playing with timbrels.

26 ^o Bless ye God in the congregations, *even* the Lord, ^p from ^q the fountain of Israel.

27 There is ^r little Benjamin *with* their ruler, ^s the princes of Judah ^t *and* their council, the princes of Zebulun, *and* the princes of Naphtali.

28 Thy God hath ^u commanded thy strength: ^v strengthen, O God, that which thou hast wrought for us.

^{lxxi.} 3. ^{John} v. 8, 9. ^{Acts} iii. 6—8. ^{2 Cor.} xii. 9, 10 17—20. ^{Phil.} i. 6. ^{2 Thes.} i. 11.

^{exlviii.} 12, 13. ^{Ex.} xv. 20. ^{Judg.} xi. 34. ^{1 Sam.} xviii. 6. ^{Jer.} xxxii. 4, 13. ^o cvii. 32. cxi. 1. cxxxv. 19—21. ^{1 Chr.} xvi. 7, 8. &c. ^p Or, ye that are of the fountain of Israel. ^{Deut.} xxxiii. 28. ^{Prov.} v. 16. ^{Is.} xlviii. 1. ^q Gen. xlii. 32. ^{Judg.} xx. 35. ^{xxi.} 6, &c. ^{1 Sam.} ix. 21. ^{1 Chr.} xii. 16. 29. xv. 3. ^{xxvii.} 12. ^{xlvi.} 9. ^{Is.} xi. 13. ^{Ez.} xxxvii. 19—27. ^r Or, with their company. ^s xlii. 8. ^{xliv.} 4. ^t cxxxviii. 8. ^{Eph.} iii.

belonged the outgoings from death. Life and death, heaven and hell, are absolutely at his disposal. The Lord Jesus is “the Resurrection and the Life.” He has “the keys of death and hell;” (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Rev. i. 12—20, v. 18.*) He has ‘opened the kingdom of heaven to all ‘believers,’ he has made a way for their deliverance from spiritual and eternal death; he has taken away the sting and terror of death, and made that “king of terrors” the gain and privilege of his people; he has consecrated the grave as the repository of their bodies, which he will raise at length incorruptible and immortal.—*Our God is the God of salvation.* (20) Or, *salvations.* (*Notes, Is. xii. 1—3. John iv. 21—24.*)

V. 21. The gifts received by the ascended Saviour, though for “rebellious man,” would not preserve such from destruction as went on still in their sins. The God of salvation, while he pardons and blesses the repenting rebel, is peculiarly terrible to the impenitent and unbelieving. (*Note, Ex. xxxiv. 5—7.*)—“The hairy scalp” means, the crown of the head, the principal strength, confidence, and glory of the enemy.—Christ will crush the serpent’s head. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Gen. iii. 14, 15.*)

V. 22, 23. The Lord had promised to save Israel from their enemies by the hand of David: he would therefore renew the wonders which he wrought, when Og king of Bashan was slain, and when the Egyptians perished at the Red Sea.—The ascension of Christ made way for most signal displays of the Lord’s power, in spreading the gospel, and in taking vengeance on his enemies: and the more glorious prevalence of Christianity shall be attended with such slaughter of antichristian opposers, as will literally verify the words here used. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, cxlix. 6—9. Is. xxxiv. lxiii. 1—6. Rev. xix. 17—21.*)—As the verses follow the prophecy of our Lord’s ascension, these events seem more directly predicted; and especially the conversion of the Jews, their restoration to their own land, and the vengeance on those who shall oppose them. (*Notes, Ez. xxxviii, xxxix.*)

V. 24, 25. When the solemnity of the day was nearly finished, these verses seem to have been sung. The congregation had been spectators of the triumphant manner, in which their God and King had gone up to take possession of his sanctuary, attended with sacred musick and rejoicing. He had accepted their services; and all was so hap-

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pily concluded, as to presage future prosperous days. (*Notes, xxiv. 7—10. 1 Chr. xv. 16—24. xvi. 4—6. 37—43.*) In like manner the prophecy of the Son of David, (the King of kings and Lord of lords,) going forth to destroy his enemies and enlarge his kingdom, is introduced by a vision of “much people in heaven, saying Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord “our God; &c.” (*Notes, Rev. xix.*) A scene not wholly unlike, but immensely more august, than that procession with the ark to mount Zion, which was the pledge of David’s further victories and prosperity.

My God, my King. (24) cxlv. 1.—*Damsels.* (25) cxlviii. 11—14. *Notes, 11, 12. Jer. xxxi. 3—5. 10—14, v. 13.*—The triumphant entrance of the ascending Saviour, amidst the loud acclamations of the heavenly hosts, is shadowed forth under these images.

V. 26. *From the fountain, &c.]* That is, ‘Ye, who ‘spring from the fountain,’ or the *stock*, ‘of Israel. Thus the people in companies seem responsively to have called upon each other, to bless the Lord. (cxxxiv, cxxxv. 1—3. 15—21.)

V. 27. The tribe of Benjamin, from which Saul the first king of Israel sprang, joined in this solemnity, as willingly subject to David; and, though a small tribe, descended from Jacob’s youngest son, and almost destroyed in the war at Gibeah; (*Notes, Judg. xx.;*) and now eclipsed by Judah whose princes supported David as his council, or by their *multitudes*; it manifested no jealousy or envy. Not only the rulers of the other tribes in the vicinity of Jerusalem attended on this occasion, but those of Zebulun and Naphtali which lay most remote: so harmonious was the whole nation on this occasion! (*Notes, 1 Chr. xii. 22—40. xiii. 1—4.*)—Thus after Christ’s ascension, rival nations and people, near and far off, thronged into his church.

V. 28. The people seem here to have addressed the king. The LORD his God had commanded all parties thus to strengthen David’s cause, and had effected their willing submission; and they prayed, that he would establish what he had by him wrought for his people, in preserving the unity of the nation, and increasing its prosperity. ‘May ‘it please thee, O God, to increase and confirm it: for, as ‘it is begun, so it must be perfected, by thee alone.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, cxxxviii. 8. Eph. iii. 20, 21. Phil. i. 3—6.*)

2 L

29 "Because of thy temple at Jerusalem * shall kings bring presents unto thee.

30 "Rebuke the * company of spearmen, * the multitude of the bulls, with the calves of the people, *till* ^a every one submit himself with pieces of silver: [†] scatter thou the people *that* ^b delight in war.

31 "Princes shall come out of Egypt; ^d Ethiopia shall soon ^e stretch out her hands unto God.

32 Sing unto God, ^f ye kingdoms of

u 1 Chr. xvii. 4—12. xxii. 7—11. xxviii. 10, &c. xxix. 3. 2 Chr. ii. 5, 6. vi. 8, 9. lxxii. 10, 11. lxxvi. 11. 1 Kings x. 10. 25. 2 Chr. xxxii. 23. Ezra vii. 13—28. Neh. ii. 8. Is. lx. 6—11. 16. y 2 Sam. viii. x. 2 Chr. xiv. xx. Is. xxxvii. * Or, beasts of the reeds. Jer. li. 32, 33. z xxii. 12, 13. Is. xxxiv. 7. Jer. l. ii. 12. xviii. 44. 2 Sam. viii. 2. 8—11. † Or, he scattereth. b cxx. 7. Rom. vii. 22. Jam. iv. 1. c lxxii. 8—11. Is. xix. 18—25. xlv. 14. lx. 6, 7. lxxvi. 19. d Zeph. iii. 10. Acts viii. 27, &c. e xlv. 20. lxxxviii. 9. cxliii. 6. 1 Kings viii. 22. f lxxvii. 2—5. c. l. cxvii. 1, 2. Deut. xxxii. 43. Rom. xv. 10, 11. Rev. xv. 4.

the earth; O sing praises unto the Lord; Selah:

33 To him that ^s rideth upon the heavens of heavens, *which were* ^h of old: lo, he doth ^t send out ⁱ his voice, *and that* a mighty voice.

34 ^k Ascribe ye strength unto God: ^l his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in the ^l clouds.

35 O God, *thou art* ^m terrible out of thy holy places: the God of Israel is ⁿ he that giveth strength and power unto *his* people. ^o Blessed be God.

g 4. xviii. 10. civ. 3. h xciii. 2. cii. 25. † Heb. give. i xxix. 3—9. lxxxvii. 17, 18. Ps. x. 5. John xii. 28, 29. Rev. xi. 12. 15. 19. k xxix. 1, 2. xcvi. 6—8. 1 Chr. xvi. 28, 29. Rev. xix. 6. l Deut. xxxiii. 26. 2 Pet. i. 17. m Or, heavens. n xlv. 4, 5. lxxv. 5. lxxvi. 5. lxxvi. 12. Neh. i. 5. Heb. xii. 24—29. Rev. vi. 16, 17. o xxix. 11. Deut. xxxiii. 25. Is. xl. 31. Zech. x. 12. Eph. iii. 16. Phil. iv. 13. Col. i. 11. o lxxii. 18, 19

V. 29. The word (הֵיכָל) rendered "temple" is also used for the tabernacle: (1 Sam. iii. 3:) yet it is probable, that David spoke this prophetically, and foretold that the temple, which was to be built at Jerusalem, would render the worship there performed so much known, that kings would bring presents and oblations to JEHOVAH, to be offered there. This was a figure of the conversion of the kings of the earth unto Christ in the latter days. (Notes, lxxii. 8—11. Ezra vii. 11—28. Is. xlix. 22, 23. lx. 4—14.)

V. 30. The same word is here rendered "company," as is before translated "congregation," but which signifies a *living creature*: (Note, 9, 10:) and it seems in this place to mean a *wild beast*.—The whole verse may be thus rendered: "Rebuke the wild beast of the reeds, the congregation of the mighty among the calves of the nations, skipping," or exulting, "with pieces of silver; scatter the people that delight in war." Bp. Horne. Some interpret "the beast of the reeds" to mean the crocodile, the emblem of Egypt; and the "calves of the nations," the objects of the Egyptian idolatry; while their "skipping with pieces of silver," is supposed to refer to the rites of their worship. As, however, David was not attacked by the Egyptians, or about to make war on them, this interpretation is not very satisfactory.—"The beast of the reed" or *lance*, seems to denote a warrior, fierce as a wild beast, perhaps Hadadezer king of Syria. "The multitude of the bulls and the calves of the people" were the powerful and numerous commanders, with their troops: and I apprehend the prayer is, "O Lord, rebuke them, enraged and strong as they are, till they lay themselves down for us to set our feet on their necks, and supplicate their lives, offering pieces of silver for tribute, as owning themselves subject to us. Yea, scatter the people that delight in war," as they evidently do." (Notes, 2 Sam. viii. x.) The word (הִתְחַנְּנוּ), rendered "submit themselves," means the most unreserved humiliation. It is used only here and Prov. vi. 3; where it is rendered, "Humble thyself." It is no doubt to be considered also as a typical prophecy, and a prayer of the church for a decided victory, over the most furious and haughty of her oppressors and persecutors. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 31—33. The victories, gained by David and Israel over the surrounding nations, would induce even those who were more distant, and most addicted to idolatry, to come to Jerusalem, and join themselves to the worshippers of

the true God. (Marg. Ref. c, d.) The conversion of the nations, in consequence of the judgments of God on the opposers of the gospel in the primitive times, and before the millennium, is evidently foretold: for the kingdoms of the earth are called upon to join in the praises of Israel; and to adore him, who rode on the heavens to the help of his people, (Note, Deut. xxxiii. 26,) and who spake with a mighty voice to them from mount Sinai.—When the Messiah ascended on high, to "the glory which he had with the Father before the world was," he sent forth the powerful word of his gospel, calling on all men to submit to him, "and honour him even as they honoured the Father that sent him."

Ethiopia, &c. (31) The Ethiopians shall hasten with their willing oblations to the God of Israel. As connected with Egypt, it is probable that Ethiopia in Africa is meant: *the land of negroes*. (Notes, Acts viii. 26—40.) This may encourage our efforts and prayers for the conversion of the much injured Africans.

V. 34, 35. All the glorious perfections of God, which are his "excellency," concur in protecting his church. The power which made the clouds, and rules the highest heavens, is exerted in behalf of his people and communicated to them, "out of his holy places;" the sanctuary of old, as the type of "heaven itself," "whither the Fore-runner is for us entered;" and whence especially he is terrible to his enemies; for "holy and reverend is his name." (Notes, xxix. cxi. 9, 10. cxlviii. 13, 14. Deut. xxxiii. 27—29.)—*Blessed be God*. (35) Notes, xli. 11—13. lxxii. 17—19. Eph. i. 3—8.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—17.

When God arises to plead the cause of his people, the confederated power of those who hate him will be dissipated and dissolved; and at length all the wicked will perish at his presence. The same displays of his power and glory will rejoice the righteous; and words cannot express the cause which they have, and ever will have, to triumph in him as their unchangeable Friend, and to celebrate his praises. His condescension is equal to his majesty: he always patronizes the afflicted and oppressed; and poor sinners, helpless and exposed more than any destitute orphans, are readily admitted among his sons and daughters, and share all the blessings of that high relation.

PSALM LXIX.

David, as the type of Christ, mingles doleful complaints with fervent prayers for himself and his people, 1—21. He, as the type of the Redeemer, devotes his enemies to destruction, 22—29. He engages to praise and bless God, calls on the whole creation to join him, and predicts the enlargement and prosperity of the church, 30—36.

Indeed all the company of his chosen were once bound in Satan's chains, and employed in a baser drudgery than that of making bricks; and far more wretched and abject, than the Israelites in Egypt. But when he comes to break off their chains, and claim them for his own, he leads them forth to liberty, to victory, and to eternal glory. They are made willing to follow him, and he goes before them: heaven and earth concur in supplying their wants, and promoting their salvation: difficulties in their path only make way for their almighty Friend to shew his care of them; he guides and guards them; he feeds their souls with the Bread of heaven, and gives them the Water of life to drink: and, while he graciously prepares for the souls of "the poor in spirit," he will not withhold what is needful for their *bodies* or families. They reap the benefit of the Redeemer's victories; and, fighting under his banner and by his word of command, they profit by the assaults of every enemy: until complete salvation render those "white as snow in Salmon," and beautiful beyond all that is lovely in the visible creation, who once were most mean and loathsome, through the guilt and defilement of their sins.

V. 18—35.

The death of our Redeemer was the redemption-price of all the blessings which he confers on *sinners*, and his resurrection and ascension made way for his conferring them on mankind. When he ascended on high, our God declared his church of ransomed sinners to be his residence, which he greatly desired and delighted in; while in its exalted Head "all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily." He now reigns over heaven, and earth, and hell, with unlimited authority. In vain do kings or nations envy or oppose his sovereignty: all must submit, or be destroyed by him; and his wrath is more dreadful from mount Zion than it was from mount Sinai. Having led our oppressors captive, "he hath received gifts for" rebellious "man," which he never refuses to such as humbly sue for them; and those who partake of them become thenceforth "an habitation of God through the Spirit." The gifts of his written word, and of the ministry of his gospel, are vouchsafed to our land. He gave the word, great was the multitude of those who published it; and they have been raised up successively even to the present day: may he give commandment that thousands more may be raised up, to go forth and preach the gospel in every part of the earth! And may we,—may all the inhabitants of Britain,—profit by our peculiar privileges! If we have embraced from our hearts this proffered mercy, let us "bless the LORD who daily loadeth us with benefits." "Our God is the God of salvation:" he has quickened us when dead in sin, and will not leave us till he has brought us to glory, honour, and eternal life. But he

To the chief Musician upon ^a Shoshan-nim, *A Psalm* of David.

SAVE me, O God; for ^b the waters are come in unto *my* soul.

2 ^c I sink in ^{*} deep mire, where *there* is no standing: I am come into [†] deep waters, where ^d the floods overflow me.

d xxxii. G. Gen. vii. 17—23. Matt. vii. 25. xxvi. 37, 38.

a xlv. lx. lxxx. titles.
b 14, 15. xviii. 4. xlii. 7. ls. xxviii. 17. xlii. 2. Lam. iii. 54. Jon. ii. 3 —6. Rev. xii. 15, 16. xvii. 15.
c xl. 2. Jer. xxxviii. 6. 22.
* Heb. the mire of depth.
† Heb. depth of waters. lxxxviii. 6, 7. Ez. xxvii. 26—34.

will crush the serpent's head, and utterly destroy all those who "go on still in their trespasses:" for his mercies to his church will be attended with judgment on his enemies, till the complete salvation of the one be accompanied with the final ruin of the other.—And as our Lord and King condescends to come and dwell among his people, let us observe the tokens of his presence; and let all of every rank, age, and sex, concur in blessing his name: for union and harmony are the stability of the church.—All our strength is in and from the Lord; and if he has begun to communicate his grace to our souls, we may pray in faith, that he would daily stablish that which he has wrought for us and in us. May he speedily so strengthen his cause upon earth, that all the proud, idolatrous, and oppressive,—all that delight in war, or maintain opposition to his church,—may be scattered and brought down; that all kings and nations may share the blessings of his gospel, and sing praises to his name. May these predictions be fulfilled in their most extensive meaning, that all the inhabitants of the world may adore and rejoice in "his excellency over Israel;" and that he may no longer be terrible to any of them out of his holy places: but that all may "have grace to worship him in reverence and godly fear." (Note, Heb. xii. 26—29.) And while all unite in ascribing power and dominion unto him, may all experience strength communicated from him, enabling them to resist temptation, and to overcome every enemy of their salvation; (Notes, cxxxviii. 3. 2 Cor. xii. 7—10. Eph. iii. 14—19. Phil. iv. 10—13. Col. i. 9—14:) thus may one nation call upon another to bless the Lord, and all on earth form one general chorus, like that of angels in heaven, continually saying with alacrity and gratitude, "Blessed be God," even "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," throughout all ages, for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM LXIX. V. 1—3. It is probable that David, in great distress during Absalom's rebellion, composed this psalm with reference to his own case: but the Holy Spirit evidently spoke of "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." (Note, 1 Pet. i. 10—12.) Indeed it is so manifest a prophecy of Christ, that we should consider him as the Speaker in most parts of it.—In these verses he compares himself to a man sinking in the mire, while the floods of waters go over his head. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 14, 15. xl. 1—5. xlii. 6—8. lxxxviii. 6—9.) His sufferings from the hands of wicked men, from the powers of hell beneath, and from the justice of the Father, while external torment united with internal agony to enhance his distress, were thus represented with peculiar propriety. He continued to cry for help, till his throat was parched with thirst, and his eyes grew dim and failed in the agonies

^e vi. 6. xlii. 1—3. xxii. 2. Heb. v. 7. 21. xxii. 15. John xix. 28—30. ^g cxix. 82. 123. Deut. xxviii. 32. Job xi. 20. xvi. 16. Is. xxxviii. 14. Lam. ii. 11. ^h xxv. 21. xxxix. 7. ⁱ John xv. 25. 1 Pet. ii. 22. ^k xl. 12. ^l vii. 3—5. xxxv. 12. 19. xxxviii. 19. 20. cix. 3—5. ^m Is. liii. 4—7. 2 Cor. v. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 24. iii. 18. ⁿ xvii. 3. xix. 12. xlv. 20. 21. ^{*} Heb. *guiltiness*. ^o xxxviii. 9. Jer. xvi. 17. ^p vii. 7. xxv. 3. xxxv. 26. 27. Is. xlix. 23. Luke xxiv. 19—21. Acts iv. 7—16. ^q lxxii. 18. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. Acts xiii. 17. 23. ^r xxii. 6—8. xlv. 22. Jer. xv. 15. John xv. 21—24.

3 ^e I am weary of my crying: ^f my throat is dried; ^g mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.

4 They that ⁱ hate me without a cause are ^k more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, ^l being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: ^m then I restored *that* which I took not away.

5 O God, thou knowest my foolishness; ⁿ and my ^{*} sins are not ^o hid from thee.

6 ^p Let not them that wait on thee, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, ^q O God of Israel.

7 Because ^r for thy sake I have borne

reproach; ^s shame hath covered my face.

8 I am ^t become a stranger unto my brethren, ^u and an alien unto my mother's children.

9 For ^v the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; ^w and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.

10 When ^x I wept, *and chastened* my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach.

11 ^y I made sackcloth also my garment; and ^z I became a proverb to them.

12 ^a They that sit in the gate speak against me; and ^b *I was* the song of the ^c drunkards.

Job xxx. 8, 9. Mark xv. 17—19.

† Heb. *drinkers of strong drink*. Dan. v. 2—4. 23.

of death; while in perfect faith and patience, but in the extremity of conflict, he waited for his God to deliver him. (Notes, Matt. xxvi. 36—46. xxvii. 46—50. John xix. 28—30. Gal. iii. 10—14. Heb. v. 7—10.) *The floods.* (2) מַבְּבֵרֵי אֶרֶץ אֲפֻרָּה a flood: “the water-flood” (15). (Note, Judg. xii. 1—6.)

V. 4. The multitudes who hated the Lord Jesus without a cause; nay, though his miracles of unmingled mercy merited their most grateful love; and who demanded his crucifixion, could not be numbered. The rulers of the Jews and of the Romans, who had all the power in their hands, combined to destroy him, being his enemies wrongfully. Then did he make restitution for our robbery, and satisfaction for our crimes, and restored that honour to the divine law which he had not taken away. (Notes, vii. 3—5. xxv. 2, 3. Matt. xxvii. 19—25. John xv. 22—25.)—David indeed was hated wrongfully, and in many things receded from his right: but the whole, and especially the concluding words, were far more emphatically verified in Christ. (Notes, Is. liii. 4—7. Zech. xiii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 18—25.)

V. 5. ‘O God, the righteous Judge, I make my appeal to thee, who knowest the very worst of me; and protest that, whatever my mistakes or my wilful sins have been, which cannot escape thy sight, I never did them any injury, nor gave them cause to persecute me.’ Bp. Patrick. —The words, as spoken by David, have no difficulty: yet they may be considered as an appeal to the heart-searching God for his general integrity, as well as a confession of folly and sin in many instances.—If applied to the Lord Jesus, as spoken by him, they must be interpreted of our folly and iniquity being imputed to him; as the debt which he had not contracted, but was required to pay; the robbery which he had not committed, but was made answerable for. (Note, 4.)—Thus many expositors understand the verse: though perhaps it should be explained as the language of the type, rather than of the Antitype.

V. 6, 7. The Psalmist fervently prayed, that his sufferings might not prove an occasion of sin or discouragement to his pious brethren; because he was persecuted and reproached, not for his crimes, but for his religion. Thus St. Paul earnestly desired that the Ephesians might

not faint, because of his sufferings on their account. (Note, Eph. iii. 13.)—But the case of our Lord's disciples, of those who “trusted that it was he that should redeem Israel,” while they witnessed the contempt and cruelty which he endured, and the ignominious death which he submitted to, and while he lay in the grave, seems most emphatically described. He however foretold and promised them that their sorrow should be turned into joy. (Note, John xvi. 16—22.) This indeed will assuredly be the case at length with all his true disciples; because “he suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.” (Notes, xxxii. 6, 7. xxxv. 25—28. Is. i. 5, 6. liii. 2—6. Heb. xii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. iii. 17, 18.)

V. 8, 9. The Lord Jesus “came to his own, but his own received him not;” his countrymen called him “a Samaritan who had a devil;” “neither did his brethren believe in him,” and the inhabitants of Nazareth, where he had been brought up, attempted to destroy him: because his zeal for the honour of the law, and the purity of the worship of God, which entirely occupied his soul, and raised him above all inferior considerations; and his plain reproofs of hypocrisy and iniquity, exasperated the mercenary and worthless teachers and rulers of the Jews, and set all orders of men against him. In calumniating him, they ascribed the miracles, which he wrought by the Spirit of God, to Beelzebub; and in many ways they reproached God, in reproaching his beloved Son, who was “the express Image of his person;” for “they both saw and hated both him and his Father.”—As two apostles have quoted the ninth verse, with express application to Christ; we are warranted in explaining it as a direct prophecy of him, or even as his words. (Note, lxxxix. 50, 51. John ii. 14—17. vii. 3—10. Rom. xv. 1—3.)—Yet the usage which David experienced from his son Absalom, his relations, his counsellors, and his subjects, chiefly because of his zeal for the honour of God and true religion, rendered him a striking type of Christ in this respect, and doubtless occasioned this complaint. (Note, xxxi. 10—13. lxxxviii. 6—9. Job xix. 5—22. Jer. xv. 15—18.)

V. 10—12. “The Lord of glory” voluntarily became

eiv. 16, 17. xci.
15. Matt. xxvi.
36. &c. Luke
xxii. 44. John
xvii. 1, &c. Heb.
v. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 23.

f 1 Sam. xxv. 8.
Esth. v. 2. 6. vii.
2. Is. xlix. 8. lv.
6. 2 Cor. vi. 2.

g xl. 10, 11. xcvi.
3. Gen. xxiv.
27. Mic. vii. 20.
Luke i. 72. Acts
xiii. 32, 33. Rom.
xv. 8, 9.

h xl. 1—3. Jer.
xxxviii. 6—13. k
Lam. iii. 55.

i xxv. 18, 19. xxxv.
19. cix. 3. 21.
Luke xix. 14. 27.
Acts v. 30, 31.

k 2. xlii. 7. cxxiv.
4. 5. cxliv. 7.
Mark xiv. 34,
&c. xv. 34.

l Jon. ii. 2—7.
Matt. xii. 40.
Rev. xii. 15, 16.

m lxxxviii. 4—6.
Num. xvi. 33,
34. Acts ii. 24.
31.

n xxxvi. 7. lxiii.
3. cix. 21.
o xxv. 16. xxvi. 11. lxxxvi. 15, 16.

p 13. li. 1. Is. lxiii. 7.

13 But as for me, *my prayer is unto thee, O LORD, 'in an acceptable time: O God, § in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

14 ^h Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: ⁱ let me be delivered from them that hate me, and ^k out of the deep waters.

15 ^l Let not the water-flood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and ^m let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.

16 Hear me, O LORD; ⁿ for thy loving-kindness is good: ^o turn unto me ^p according to the multitude of thy tender mercies.

17 And ^q hide not thy face from thy servant; ^r for I am in trouble: ^s hear me speedily.

18 ^t Draw nigh unto my soul, and ^u redeem it: deliver me ^v because of mine enemies.

19 Thou hast known ^x my reproach, and my shame, and ^y my dishonour: ^z mine adversaries are all before thee.

20 ^a Reproach hath broken my heart, and ^b I am full of heaviness: and ^c I looked for some to ^d take pity, ^e but there was none; and for ^f comforters, but I found none.

21 They gave me also ^g gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me ^h vinegar to drink.

q xiii. 1. xxii. 24.
xxvii. 9. xiv.
24. cii. 2. cxlii.
9. Matt. xxvii.
46.

r Matt. xxvi. 38.
Heb. make haste
to hear me. xl.
13. lxx. 1. Job
vii. 21.

s x. 1. xxii. 1. 19
Jer. xiv. 8.

t xxxi. 5. cxi. 9.
Job vi. 23.

u Deut. xxxii. 27.
Josh. vii. 9.

x 7—9. xxii. 6, 7.
Is. liii. 3. Heb.
xii. 2. 1 Pet. ii.
23.

y John viii. 49.
z ii. 2—4. xxxviii.
9.

a xlii. 10. cxxiii.
4. Heb. xi. 36.

b xlii. 6. Matt.
xxvi. 37, 38.
John xii. 27.

c Is. lxiii. 5. Mark
xiv. 37.
Heb. to lament
with me.

d cxlii. 4. John
xvi. 32. 2 Tim.
iv. 16, 17.

e Job xvi. 2. xix.
g Mark

21, 22. Matt. xxvi. 56.

f Jer. viii. 14. ix. 15. xxiii. 15.

Matt. xxvii. 34.

xv. 36. Luke xxiii. 36.

John xix. 29.

g Mark

a “man of sorrows.” “In the likeness of sinful flesh,” and as a poor man, he appeared in the habit of humiliation, as if he had been a penitent in sackcloth. He wept, and fasted, and prayed; and he was despised and reproached for it. He was called “a Samaritan who had a devil,” “a Nazarene,” and “this deceiver;” and he was made a by-word and a proverb to the people. (*Marg. Ref. b—d.*) The chief priests and rulers, who sat as judges in the gate, with deliberate malice conspired his death: and the very drunkards profanely made songs of him, and diverted themselves amidst their intemperate revels, by reviling and ridiculing him. (*Notes, xxii. 7, 8. xxxv. 15, 16. Dan. v. 1—4. Hos. vii. 5—7. Matt. xxvii. 27—31. 39—44.*) Something of this kind had befallen David; but Jesus was far more derided and abhorred.—The Septuagint render the first clause in these verses, “I bowed down my soul with fasting.”—The word *chastened* is not in the original, and seems not so well to suit the case, as *afflicted*, or *humbled*, would have done. (*Note, xxxv. 13, 14. cix. 22—24.*)

V. 13. *An acceptable time.*] Or, *A time of good will, or special favour.* “Knowing, that albeit I now suffer trouble; yet thou hast a time wherein thou hast appointed my deliverance.”—“I commend myself with the greatest earnestness unto thee, O LORD; who now that I am so despicable, wilt think it, I hope, the fittest time to be favourable to me.” *Bp. Patrick.*—When the Redeemer was enduring his extremest sufferings, that he might glorify God and save the souls of his people, it was an acceptable time for his prayers in behalf of himself and them. Through him it is “an acceptable time” for our prayers, when his gospel is preached to us, and his Spirit is striving with us. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Is. xlix. 7, 8. 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2. Heb. v. 7—10.*)

The truth of thy salvation.] The faithful promises assuredly to be fulfilled to all, who embrace them in genuine faith, and plead them in prayer. (*Note, John i. 17.*)

V. 14, 15. The clause, “Let me be delivered from them that hate me” (14), explains the meaning of the figurative language in these verses, and in the beginning

of the Psalm. (*Note, 1—3.*)—They contain the prayer and expectation of the Redeemer in the depth of his humiliation, when his enemies and sufferings seemed about entirely to overwhelm him: but he knew that his soul would not be left in the place of separate spirits, nor his body in the grave to see corruption; but that his resurrection and exaltation would make way for him to accomplish his purposes of love. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, xvi. 8—11.*)

V. 16—20. To understand these verses, and be suitably affected with them, it is peculiarly necessary to compare them with the history, given by the Evangelists, of our Lord’s agony in the garden, and his sufferings on the cross.—In the garden, “his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,” and “being in an agony he prayed more earnestly:” but so far from having any one to condole with him or comfort him, the apostles themselves “could not watch with him one hour.” Then, having been betrayed by Judas, denied by Peter, and forsaken by all, he was nailed to the cross, surrounded by his cruel enemies, who reproached and insulted him to the utmost; and in this extremity he exclaimed also, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.” He had not at this crisis the comfort of his Father’s manifested loving-kindness, which he knew to be good, yea better than life: but “he hid his face from him.” And while he suffered for sinners, that the “multitude of God’s mercies” might be shewn to them, he was excluded from mercy; men shewed him no mercy, and he was smitten with the sword of divine justice. But he prayed “with strong crying and tears;” and he was heard speedily, and rescued from his foes and from death. (*Marg. Ref.—Neb. v. 7.*)

V. 21. The word, rendered “gall,” signifies any thing either poisonous, or exceedingly bitter. (*Note, Deut. xxix. 18. Jer. viii. 14—16. Acts viii. 18—24, v. 23.*)—The literal accomplishment of this verse, in the case of our Lord, is one instance out of many, of the particularity with which the circumstances of his passion were described, by “holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” (*Preface to Psalms, 1 page, Note, xxii. 16—18.*) But the vinegar and the gall were but a feeble emblem of that bitter cup which he exhausted, that we might drink

h Prov. i. 32. Mal. ii. 2. Rom. xi. 8—10. i Is. viii. 14, 15. l Pet. ii. 8. k Is. vi. 9, 10. xxix. 9, 10. Matt. xiii. 14, 15. John xii. 39, 40. Acts xxviii. 26, 27. Rom. xi. 25. 2 Cor. iii. 14. l Deut. xxviii. 65—67. Is. xxi. 3, 4. Jer. xxx. 6. Dan. v. 6. Rom. vi. 10. m lxxxix. 6. Lev. xxvi. 14, &c. Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 18—28. xxxi. 17. xxxii. 20—26. Hos. v. 10. Matt. xxiii. 35—37. Luke xxi. 22. l Thes. ii. 15, 16. Rev. xvi. 1. n Ex. xv. 15. Is. xlii. 8. Zech. i. 6. o l Kings ix. 8. Jer. vii. 12—14. Matt. xxiii. 38. xxiv. 1, 2. Acts i. 20. * Heb. palace. Is. v. 1. vi. 11. † Heb. let there not be a dweller. p cix. 16. 2 Chr. xxviii. 9. Job xix. 21, 22. Zech. i. 15. 1 Thes. ii. 15. q Is. liii. 4. 10. Zech. xiii. 7. r Mark xv. 28—32.

22 ¶ Let ^h their table become a snare before them: and *that which should have been for their welfare, let it become* ⁱ a trap.

23 Let ^k their eyes be darkened, that they see not; and ^l make their loins continually to shake.

24 ^m Pour out thine indignation upon them, and let thy wrathful anger ⁿ take hold of them.

25 ^o Let their ^{*} habitation be desolate; and [†] let none dwell in their tents.

26 For ^p they persecute *him* ^q whom thou hast smitten; and ^r they talk to

the grief of [†] those whom thou hast wounded. Heb. thy wound. ed.

27 ^s Add ^t iniquity unto their iniquity: and ^u let them not come into thy righteousness.

28 Let them be ^v blotted out of the book of the living, and not ^x be written with the righteous.

29 But ^y I am poor and sorrowful: ^z let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high.

30 ^a I will praise the name of God with a song, and will ^b magnify him with thanksgiving.

31 *This* ^c also shall please the LORD
2 Cor. viii. 9. z xviii. 48. xxii. 27—31. lxxxix. 26, 27. xci. 14—16. Phil. ii. 9—11. a xxviii. 7. xl. 1—3. cxviii. 21, 28, 29. b xxxiv. 3. c l. 13, 14, 23. Hos. xiv. 2. Eph. v. 19, 20. Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 5.

“the cup of salvation.” (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Matt. xxvii. 32—34. Mark xv. 21—24, v. 23.)

V. 22—28. Some commentators read this awful passage entirely in the future tense, as a *prediction* and not an *imprecation*: but most of the verbs are in the imperative; and the apostles quote from it as an imprecation. (Notes, Acts i. 20—22. Rom. xi. 7—10.) If we consider the whole as the language of Christ, denouncing the doom of his implacable enemies, and as recorded for a warning to others; no reasonable objection can be made to this interpretation: for in reading them, we only assent to the justice of the sentence. (Note, Deut. xxvii. 15.)—As our example, Christ on the cross prayed for his crucifiers; and his prayer was answered in the conversion of numbers of them: but, being exalted upon his throne, he asks of the Father, and receives from him, authority to break in pieces with his iron rod all obstinate opposers, as well as to save all humble supplicants. (Note, ii. 7—9.)—The case of the Jewish nation in particular, is here prophetically described. Not only were their temporal advantages made an occasion of mischief to them: but, depending on those sacrifices and institutions which were originally appointed for the good of their souls, and ensnared in their own counsels, they persisted both in enmity to Christ, and in resistance to the Romans. Being shut up in Jerusalem, when they were assembled to eat the passover, “their table” “became their snare:” infatuated beyond all example, and disunited among themselves, the horrors of intestine massacres weakened and terrified them: at length the Romans, the instruments of the Lord’s indignation, got possession of the city with most dreadful slaughter, destroyed the temple, (the palace here mentioned, 25, marg.) and desolated their city and habitations, so that none of them were left to dwell there. The remnant of the nation were excluded the church, and left in *judicial* darkness to “add iniquity to iniquity,” without obtaining an interest “in the righteousness of God.” Thus they have been blotted out of the register, in which the people of God were enrolled, and were no longer “written among the righteous:” and all this was laid on them for rejecting and crucifying the Messiah, with the most determined contempt and cruelty.—The twenty-fifth verse is applied by St. Peter to the traitor Judas, “who was guide to them

“that took Jesus;” and thus a proper representative of the apostate but hypocritical nation, which as with one voice demanded, even while celebrating the passover, the crucifixion of their Prince and Saviour.—But, the original word rendered *habitation*, meaning a *palace*, the destruction of the temple, the pride of the nation, seems also predicted: and when our Lord said, “Your house is left unto you desolate,” he may be supposed to have referred to this passage. (Note, Matt. xxiii. 37—39.)—The twenty-second Psalm, after predicting the sufferings of Christ, closes with the triumphs of his gospel; (Notes, xxii. 19—31;) but this first denounces the ruin of his enemies. Some render the words, translated “Add iniquity unto their iniquity;” “Add punishment to their iniquity:” and the marginal references will shew, that to be given up to wickedness is often the punishment, in awful justice, awarded to obstinate transgressors. (Notes, v. 10, 11. cix. 6—20.)—“It were to be wished,” says Bp. Horne on the twenty-sixth verse, “that the sorrows of the penitent, when wounded with a sense of sin, never subjected him to the scorn and contempt of those who would be thought ‘Christians.’”

V. 29. xl. 17. Note, xxii. 4—6, v. 6.—*Let thy salvation, &c.* Or, “Thy salvation, O God, shall set me up on high.” (Notes, lxxxviii. 1, 2. xci. 14—16.) Thus the Saviour, in the depth of his passion and humiliation, anticipates his exaltation “far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.” (Notes, Eph. i. 15—23. Phil. ii. 9—11.)

V. 30, 31. ‘Here, as in the twenty-second, and many other Psalms, the scene changes from sorrow to joy; from a state of suffering to one of triumph; from the passion to the resurrection.’ Bp. Horne.—The praises of the great Redeemer and of his redeemed church; and indeed his whole work, with the eternal glory thence redounding to the God of salvation; are far more acceptable to him than the sacrifices of the law ever had been in themselves: but when the Jews rejected Christ and preferred their sacrifices, these, even though clean animals offered according to the law, became abominable; being a declaration of their unbelief, and their refusal to “submit to the righteousness of God.” (Notes, xl. 6—8. l. 7—15. 22, 23, Is. lxvi. 3, 4. Heb. x. 5—10. 26, 27.)

d xxxiv. 2. John xvi. 22. xx. 20. better than an ox or bullock, that hath horns and hoofs.

* Or, meek. xxv. 9. Is. lxi. 1—3. 32 ^d The * humble shall see *this*, and be glad: and ^e your heart shall live that seek God.

f x. 17. xxxiv. 6. lxxii. 12—14. 33 For ^f the LORD heareth the poor, and despiseth not ^g his prisoners.

h xcvi. 11. xcvi. 18. 34 ^h Let the heaven and earth praise him, the seas, and every thing that

him, the seas, and every thing that ⁺ moveth therein.

35 For ⁱ God will save Zion, and will ^k build the cities of Judah: that they may dwell there, and have it in possession.

36 ^l The seed also of his servants shall inherit it: and ^m they that love his name shall dwell therein.

Heb. creepeth. Gen. i. 20. marg. i. li. 18. cii. 13. 16. cxlvii. 12. 13. Is. xiv. 32. xlv. 26. xlv. 13. Rev. xiv. 1. k xlviii. 11—13. Jer. xxxiii. 10. 11. l xc. 16. 17. cii. 28. Is. xlv. 3, 4. lxi. 9. Acts ii. 39. m xci. 14. Rom. viii. 28. Jam. i. 12 ii. 5.

V. 32. (Notes, xxii. 26. 29.) The meek and humble, hearing of the Saviour's sufferings and exaltation, rejoice; and the souls of all that seek the Lord, shall through his atonement be made partakers of life spiritual and eternal.—In how many millions of instances has this already been fulfilled! (Notes, 1 Chr. xvi. 10, 11. Is. lv. 6—9.)

V. 33. *His prisoners.*] Those who are bound in prison, as enslaved to sin and condemned for their crimes, when they are alarmed, and stirred up to seek deliverance, shall not be despised; but on the contrary, through the Redeemer's intercession, shall be brought into "the glorious liberty of the children of God."—Some explain the words, of those who were cast into prison, by such as persecuted the preachers of the gospel and those who followed them; but the figurative meaning seems far more suitable to the general tenour of the Psalm, and indeed to that of the prophecies and promises of the scripture in every part of it. (Notes, cii. 13—22. cvii. 10—16. Is. lxi. 1—3. Zech. ix. 11, 12. Luke iv. 16—22. Acts xxvi. 16—18.)

V. 34. 'The mercies of God in Christ are such, that they cannot worthily be praised by any thing less, than an universal chorus of the whole...creation.' Bp. Horne. "Heaven and earth shall, &c." The future tense is used, and it is a prediction, rather than a pious wish. (Notes, cxlviii. Luke ii. 8—14. Rev. v. 11—14. xix. 1—6.)

V. 35, 36. Zion seems to denote the church at large; the cities of Judah, the several divisions of the church throughout the world; evangelical blessings being predicted under allusions taken from the then existing state of things. (Notes, Is. lx. 4—7. lxvi. 19—23. Ez. xl. 2. Heb. xii. 18—21.)—God will preserve his church, and every sound part of it, and all true Christians; continuing to them, and entailing on their posterity, the blessings of the new covenant.—Yea, all that love God shall dwell for ever in Zion, in the church militant on earth, without being finally overcome by any enemy, and in the church triumphant in heaven.—The future conversion and restoration of the Jews also were here foretold in connexion with the other blessings, which those events will introduce. (Notes, xxii. 30, 31. Is. liii. 9—12. lxv. 8—10. Jer. xxxiii. 17—26. Rom. xi. 11—15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—21.

It behoves us carefully to examine, whether the things which pertain to the Lord Jesus form as important a part of our religion, as they do of the holy scriptures; and whether our judgment, experience, and affections are, as it were, imbued with them, as the word of God is in all its parts: that, while the prophecies, as compared with the accomplishment, confirm our belief that the Bible is a divine revelation; our hope may rest on the Foundation

laid in it, and our conduct be influenced by the motives proposed in it.—We cannot too often be called to contemplate the scene, here again presented to our minds. We should frequently consider the person of the Sufferer spoken of; and enquire *wherefore*, as well as *what*, he suffered: that beholding the Son of God incarnate, overwhelmed by his inexpressible sorrows, bereft of comfort, *seeming* in vain to cry for relief, conflicting with Satan's horrid temptations, and even bearing the wrath of God for us;—that viewing him hated without cause, and apparently left in the power of cruel enemies, treated as a stranger and an alien by his brethren and people; reproached, insulted, derided, condemned by the rulers, and made the sport of the soldiers and the vilest of the multitude; betrayed, denied, or forsaken by his disciples; nailed to the cross, and mocked, when athirst, with vinegar mingled with gall to drink:—that meditating, I say, on these scenes, we may be led to deeper humiliation for sin, to a greater admiration of the justice and mercy of our God, a higher valuation of our immortal souls, a clearer conviction of our danger, and the vanity of every other dependence, except on his great atonement; to a fuller perception of our infinite obligations to our gracious Redeemer, and a more lively gratitude and love constraining us to live to his glory. Let us further learn hence, to expect the enmity of the many and the mighty, of our relatives, and of those whom we have most served. We may perhaps plead that they "hate us wrongfully and without cause:" but our foolishness and our sins are not hid from God; and alas! they too often appear to man, and give malice that occasion which it sought against us. We need not, however, be discouraged, when reproached and put to shame for the Lord's sake; if our zeal for the truths, precepts, and worship of God, in some small measure resembling that of our Redeemer, should disgust and exasperate our neighbours, and make our former friends treat us as strangers; if those, whose words and works reproach the Lord, should despise and revile us for his sake; if even judges and rulers should speak against us; and "drunkards make songs of us," and turn our godly sorrow, our tenderness of conscience, our deadness to the world, and even our prayers for them, into derision and mockery. Whatever deep waters of affliction or temptation we are sinking into; whatever floods of trouble, or of ungodly men, seem ready to overwhelm us; we should persevere in prayer, and in waiting on our God to save us; though we be weary, and as it were hoarse, with crying for help, and our eyes be ready to fail with looking for deliverance: and the more men despise and desert us, the more earnest should be our cries unto the Lord to help and comfort us. Such extremities will be found acceptable times of approach to God,

PSALM LXX.

David prays for speedy help, to the confusion of his foes, and the triumph of the righteous, 1—5.

To the chief Musician, *A Psalm* of David, ^a to bring to remembrance.

^a xxxviii. title.

^b xl. 13, &c. lxix. 18. lxxi. 12. cxliii. 7. **MAKE haste,** ^b O God, to deliver me; make haste ^{*} to help me, O LORD.

^c vi. 10. xxxv. 4. 26. lxxi. 13. cix. 29. Is. xli. 11. ^d Is. xxviii. 13. John xviii. 6. **2** ^c Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul: let them ^d be turned backward, and

if we plead with him the multitude of his mercies, and the truth of those promises, which secure the believer's salvation: but we should in these emergencies remember others, who seek the Lord; and pray for them, that they may not be ashamed or discouraged, through our afflictions, or our misconduct.—He who brought the Redeemer from the grave, and exalted him above all his enemies, will hear those who come in his name: he will deliver them out of temptation and affliction; and with his refreshing loving-kindness he will turn unto them and comfort them, and that speedily; and he will at length receive their souls, and raise their bodies from the grave, and thus rescue them from every enemy. Indeed reproach and contempt are hard to bear, and often fill our hearts with heaviness; and we may, at some times, look in vain for compassion or comfort from our fellow-creatures. But the Redeemer exhausted that cup of wrath, which contained nothing but vinegar and gall; and he will infuse sweetness into all our sorrows. We need not therefore fear suffering with him, or for him, and should look to him, “lest we be weary and faint in our minds.”

V. 22—36.

In this our day especially “in this acceptable time,” “while it is called to-day,” we ought to fear coming short of the salvation set before us; and lest any of us should suffer, as the enemies of Christ, from his awful indignation. For many, besides the nation of the Jews, have had their table made their snare, and the things which should have been for their welfare, a trap to them; because they have opposed, or neglected his salvation: many are given up to judicial blindness, and to desperation: the hot displeasure of God pursues them from their habitation on earth; and, being “driven away in their wickedness,” they “add iniquity to iniquity,” and that for ever: for they are “blotted out of the book of the living, and are not written among the righteous.” Let us then fear lest this should be our case, and be careful not to “persecute those, whom God hath smitten; or to speak to the grief of those, whom he hath wounded.” Let us call upon the Lord without further delay, and persist in calling upon him, as on the “throne of grace,” “waiting to be gracious:” and then, though we be not only poor and sorrowful, but guilty and defiled, “the salvation of God will set us up on high.” And not only the atonement of the Redeemer, but the praises of the redeemed, who “magnify the name of the LORD with thanksgiving,” are more pleasing to him “than bullocks with horns and hoofs.”

put to confusion, that desire my hurt.

3 Let them be turned ^e back for a reward of their shame, that say, ^f Aha, aha.

4 ^g Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified.

5 But ^h I am poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou art my Help and my Deliverer; ⁱ O LORD, make no tarrying.

The humble will perceive and rejoice in these encouraging truths; and the souls of those, who seek the Lord according to this blessed gospel, shall live for ever. Through our exalted Advocate, he will hear the prayers of those who have been the prisoners of Satan, when they long for liberty and salvation; and he will not despise the poorest or the most guilty, who come to “trust in him.” “Let then heaven and earth praise him, the seas and every thing that moveth therein:” for God will protect and save his church, and enlarge her borders; that his people “may dwell there, and have it in possession.” He will bless them and their children after them; “a seed shall serve him” on earth, and his servants shall inherit his heavenly kingdom; and those who love his name, shall dwell before him for ever. “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

NOTES.

PSALM LXX. V. 1—5. (Notes, xl. 13—17.) This Psalm is, for substance, the same as the concluding verses of the fortieth Psalm; yet there are verbal alterations in every part of it, though none that materially affect the sense.—Some think, that it was parted from the fortieth Psalm, (with some variation,) as suggesting general hints for prayer, to pious persons, under very afflictive circumstances.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No worldly possessions or distinctions can prevent the humbled sinner from feeling himself to be poor and needy: hence his entire dependence upon a merciful God, and his fervent applications to him on all occasions; while the proud can only pray formally and hypocritically. (Notes, Matt. v. 3. Luke xviii. 9—14.) But “the poor in spirit” have God for their Helper and Deliverer; and shame must be the portion of all who seek after their souls, desire their hurt, or rejoice in their calamities. Sometimes these are so ashamed as to repent and seek forgiveness: but unless this be the case, they will be treated as the enemies of Christ; because they tread in the steps of those who persecuted him, in his poverty and humiliation; and hate his image and his cause in his poor disciples. But those who “seek the LORD,” and “love his salvation,” have the “prayers of all the people of God on earth, and the intercession of Christ in heaven, in their behalf. Joy and gladness will therefore be vouchsafed them, and they will eternally magnify the God of their salvation.

PSALM LXXI.

The Psalmist professes his trust in God, and prays for help to the end, and for the confusion of his enemies, 1—13. He resolves to confide in God and praise him, 14—16. He renews his petitions, that he may not be cast off in the decline of life, but may be enabled to transmit to posterity his views of the power and grace of God, 17, 18. He exults in the prospect of complete deliverance, joy, and triumph, 19—24.

IN thee, O LORD, ^a do I put my trust: ^b let me never be put to confusion.

2 Deliver me ^c in thy righteousness, and ^d cause me to escape: ^e incline thine ear unto me, and save me.

3 Be thou ^{*} my strong Habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: ^f thou hast given commandment to save me; for thou *art* ^g my Rock and my Fortress.

4 Deliver me, O my God, ^h out of

the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man.

5 For ⁱ thou *art* my hope, O Lord God: *thou art* ^k my trust from my youth.

6 ^l By thee have I been holden up from the womb: ^m thou art he that took me out of my mother's bowels: ⁿ my praise *shall be* continually of thee.

7 I am ^o as a wonder unto many; but ^p thou *art* my strong Refuge.

8 ^q Let my mouth be filled *with* thy praise, *and with* thy honour all the day.

9 ^r Cast me not off in the time of old age; forsake me not ^s when my strength faileth.

10 For mine enemies speak against me; ^t and they that ^u lay wait for my soul ^v take counsel together,

Prov. i. 11. + Heb. watch or observe. xxxvii. 32, 33. 1 Sam. xix. 11. Jer. xx 10. u ii. 2. lxxxiii 3 2 Sam. xvii. 1, &c. Matt. xxvi. 3, 4. xxvii. 1.

NOTES

PSALM LXXI. V. 1. The name of David is not prefixed to this beautiful Psalm: yet there can be no doubt that he wrote it during Absalom's rebellion; and probably at the crisis when he heard of the sanguinary counsel, which Ahithophel had given respecting him. (Notes, 2 Sam. xvii. 1—4. 17—21.)

V. 2. *In thy righteousness.*] "It is a righteous thing" with God to recompense tribulation to those that trouble "you, and to you who are troubled, rest" and deliverance. (Note, 2 Thes. i. 5—10.) This kind of appeal to the justice of God, in David's circumstances, seems by much the most natural interpretation. (Notes, vii. 1—11. xvii. 1—3. cxliii. 1, 2.) But some suppose the faithfulness of God to his promises to be meant; and others explain the words, as spoken of that "righteousness of God, which is unto all and upon all that believe." (Notes, 16. Rom. iii. 21—26.)

V. 3. The idea of an impregnable fortress, in a country liable to be invaded by powerful enemies, with a ready admission on any emergency, and habitual residence in it, admirably illustrates the believer's privilege of access to God at all times; with the security and confidence which spring from a due improvement of it. (Notes, xxxi. 2—4. xci. 1, 2. 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3. Prov. xviii. 10, 11. Is. xxxii. 1, 2.)—The promises, which God had made to David, and to his posterity by Solomon, were such express declarations of his purposes, as amounted to "a commandment to save him," which all the servants of God in heaven and earth ought to concur in performing. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 4. *The unrighteous and cruel man.*] That is, Ahithophel. (Marg. Ref. h.)

V. 5, 6. David was conscious that he had trusted God from his early youth: and the recollection of the numerous instances, in which the Lord had answered his expectations and prayers, through a long course of years, not only encouraged his confidence, but animated him to praise

and gratitude amidst all difficulties.—In this he was a feeble type of Christ, who, with infinite condescension, passed through the state of childhood and youth for our sakes, and without the least spot of sin. (Notes, xxii. 9, 10. Is. xlix. 1, 2. P. O. Luke ii. 41—52.)

V. 7. Numbers no doubt wondered that David should meet with such uncommon afflictions, and perhaps suspected him of some prodigious wickedness, which he contrived to hide from men: (Note, Job ii. 12, 13:) many might wonder at his unabated confidence in God, and be anxious to know, whether he would be delivered, or not: and others might be surprised to see him protected and comforted under his afflictions, and astonished especially at the wonderful deliverances which he had experienced.—"Christ, in his state of humiliation upon earth, was a 'sign' every where 'spoken against.' ... The Christian, 'who lives by faith, who quits possession for reversion, 'and who chooses to suffer with his Saviour here, that he 'may reign with him hereafter, appears to the men of the 'world as a monster of folly and enthusiasm. But God 'is the "strong Refuge" of all such.' Bp. Horne. (Notes, 2 Kings ix. 11. Zech. iii. 8.)

V. 8, 9. The Psalmist especially prayed, that he might be delivered and comforted, in order that his mouth might be opened, continually to celebrate the praises of God, and to recommend his salvation to all around him, and all that should come after him. He had long endeavoured, with all his influence, to promote the worship and service of God; and he had been very useful to Israel: but he was not capable of such services as he had been formerly; and his rebellious son, and ungrateful people, rejected and despised his authority. And he earnestly prayed, that his sins, in the matter of Uriah, might not be thus visited upon him. (Notes, li. 11—13.) He was, however, persuaded that God, who had favoured and helped him all his life long, would not cast him off in his old age. (Notes, 17, 18. Is. xlv. 3, 4.)

V. 10, 11. Absalom, Ahithophel, and the other con-

x iii. 2. xxxvii.
25. 28. xli. 7, 8
xlii. 10. Matt.
xxvii. 42, 43. 46.
49.
y vii. 2. l. 22.
2 Chr. xxxii. 13.
14. Dan. iii. 15.
z xxii. 19. xxxv.
22. xxxviii. 21.
22. lxix. 18.
a lxx. 1, 2. cxliii.
7.
l 24. vi. 10. xxxv.
4. 26. xl. 14, 15.
Is. xli. 11. Jer.
xx. 11.
c cix. 29. cxxxii.
18. 1 Pet. v. 5.
d xliii. 5. Job xlii.
15. Lam. iii. 21.
26. Heb. x. 35.
1 Pet. i. 13.
1 John iii. 3.
e 6. Phil. i. 9.
1 Thes. iv. 10.
2 Pet. iii. 18.
f 8. 24. xxii. 22—
25. xxx. 12. xl.
9, 10. cxlv. 2. 5—14.

11 Saying, ^x God hath forsaken him: persecute and take him; ^y for *there is none to deliver him.*

12 ^z O God, be not far from me: O my God, ^a make haste for my help.

13 ^b Let them be confounded *and* consumed that are adversaries to my soul; let them be ^c covered *with* reproach and dishonour that seek my hurt.

14 But ^d I will hope continually, and will yet ^e praise thee more and more.

15 ^f My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness *and* thy salvation ^g all the

g xxxv. 28. lxxxix. 16.

day; for ^h I know not the numbers *thereof.*

16 I will go ⁱ in the strength of the Lord God: ^k I will make mention of ^l thy righteousness, *even* of thine only.

17 O God, ^m thou hast taught me from my youth; and ⁿ hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works.

18 ^o Now also, ^p when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not; ^q until I have shewed thy ^r strength unto *this* generation, *and* thy power to every one *that* is to come.

* Heb. *unto old age and grey hairs.*

17. 1 Chr. xxix. 10, &c. Acts xiii. 36.

p lxxviii. 4—6. cxlv. 4, 5.

† Heb. *arm.* Is. li. 9. liii. 1.

h xl. 5. 12 cxxxix.
17, 18.
i xxix. 11. Deut.
xxxiii. 25. Is.
xl. 31. xlv. 24.
Zech. x. 12.
Eph. iii. 16. vi.
10. Phil. iv. 13.
2 Tim. ii. 1.
k Is. xxvi. 13
lxiii. 7.
l 2. 15. 19. 24. ii.
14. Matt. vi. 33.
Rom. i. 17. iii.
21. x. 3. Phil.
iii. 9. 2 Thes. i.
6.
m 5. cxix. 9. 102.
n xvi. 16. 1 Sam.
xxvii. 36. 37.
2 Sam. iv. 9.
xxii. 1, &c.
1 Chr. xvi. 4.
&c.
o 9. Gen. xxvii. 1.
1 Sam. iv. 15.
18. Is. xlv. 4.
Ex. xiii. 8. 14—

spirators, while they consulted together to destroy David, may be supposed to have excused their own detestable wickedness, by charging him with many real or supposed crimes; and it is probable, they spoke most virulently of his conduct in respect of Bathsheba and Uriah. Persuading themselves, therefore, that David had, by that scandalous wickedness, forfeited the divine protection; which they could not deny that he had formerly enjoyed, when he slew Goliath, was delivered from Saul, and made victorious over the surrounding nations; they concluded that God had forsaken him, and that they might proceed in persecuting him, with confidence of success; for there was now no Deliverer. (*Notes*, iv. 2. xli. 4—8. xlii. 9, 10.) But David, while submissively enduring the correction of his heavenly Father, was conscious that he had deeply repented, and had obtained forgiveness. He was also aware, that profane contempt of God was united with enmity to himself, in the conduct of his foes: and thence he deduced arguments to strengthen his assurance, that God would for his own glory rescue his persecuted servant from his impious persecutors.—Those who consulted to put our Lord to death, and tried to find accusations against him, could not but own that he had wrought many miracles; yet when they prevailed so far as to get him nailed to the cross, they insulted him, as if God had finally forsaken him. (*Notes*, Matt. xxvii. 39—44. John xi. 47, 48.)

V. 12. ‘O my God, who hast hitherto so wonderfully preserved me, let this their vain confidence and insulting language incline thee to make the greater speed to relieve me.’ *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13—15. These verses throughout are in the future tense; the language of *prediction*, or confident expectation, and not necessarily of *imprecation*. It might not be so material to observe this, if many had not taken occasion from the latter interpretation, to charge “the man after God’s own heart” with malevolence and a revengeful spirit; and to represent the Old Testament as sanctioning such a spirit, though unsuitable to the evangelical dispensation. Nay, some very pious and respectable persons have admitted charges of this kind, to a very great extent; but they are highly dishonourable to God. His perfections and commandments, his holiness, and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, are unchangeably the same. And there is no reason to think, that David had recorded one *prayer* in the Psalms, which St. Paul would in similar circumstances

have scrupled. When he spoke as the type of Christ, or by the Spirit of prophecy, he might very properly either predict or denounce destruction on those, who persisted in opposing him; as the apostle says, “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.” (*Notes*, 1 Cor. xvi. 21—24.) And when he was engaged in devotion or meditation, he might, in assured faith, foresee the ruin of his own wicked persecutors, such as Saul and Ahithophel, and even pray for their confusion, as the apostle said of Alexander the coppersmith, “The Lord reward him according to his works;” being fully persuaded that he was given over to a reprobate mind, and if not restrained would do a great deal of mischief to the church of God. (*Notes*, v. 10, 11. xxxv. 4—9. xl. 13—15. lxix. 22—28. cix. 6—20. 2 Tim. iv. 14, 15.)—‘Because thy benefits toward me are innumerable, I cannot but continually meditate on them, and rehearse them.’ (*Notes*, 8, 9. 22—24. xl. 1—5. 9, 10. cxxxix. 17, 18. cxlv. 9—13. Is. xlv. 20—25.)

V. 16. The Psalmist, in the sharp and perilous contest in which he was engaged, determined to trust in the power of God for deliverance, and to “mention his righteousness alone.”—He had not deserved, from his son and subjects, the ill usage which he received from them: he would not, however, attempt to justify himself before God; but would submit, with adoring reverence, to his righteousness under this heavy trial; committing his cause to him as a righteous Judge, without the least reserve.—The Christian also goes forth to conflict with his enemies, in the strength of the Lord; and mentions the righteousness of Christ, the righteousness of God by faith, as the only meritorious cause of his acceptance: and many think David here spoke of that righteousness, as the ground of his confidence. Others interpret it of the Lord’s faithfulness to his promises: but the foregoing sense seems most to agree with the context. (*Note*, li. 14.)

V. 17, 18. David had early been taught by the Spirit of God the way of truth and holiness, and employed in many useful services during a long course of years; especially in declaring the wondrous works of God as the sweet Psalmist of Israel: (*Note*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, 2;) and he prayed, in the language of confident expectation, that he might be preserved in his old age, till he had completed this work, and shewn more fully the power of God, and his glorious perfections and kingdom, not only to that, but to all future

19 ^a Thy righteousness also, O God, ^b is very high, ^c who hast done great things: O God, ^d who ^e is like unto thee?

20 Thou, ^f which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt ^g quicken me again, and ^h shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth.

21 Thou shalt ⁱ increase my greatness, and ^j comfort me on every side.

22 I will also praise thee with the ^k psaltery, ^l even thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, ^m O thou Holy One of Israel.

23 ⁿ My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and ^o my soul, which thou hast redeemed.

24 ^p My tongue also shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long: ^q for they are confounded, for they are brought unto shame, that seek my hurt.

25 Deliverance and redemption which he was hourly expecting. (Marg. Ref.—Note, lxiii. 5, 6.)

generations. (Note, 5, 6, 8, 9.)—The usefulness of his Psalms to the whole church, in all successive ages, is a most wonderful performance of this, whether considered as a prayer, or a prediction: for many of his Psalms, especially some of those which conclude the book, seem to have been written, and the complete arrangement of the Psalmody at the tabernacle to have been made, after this time.

Strength. (18) "Arm." Marg. (Notes, Is. li. 9—11. liii. 1.) And as Christ is "the Arm of the Lord," so the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation:" (Notes, ex. 2. Rom. i. 13—16, v. 16. 1 Cor. i. 20—24. 2 Cor. x. 1—6:) and the psalms of David especially declare this Arm and power of God, to every generation.

V. 19. The methods, by which God governs and will judge the world in righteousness, are so high that man cannot comprehend them. This is peculiarly the case, in respect of the harmony of mercy and truth with perfect justice in the mediatorial government of Jesus Christ, and the way in which believers are "made the righteousness of God in him." (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxxvi. 5—9. xcvii. 2. Rom. iii. 21—26. xi. 33—36. Eph. iii. 9—12. 1 Pet. i. 10—12.)

V. 20, 21. David had already been carried through many and grievous troubles; and now in the depth of his present distress, he was like one who is dead and buried: but he expected that God would revive him; and not only restore him to his former comforts, but abundantly increase them: nor was he disappointed.—He likewise seems here to have spoken as the type of Christ, under his deepest humiliation, about to die and be buried, but expecting his resurrection, and exaltation to the throne of glory, and the enlargement of his kingdom to the ends of the earth. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 22—24. This exulting anticipation of the high praises, which, with heart-felt joy and gratitude, the Psalmist expected to sing to his great Deliverer and Benefactor, using every method of making them more solemn and triumphant, when it is considered as his language in the depth of distress, is worthy of special consideration; and shews the strength of his faith, the confidence of his hope, and the fervency of his piety.—The "truth," or faithfulness, of God is here mentioned distinctly, as well as his "righteousness." David had grounded his confidence on the divine promises, and referred the cause between him and his rebellious subjects to the decision of divine justice; both of which he would celebrate continually, and "with joyful lips," when he had received that merciful

22 I will also praise thee with the ^{*} psaltery, ^a even thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, ^b O thou Holy One of Israel.

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Strength. (18) "Arm." Marg. (Notes, Is. li. 9—11. liii. 1.) And as Christ is "the Arm of the Lord," so the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation:" (Notes, ex. 2. Rom. i. 13—16, v. 16. 1 Cor. i. 20—24. 2 Cor. x. 1—6:) and the psalms of David especially declare this Arm and power of God, to every generation.

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V. 20, 21. David had already been carried through many and grievous troubles; and now in the depth of his present distress, he was like one who is dead and buried: but he expected that God would revive him; and not only restore him to his former comforts, but abundantly increase them: nor was he disappointed.—He likewise seems here to have spoken as the type of Christ, under his deepest humiliation, about to die and be buried, but expecting his resurrection, and exaltation to the throne of glory, and the enlargement of his kingdom to the ends of the earth. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 22—24. This exulting anticipation of the high praises, which, with heart-felt joy and gratitude, the Psalmist expected to sing to his great Deliverer and Benefactor, using every method of making them more solemn and triumphant, when it is considered as his language in the depth of distress, is worthy of special consideration; and shews the strength of his faith, the confidence of his hope, and the fervency of his piety.—The "truth," or faithfulness, of God is here mentioned distinctly, as well as his "righteousness." David had grounded his confidence on the divine promises, and referred the cause between him and his rebellious subjects to the decision of divine justice; both of which he would celebrate continually, and "with joyful lips," when he had received that merciful

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PSALM LXXII.

David prays for Solomon, and for the Messiah under the type of Solomon; and predicts the peace, righteousness, honour, extent, and duration of his kingdom, as typifying that of the Messiah, 1—17. He ardently blesses God on these accounts, and prays that

* Or, of. cxviii. the earth may be filled with his glory, 18—20.

title.
a 1 Kings i. 39.
&c. 1 Chr. xxii.
12. 13. xxix. 19
2 Chr. i. 10. 18.
xi. 2. John iii.
34. Heb. i. 8, 9.
b 1 Kings i. 47. 48.
ii. 1—4. Jer.
xxiii. 5, 6.
c 12—14. xiv. 6, 7
1 Kings iii. 5—
10. 18. xi. 3—5.
xxii. 1. Jer.
xxiii. 15. Rev.
xix. 11.

A Psalm * for Solomon.

GIVE the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto ^b the king's son.

2^c He shall judge thy people with

must "go forth in the strength of the Lord God, and make mention of his righteousness only."—Indeed, as old age approaches, our strength in many respects will fail us: but God will not cast off his greyheaded servants, when they are no longer capable of labouring as they have done. And his people should imitate his example, in their kindness towards such as have spent their health and strength in their service.—He indeed often favours his aged servants with peculiar vigour in their souls, when nature is sinking into decay; that their faith, hope, love, and joy, may shew to all around them, what a faithful Friend he is to his people. The experienced believer, in such circumstances, ought to speak of the perfections and works of God, to his neighbours: and, if able, he will do well to leave some testimony of his happy experience and decided judgment, upon record for posterity; to shew his "strength to the present generation, and his power to all them who are yet for to come." (*Note*, 2 *Pet.* i. 12—15.)—But God is so exalted, that it is far above our ability to praise him worthily: he has done great things, and there is none like unto him: yet "the everlasting righteousness," which was brought in, when the Redeemer had passed through his great and sore troubles, and was raised again from the depths of the earth, and exalted to the throne of glory, demands our most admiring gratitude and praise. Resting our hopes on that foundation, we may bear up under our lighter trials, and even go down with confidence into the grave: for the Lord will receive our "souls, which he hath redeemed;" and will quicken our bodies also and raise them from the dust of the earth again, and thus "increase our greatness, and comfort us on every side." (*Notes*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 50—58. *Phil.* iii. 20, 21.) Anticipating this final deliverance and victory, let us here spend our days, while waiting the approach of death, in praising the Holy One of Israel, with all our powers and attainments: and while we are speaking of his righteousness, and earnestly praising his name, we shall rise superior to our fears and infirmities; and have sweet earnest of the joys of heaven.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXII. *Title.* David had 'the satisfaction to see all the great men do homage to Solomon, and acknowledge him for their succeeding sovereign before he died: ... (1 *Chr.* xxix. 24:) and thereupon, the spirit of 'the holy man being transported with an extraordinary

righteousness, and ^d thy poor with judgment.

3^e The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and 'the little hills, ^g by righteousness.

4^h He shall judge the poor of the people; he shall save the children of the needy, and shall 'break in pieces ^k the oppressor.

5ⁱ They shall fear thee ^m as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.

xviii. 6—8. 20. 24. xix. 2. 11 Sam. xii. 18. 1 Kings iii. 28. 29. 36. 37. Is. ix. 7. Dan. ii. 44. vii. 14. 27. Luke i. 32, 33. 1 Cor. xv. 24, 25. Eph. iii. 21. Rev. xi. 15.

d xii. 5. lxxxii. 3.
4. Job xxxiv. 19.
e 16 Is. xxxii. 16.
17 lii. 7. Ez.
xxxiv. 13, 14.
Joel iii. 18.
f lxxv. 12.
g lxxxv. 10, 11.
xcvi. 11—13.
xcviii. 8, 9.
Dan. ix. 24.
2 Cor. v. 19—21.
h 12—14. cix. 31.
Is. xi. 4. Ez.
xxxiv. 15, 16.
Zech. xi. 7. 11.
Matt. xi. 5.
i ii. 9. xciv. 5.
Job xix. 2.
xxxiv. 24. Prov.
xx. 26. Jer. li.
20—23.
k Is. ix. 4. Dan.
ii. 34, 35. Zech.
ix. 8—10. Rev.
m 17. lxxxix.

'joy, he indited this psalm, in which he recommends 'Solomon to the divine benediction, and instructs him how 'to make his people happy; ... which he carries on in so 'high a strain, in some places, that the words had not a 'full accomplishment, ... till the appearing of that great 'King, Christ, of whose ... kingdom his father David here 'prophesies.' *Bp. Patrick*.—"The aged monarch of Israel, 'being about to resign the kingdom into the hands of his 'son Solomon, makes unto God the request of a wise 'father for him. He asks such a portion of wisdom and 'integrity from above, as might enable the young prince 'to govern aright the people of God, and exhibit ... a fair 'resemblance of the Messiah.' *Bp. Horne*. (*Notes*, 1 *Chr.* xxii. 11—13. xxix. 10—19. 21—25.)—The prayer of Solomon, for wisdom to govern Israel, was evidently grounded on the instructions of this psalm, which shews how deeply he was impressed by it. (*Notes*, 1 *Kings* iii. 5—14.)

V. 1, 2. Solomon was both "king" and "the king's son," which no king of Israel had before been: and his pious father ardently desired, that "the wisdom of God "might be in him to do justice;" that he might understand the statutes and laws of God, and copy his righteousness in his administration; especially in exercising his authority to defend and redress the wrongs, and relieve the distresses, of the poor. (*Note*, 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 3, 4. *Prov.* xxxi. 4—9.) Thus his reign would be an apt resemblance, as it was an evident type, of the kingdom of the Messiah; of whom the whole psalm must be considered as a direct prophecy, and many of the expressions in it can be interpreted of no other.

V. 3. The peace and righteousness of Solomon's reign were visible, in the mountains and hills, covered with vines, corn, and cattle; the people quietly gathering in their abundance, and enjoying it, without fear of invasion or oppression; and the magistrates, both superior and inferior, being exact in administering justice.—Thus the Redeemer's kingdom, established in mercy, and governed in peace and righteousness, produces abundantly the fruits of holiness, in all places where it is truly established. (*Notes*, lxxxv. 10—13. xcvi. 10—13. xcviii. 7—9.)

V. 4—7. 'As this is true in all godly kings, so it is 'chiefly verified in Christ, who, with his heavenly dew, 'maketh his church ever to flourish.' 'He sheweth where- 'fore the sword is committed to kings; to wit, to defend 'the innocent, and suppress the wicked.'—Solomon reigned only forty years, and his kingdom lost much of its splen-

ⁿ Deut. xxxii. 2. 6 He shall come down ^a like rain upon the mown grass; as showers *that* water the earth.

^o xxxii. 15—18. 7 [°] In his days shall the righteous flourish; and ^p abundance of peace ^{*} so long as the moon endureth.

^p 1 Kings iv. 25. 8 ^a He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth.

^r 1 Chr. xxii. 8, 9. 9 ^{*} They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before him; and [†] his enemies shall ^a lick the dust.

^q ii. 8. lxxx. 11. 10 ^{*} The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

^r xxii. 27, 28. 11 Yea, [†] all kings shall fall down before him: [‡] all nations shall serve him.

before him: [‡] all nations shall serve him.

12 For ^a he shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and ^b him that hath no helper.

13 He shall spare the poor and needy, and ^c shall save the souls of the needy.

14 He ^d shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and ^e precious shall their blood be in his sight.

15 And ^f he shall live, and ^g to him [†] shall be given of the gold of Sheba: ^h prayer also shall be made for him continually; and ⁱ daily shall he be praised.

Matt. ii. 11. [†] Heb. one shall give ^h 19. xlv. 4. Matt. vi. 10. xxi. 9. John xvi. 23, 24. 1 Cor. i. 2, 3. 2 Cor. xiii. 14. 1 Thes. iii. 11. 2 Tim. iv. 22. Heb. x. 19—22. 2 Chr. ii. 11, 12. ix. 4—8. 23, 24. John v. 23. Phil. ii. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 18. Rev. i. 5, 6. v. 8—14. vii. 9—12.

dour, when left to his descendants; and even the kingdom of Judah as continued to them, terminated in a few centuries: but Christ shall reign through all generations to the end of time.—Solomon's peaceful and equitable administration was refreshing and beneficial, as the gentle showers upon the new mown grounds, or on the grass when parched by the burning sun. 'He shall not endeavour to be formidable to them, like a tyrant, whose government imitates the thunder, storms, and tempests: but condescend most graciously to the meanest; and rule them in so soft and gentle a manner, as shall make his authority no less acceptable and beneficial, than the rain is to the after-grass, or dripping showers, which fall in summer-heat, to refresh the parched earth.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, Deut. xxxii. 2. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4.*)—But the effects of the gospel of Christ, accompanied by the influences of the Holy Spirit, and of his mediatorial kingdom, are thus most aptly described. By these the distressed conscience is comforted, the barren heart made fruitful, and the beauties of holiness communicated, where before vice and deformity alone were visible. If then the righteous flourished and were multiplied in Solomon's peaceful reign; much more has this been, and will be, the effect of the setting up of the kingdom of our Prince of peace: and more especially in the latter ages of the world; when it is foretold that men "shall learn war no more." (*Notes, lxxxix. 1—4. Is. ii. 2—5. ix. 6, 7. xi. 2—9. xxxii. 16—20. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Luke ii. 8—14. Heb. vii. 1—3. Rev. xx. 4—6.*)—*As long as the moon endureth.* (7) "Till there be no moon." *Marg.*

V. 8—11. Solomon reigned from the river of Egypt, and the coast of the Mediterranean sea, to the Euphrates, and perhaps to the Persian gulph into which the Euphrates runs. (*Note, 1 Kings iv. 21.*) The inhabitants of the desert countries which lay between submitted to him; and opposition, as it were, lay prostrate before him. The queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem with munificent presents, and all the kings round about brought tribute or gifts to him. (*Notes, 1 Kings x. 1—15.*) Yet this faintly shadowed forth the Redeemer's kingdom. The prophet Zechariah uses these very words in foretelling the extent of it. (*Zech. ix. 10.*) The wise men from the East, with their presents,

first hailed the new-born King of the Jews (15). His kingdom has already been set up in many nations, and a full completion of these predictions will at length take place; when all "kings shall indeed fall down before him," as his worshippers, "all nations shall serve him."—It is absurd to interpret this of the forced submission, which even the wicked will make to Christ at the day of judgment: for how will they "serve him" by "going away into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels?" No doubt the millennium is here foretold. (*Notes, lxxxvi. 9, 10. cxxxviii. 4, 5. Rev. xi. 15—18. xx. 1—6.*)

V. 12, 13. 'Nor shall they be induced to these submissions so much by the greatness of his power, ... as by the fame of his justice, mercy, and compassion; (wherein he shall resemble the Lord Christ:) for no sooner shall any miserable wretch, who hath no friend in the world, implore his protection, but he shall instantly succour ... him.' *Bp. Patrick.*—The verses, however, far more properly express the spiritual blessings of Christ's kingdom, than any temporal effects of the very best government on earth. (*Notes, x. 17, 18. lxxxii. 2—4. Is. xli. 17—20. lvii. 15, 16. lxi. 1—3. lxvi. 1, 2. Matt. v. 3—5. xi. 2—6. Jam. ii. 5—7. Rev. iii. 17—19.*)

V. 14. Solomon, as a wise and good king, rescued, as a redeemer, the poor from fraud and violence; and he was tender of the blood of his subjects: he put none to death by the sword of justice, when mercy could safely be exercised; and he did not waste their blood in wars of any kind.—But the Redeemer shed his own blood to redeem the souls of his people; he does not expose them to unnecessary sufferings; and when they shed their blood for his sake, it is precious in his sight, and will be abundantly recompensed to them, and avenged on their persecutors. (*Notes, cxvi. 15. Matt. xxiii. 29—36. Rev. ii. 10, 11. vi. 9—11.*)

V. 15. During the course of a long and prosperous reign, Solomon received tribute from the Arabians and other nations; and those who solicited his favour brought him presents. The continuance of his life was prayed for by his pious subjects; and numbers joined them in bestowing

16 ^k There shall be an handful of corn in the earth ^l upon the top of the mountains; ^m the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and *they* ⁿ of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.

17 ^o His name ^{*} shall endure for ever: [†] his name shall be continued as long as the sun; and ^p *men* shall be

blessed in him: ^q all nations shall call him blessed.

18 ^r Blessed *be* the LORD God, the God of Israel, ^s who only doeth wondrous things.

19 And ^t blessed *be* his glorious name for ever: ^u and let the whole earth be filled *with* his glory. ^x Amen, and amen.

20 ^y The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended.

daily the highest commendations on him. But in these things he was no more than a type of the Messiah. The ancient church from the beginning prayed for his coming: his church now prays for the success of his gospel: prayers are continually ascending *through* him for the blessings of his salvation: while praises and adorations are presented before him, by his people in every part of the world, yea, by all the inhabitants of heaven.—The clause rendered, “Prayer also shall be made for him continually,” is translated in the book of common prayer, “Prayer shall be made ever *unto* him;” and by the Septuagint, “they shall pray continually *concerning* him.” The original word (יְרַבֵּ) may be rendered either *through* him, or, *on account of* him: and may therefore be understood, either of the prayers offered for his coming, and the success of his gospel; or of those daily presented through his intercession, and on the ground of his merits and atonement. No doubt prayer as well as praise is daily offered to him, throughout the whole church; but this does not appear to be the meaning of the words. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*He shall live, &c.* Notes, John xiv. 18—20. Rom. v. 7—10. viii. 32—34. Col. iii. 1—4.

V. 16. A handful of corn, sown on the ridge of a mountain, the least fertile part of the country; yet producing a crop so strong and thick, that, when waving in the wind, it would resemble the forests of Lebanon; is the allusion here used, to illustrate the fruitfulness of Canaan in this favoured reign. In consequence, the inhabitants of Jerusalem would become numerous as the blades of grass. The old translation of the last clause runs thus, “the *children* shall flourish out of the city, like the grass of the earth.” It is a prediction of a vastly increased population, and all abundantly provided for.—The rapid promulgation of Christianity, from small beginnings, among the Gentiles as well as Jews; the numerous converts raised up, strong in faith, holy in their lives, and filled with consolation; and the continual increase of these inhabitants of the new Jerusalem, and the abundant provisions made for them, were thus, in a striking manner, typically predicted.—When two or three missionaries are sent, with “the word of the truth of the gospel,” to a heathen nation: a handful of seed corn is carried to be sown in a most unpromising situation: yet this, increasing by the special blessing of God; and the increase being as it were sown again and again, from year to year; a whole nation or continent may at length be covered with the abundant harvest, and the spiritual prosperity of populous cities amply provided for. (Notes, lxvii. 6, 7. lxxxv. 10—13. Is.

xxx. 23—25. xxxii. 15—20. Matt. xiii. 31, 32. John xv. 12—16.)

V. 17—19. These verses contain a most extraordinary prediction of Christ and his kingdom; and notwithstanding Solomon’s durable and extensive renown, they can scarcely be at all applied to him, without enervating their energy. “Behold, a greater than Solomon is here!”—The words rendered, “*Men* shall be blessed in him; all nations shall call “him blessed,” seem to mean, “All “nations,” while “blessing themselves in him,” shall call him blessed, or celebrate his praises. (Notes, Gen. xii. 1—3. xviii. 18, 19. xxii. 16—18.) Nearly the very words of the Lord to Abraham (Gen. xxii. 18) are here used.—Thus God alone has done most wonderful things, in blessing the nations by Jesus Christ; and he will do wonderful things.—The last clause is future, and may be exactly rendered, “The whole earth shall be filled with his glory;” being a prediction of the universal prevalence of the kingdom of Christ, and the display of the glory of God in him. (*Marg. Ref.*—Notes, Is. xi. 6—9. Hab. ii. 12—14. Zech. xiv. 6—9.) To this the Psalmist and all the people added, Amen, amen. (Note, xli. 11—13. Matt. vi. 9, 10, 13.) Be it so, be it so. ‘Let the whole earth be filled with the glory of God and of Christ.’—‘Blessed, therefore, be thou, ‘O Lord Jesu, for thou art the Lord God, even the God ‘of Israel, who hast wrought such miracles of mercy for ‘the salvation of thy church: and blessed by the tongues ‘of men and angels be thy holy and glorious name; and ‘let the whole earth be filled with...thy most excellent ‘glory!...So be it, so be it.’ Bp. Horne.—Perhaps the eighteenth verse may be considered, as addressed to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus; and the beginning of the nineteenth to the divine Saviour.

V. 20. The dying Psalmist, having thus prayed for, and foreseen, his son’s prosperous reign; and having looked forward to the coming of the Redeemer, and viewed the whole earth filled with his glory; had no more to ask or to do, but to lie down and rest in hope. (Notes, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1—5.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Pious parents will be the more earnest in prayer for their children, in proportion to the importance of those stations, which they are likely to occupy in society, and in the church of God: and those who have faithfully served their generation, and are going to rest, will be equally attentive to the interests of posterity, especially with respect to true religion.—As it is in every way so important to mankind,

PSALM LXXIII.

The Psalmist, assured that God is good to his people, shews that his faith had almost failed, on seeing the prosperity of the wicked, 1—14. He states how he overcame the temptation in the sanctuary, by learning their dreadful end, 15—20. He, with deep humility, avows his unreserved dependence on God, and de-

* Or, for Asaph. terminates to cleave to him, expecting present support and future glory, 21—28.

A Psalm * of Asaph.

that rulers should be men of wisdom and righteousness, protectors of the industrious poor, and terrors to evil-doers of every degree; it becomes the duty of every man, to pray that God would give the king, and his successor, and all legislators and magistrates, his judgments and righteousness, that "they may judge the people with righteousness and the poor with judgment." And princes should be reminded by such as have access to them, especially the ministers of religion who are thus distinguished, that they are the vicegerents of God, to whom they must give an account of their authority, and that they ought to imitate him in their government. While we therefore meditate on the nature of the Redeemer's kingdom, let it be observed, that in this respect he is especially an example to all rulers, and will be followed by all such as are wise and righteous. The wisdom and justice of God, as well as his authority, are in him. He is "the King of righteousness, and of peace:" and, having once "made peace by the blood of his cross," he brings all spiritual blessings to sinners; and, by their conversion and salvation, renders them like a precious harvest springing forth in every part of the earth. The poor in spirit, the broken in heart, apply for and obtain from him peace of conscience, and that "peace of God which passeth all understanding;" but he will crush the obstinate, the proud, and the impenitent. By the warnings and encouragements of his gospel, multitudes, through successive generations, are brought to fear, submit to, and worship God: and this shall be more and more the case, as long as the sun and moon endure. His gracious truths, attended by the influences of his Spirit, distil, like the refreshing and fructifying rain upon the parched earth; and holiness, comfort, and usefulness are the never-failing effects. Thus "in his days the righteous flourish;" and, while they enjoy abundance of peace, they are multiplied exceedingly. His people are taught to behave with such equity, truth, and love; and so to bear with and forgive each other, and to follow peace with all men; that as far as his kingdom is really set up, discords and contentions cease, in families, neighbourhoods, and nations: and he defends his harmless subjects, against those who would treat them with deceit and violence. He delivers the needy, perishing sinner, when he cries unto him, from the tyranny and oppression of Satan: he spares believers, though they deserve punishment, and saves their souls from destruction; he redeems them from all their enemies, "and precious shall their blood be in his sight." Thus he becomes precious to their hearts, and love of him constrains them to live devoted to his service and glory.—The good seed of his gospel being, as it were, but a hand-

[†] TRULY ^a God is good to Israel, even ^b to such as are ^c of a clean heart.

2 But ^c as for me, ^d my feet were almost gone; ^e my steps had well nigh slipped.

3 For ^f I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

4 For ^g there are ^h no bands in their death; but their strength is ⁱ firm.

d cxvi. 8. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Rom vii. 23, 24. e xvii. 5. xxxviii. 16. xciv. 18. Job xii. 5. f xxxvii. 1. 7. Prov. iii. 31. xxiv. 1. Jer. xii. 1. Jam. iv. 5. g xvii. 14. Job xxi. 23, 24. xxiv. 20. Ec. ii. 16. vii. 15. Luke xvi. 22. h Heb. fat. xvii. 10.

[†] Or, Yet. ii. 6. xiii. 11. a 18—29. lxxxiv. 11. Is. lxiii. 7—9. Luke xii. 32. b John i. 47. Rom. ii. 28, 29. iv. 16. ix. 6, 7. c Heb. clean of heart. li. 10. Jer. iv. 14. Matt. v. 8. Tit. iii. 5. Jam. iv. 8. d v. 7. xvii. 15. xxxv. 13. Josh. xxiv. 15. 1 Sam. xii. 23. 1 Chr. xxii. 7. Job xxi. 4.

ful, sown upon the before barren mountains of the Gentile world, has already produced an immense increase of believers, fruitful in good works, to the glory of God, and the benefit of mankind: and they shall still increase more and more. His dominion has already extended very widely; many kings and nations have become his subjects; and many of his enemies have licked the dust. At length "all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall do him service:" he shall crush the head of the great oppressor, and destroy all who withstand his cause: "his name and glory shall endure as long as the sun;" and "men shall be blessed in him," and with one consent shall call him blessed for evermore. May we then submit to his authority, and partake of his righteousness and peace: may we daily celebrate his praises, and bless the God of Israel for the wonders of his redeeming love: may we spend our days, and end our lives, praying and using all proper means in our power, for the success of the gospel, and longing for that time when "the whole earth shall be filled with his glory! Amen, and amen."

NOTES.

PSALM LXXIII. *Title.* This, and several of the following psalms, are ascribed to Asaph, in the same manner of expression by which others are ascribed to David: (*Marg. Ref.*) yet some think that David wrote them, and only delivered them to Asaph to be set to musick, or sung; while others think that another Asaph, in later ages, wrote some of them. (2 Chr. xxix. 30.)

V. 1. The Psalmist, after much consideration, and a sharp contest with temptation, thus abruptly expressed his assurance that, notwithstanding appearances, the Lord was kind to his true people, who served him in uprightness of heart.—The same distinction between an Israelite by nation, and the true Israelite, which is often made in the New Testament, is here explicitly established. (*Notes, Matt. v. 8. John i. 47—51. Rom. ii. 25—29.*)

V. 2, 3. (*Notes, xxxvii. 1, 2. 5—8. xciv. 16—18. Jer. xii. 1—4.*) 'I began to doubt, and stagger in my faith. ... The reason was, that having a just indignation against the folly, or rather madness, of wicked men, it first vexed me to see them... in a very flourishing condition; and then tempted me to think it very hard, that sober men should not equal, if not exceed them, in such happiness.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 4. Wicked men often live to old age, in firm strength and health, as well as prosperity; and end their lives without great pain: while many pious persons scarcely know what health is, and die with great sufferings. Nay, numbers of

h 12 Prov. iii. 11, 12. Jer. xii. 1, 2. 1 Cor. xi. 32. Heb. xii. 8. Rev. iii. 19. 5^h They are not * in trouble as other men: neither are they plagued [†] like other men.

• Heb. in the trouble of other men. 6ⁱ Therefore pride compasseth them about ^k as a chain; ^l violence ^m covereth them as a garment.

7 Their ⁿ eyes stand out with fatness: they [†] have ^o more than heart could wish.

8 ^p They are corrupt, and ^q speak wickedly concerning oppression: ^r they speak loftily. 9 They ^s set their mouth against the heavens, and ^t their tongue walketh through the earth.

10 Therefore his people return hither: and ^u waters of a full cup are wrung out to them.

11 And they say, ^v How doth God know? and ^w is there knowledge in the most High?

12 Behold, ^x these are the ungodly,

‘dependants is never wanting, to whom the...vain and ‘ignorant wretch, exalted in his own conceit above the ‘level of mortality, may, from the chair, without controul, ‘dictate libertinism and infidelity.’ Bp. Horne.

V. 10. This verse is generally allowed to be very difficult, and a variety of discordant interpretations have been given of it.—The original may literally be rendered, “On “this account his people shall return hither, and waters “of fulness shall be wrung out to them.” “His people,” seems to mean the people of God, who, witnessing the prosperity of the wicked, and experiencing many sorrows and hardships, were tempted to “return hither,” (i. e. to the company of the ungodly,) in order to share their ease and pleasure: but the consequence in general was, that “waters of a full cup were wrung out to them;” they brought many chastisements on themselves, and were oppressed with sorrow for their guilt and folly. ‘Not only ‘the reprobate, but also the people of God, oftentimes ‘fall back, seeing the prosperous estate of the wicked, and ‘are overwhelmed with sorrows; thinking that God con- ‘sidereth not aright the state of the godly.’—The verse is in the future, and it seems most natural to explain it, as the Psalmist’s apprehension, that the prosperity of daring sinners would eventually prove an invincible temptation, and a great source of sorrow to believers. The clause, “waters of a full cup are wrung out to them,” probably refers to the cups of liquor mingled with poison, which were in those days given to criminals: but whether it denote the inordinate sorrow of tempted believers under their own sufferings, contrasted with beholding the success and indulgence of the wicked; or to the painful consequences of yielding to the temptation, and imitating those whom they envied, must remain doubtful.

V. 11. This verse is by some interpreted in connexion with the foregoing, as the language of the tempted believer, who is even induced by what he feels and witnesses, to adopt the language of the ungodly, and to question, whether God do indeed know, and take cognizance of human affairs. This interpretation rises naturally from the words: but, as it is thought by many, that pious persons cannot well be supposed to use such infidel language, they conclude that the Psalmist here returns to his subject, and that the profligates above described, and those whom they pervert, are again introduced. (Notes, 6—9. x. 2—11. xciv. 1—9.)

V. 12—14. ‘These worthless, ungodly, blasphemous ‘wretches, whose characters I have been delineating; these

the wicked are so hardened in presumption, that they die without terror or remorse. (Notes, xvii. 13—15. Job xxi. 7—22. xxiv. 18—20.) The original may be rendered, “They have no bands till their death.” They are not put in chains for execution, like condemned criminals; but are let alone, till they are taken out of the world like other men.—‘There is neither pangs of body, nor remorse and ‘terror of soul, in their death.’ Bp. Hall.

V. 5. The wealthy sinner, ‘far from poverty as free ‘from disease, seems to pass his days exempted from the ‘miseries of mankind, without labour and anxiety; and ‘not so much as to think of those, who, distressed on all ‘sides, can scarcely earn their bread by the sweat of their ‘brows.’ Bp. Horne. (Notes, Heb. xii. 4—13.)

V. 6—9. The haughtiness of these prosperous ungodly men appeared in their external decorations; nay, they counted that display of their pride, which is falsely called magnificence, their highest ornament; as conquerors, and other eminent persons, wore chains of gold round their necks for decoration and distinction. (Marg. Ref. k.) At the same time, their whole conduct was so notorious for violence and oppression, that they were covered with them as with a garment. Perhaps it is also implied, that their violence bore the expense of their ostentation, which they gratified in rich garments and costly ornaments. They likewise indulged and pampered their bodies, in the most luxurious manner; and their looks discovered their excessive sensuality and voluptuousness. Yet they reserved more from their enormous expenses, than a wise man would wish for; or more than they formerly could have thought of: such unexpected success attended them!—But, instead of being thankful for their abundance, their corrupt passions were thus exceedingly strengthened and inflamed: and, so far from restraining or concealing them, they openly gloried in them; avowing their designs and politick methods of oppressing the poor, and crushing opposition; despising the laws of man, and even those of almighty God; and haughtily uniting to their licentious, selfish, and unfeeling conversation, the language of infidelity or atheism; saying, not “within themselves,” but openly, “I neither fear God, nor regard man;” thus setting the Judge of the world at defiance, and propagating far and wide their pernicious and impious principles. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Sam. ii. 3. Job xxi. 7—16. xxii. 15—20. Luke xviii. 1—8.)—Alas! how many are there in modern times, who seem to have sat for the odious and detestable portrait here exhibited!—‘A circle of fawning

a xvii. 14. lxii. 10. Jer. v. 27, 28 Hos. xii. 7, 8.
b Job xxi. 15. xxxiv. 9. xxxv. 2. Mal. iii. 14.
c xxiv. 4. xxvi. 6. li. 10. Heb. x. 19—22. Jam. iv. 8.
d xxxiv. 19. xciv. 12. Job vii. 3, 4. 18. x. 3. 17. Jer. xv. 18. Am. iii. 2. Heb. xii. 5. 1 Pet. i. 6.
e Heb. *my chastisement was*.
f 1 Sam. ii. 24. Mal. ii. 8. Matt. xviii. 6, 7. Rom. xiv. 15. 21. 1 Cor. viii. 11—13.
g xxii. 30. xxiv. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 9.
h xxxvi. 6. lxxvii. 19. xcvi. 2. Prov. xxx. 2, 3. Ec. viii. 17. Rom. xi. 33.
i Heb. *labour in mine eyes*. xxxix. 6. Luke xviii. 32—34. John xvi. 18, 19.
j xxvii. 4. lxiii. 2. lxxvii. 13. cxix. 24. 130.
k xxxvii. 37, 38. Job xxvii. 8. Ec. viii. 12, 13. Jer. v. 31. Luke xii. 20. xvi. 22, 23.
l xxxv. 6. Deut. xxxii. 35. Jer. xxxii. 12.
m xxxvii. 20, 24, 35—38. lv. 23. xcii. 7. xciv. 23.
n 2 Thes. i. 9.
o lxxiii. 9. Job xx. 5. Is. xxx. 13. Acts xii. 23.
p 1 Thes. v. 3. Rev. xviii. 10. xx. 23—25. Prov. xxviii. 1. Is. xxi. 3, 4. Dan. v. 6. xxxix. 7, 8. p vii. 6. lxxviii. 65. q xxxix. 6.

who prosper in the world; ^a they increase in riches.

13 Verily, ^b I have cleansed my heart in vain, and ^c washed my hands in innocency.

14 For ^d all the day long have I been plagued, and ^e chastened every morning.

15 If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should ^f offend *against* ^g the generation of thy children.

16 ^h When I thought to know this, it *was* ⁱ too painful for me.

17 ^j Until I went into the sanctuary of God; ^k then understood I their end.

18 ^l Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: ^m thou castedst them down into destruction.

19 ⁿ How are they *brought* into desolation, as in a moment! ^o they are utterly consumed with terrors.

20 ^p As a dream when *one* awaketh; so, O Lord, ^q when thou awakest, thou shalt despise ^r their image.

^a are the men who prosper in the world, who succeed in every thing they undertake, and roll in riches! What are we to think of God, his providence, and his promises?... All my faith, my charity, and my devotion, all my watching and fastings,...all the labour and pains I have taken...have been altogether vain and fruitless.' *Bp. Horne.* (Notes, Job xxxiv. 5—9. xxxv. 1—3. Mal. iii. 13—18.)—The clause, "Washed my hands in innocency," seems equivalent to St. Paul's words, "Herein do I exercise myself to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man." (Note, xxvi. 6—8. Acts xxiv. 10—21, v. 16.)

V. 15—17. The Psalmist, having related the progress of his temptation till it came to the crisis, next shews how by faith and grace he prevailed against it. In his greatest despondency, he could not but respect and wish well to "the generation of God's children;" and he considered, that if he gave utterance to such sentiments as had arisen within him, he should grieve, condemn, or deceive them, and so cause them to offend. He therefore purposed to acquire a full understanding of the mystery in Providence; and in the mean while to keep silence: but the more he reflected and reasoned on the subject, the deeper was his conviction that it was too difficult for him, and the greater perplexity he experienced; until he went at length into the sanctuary of God, to consult the priests, the Lord's ministers, and to examine his word, and spread the case before him in prayer; and then he was enabled to look forward to the last end, and to understand the final doom of prosperous sinners, so that he could no longer envy them, or complain of his own condition. (Notes, xxxvii. 35—38. xcii. 6, 7. Luke xvi. 19—23.)

21 Thus ^r my heart was grieved, and I was pricked ^s in my reins.

22 ^t So foolish *was* I, and ^u ignorant: I was ^v as a beast ^w before thee.

23 Nevertheless ^x I *am* continually with thee: ^y thou hast holden *me* by my right hand.

24 ^z Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward ^{aa} receive me to glory.

25 ^{ab} Whom have I in heaven *but* thee? and *there is* ^{ac} none upon earth that I desire beside thee.

26 ^{ad} My flesh and my heart faileth: ^{ae} but God is the Strength of my heart, and ^{af} my Portion for ever.

27 For lo, ^{ag} they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them ^{ah} that go a whoring from thee.

28 But ^{ai} it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, ^{aj} that I may declare all thy works.

r 3. xxxvii. 1. 7.
s Job xvi. 12. Lam iii. 13.
t lxix. 5. xcii. 6. Prov. xxx. 2. Ec. iii. 18.
u Heb. *I knew not*.
v xxxii. 9. Is. i. 3.
w Heb. *with thee*.
x xvi. 8. xxiii. 4. cxxxix. 1—12. 18. Gen. xviii. 1. Matt. i. 23. xxviii. 20. Heb. xiii. 5.
y xxxvii. 17. 24. lxiii. 8. Is. xli. 10. 13. xlii. 1.
z xvi. 7. xxv. 9. xxxii. 8. xlviii. 14. cxliii. 8—10. Prov. iii. 5, 6. viii. 20. Is. xxx. 21. lxxviii. 17. lviii. 8. 11. Luke xi. 13. John xvi. 13. Jam. i. 5.
aa xlix. 15. lxxxiv. 11. Luke xxiii. 46. John xiv. 3. xvii. 5. 24. Acts vii. 59. 2 Cor. v. 1. 1 Pet. i. 4, 5.
ab xvi. 5. 11. xvii. 15. xxxvii. 4. xliii. 4. lxiii. 3. lxxxix. 6. Matt. v. 8. 1 John iii. 2. Rev. xxi. 3. 22, 23.
ac xliii. 1, 2. civ. 34. cxliii. 6—8. Is. xxvi. 8, 9. Hab. iii. 17, 18. Matt. x. 37. Phil. iii. 8.
ad lxiii. 1. lxxxiv. 2. cxix. 81, 82.
ae Job xiii. 15. 2 Cor. iv. 8—10. 16—18. Phil. i. 21. 2 Tim. iv. 6—8. 2 Pet. i. 14. e xviii. 2. xxvii. 14. cxxxviii. 3. Is. xl. 29—31. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. || Heb. *Rock*. f xvi. 5.
af 6. cxix. 57. cxliii. 5. Lam. iii. 24. Rev. xxi. 3, 4, 7. g Job xxi. 14, 15. Is. xxxix. 13. Jer. xii. 2. Matt. xv. 7, 8. Eph. ii. 13. 17. h Ex. xxxiv. 15. Num. xvi. 39. Jam. iv. 4. Rev. xvii. 1—5. i lxxv. 4. lxxxiv. 10. cxvi. 7. Lam. iii. 25, 26. Luke xv. 17—20. Heb. x. 19—22. Jam. iv. 8. 1 Pet. iii. 18. k lxvi. 16. lxxi. 17. 24. cvii. 22. cxviii. 17.

V. 18—22. By the light of truth, and the eye of faith, the Psalmist clearly saw, that prosperous ungodly men stand on the slippery summit of a tremendous precipice; whence in the appointed time God casts them down by death, with a fall equal to the height to which they were elevated. In a moment they are desolated and ruined, and overwhelmed with terrors. (Notes, lviii. 6—9. Job xx. 4—9. Luke xii. 15—21.) The dread of death and judgment mars their enjoyment; and the death of any one of them terrifies the survivors. So that their happiness is but a transient, disturbed dream of pleasure: and God pours contempt upon this lifeless image of felicity; (Notes, xxxix. 6. Zech. xi. 15—17;) when arising to take vengeance, he by death awakes them to see substantial good for ever lost, and real misery unavoidable and eternal.—These considerations convinced the Psalmist of his sin and folly, in envying such wretched men. He was deeply ashamed, on recollecting the disquietude and impatience of his heart, and the effect produced even upon his animal frame, without any sufficient cause. And he appeared to himself, and knew that he must appear in the sight of God, to be ignorant and stupid as a beast, which has no conception of any other good than present sensual enjoyment. (Notes, Prov. xxx. 2, 3.)

V. 23—28. Emerging from his temptation, the Psalmist found his heart humbled, and his valuation of spiritual blessings greatly enhanced. He reflected, with pleasure and gratitude, on his privileges as a believer. He was persuaded that he was under the immediate care of an ever-present, wise, and faithful Friend, who had hitherto upheld him, especially under his urgent temptation; as a

PSALM LXXIV.

Heavy complaints to God, that in anger he had left his congregation, without any encouraging token, while insulting conquerors desolated the sanctuary, 1—

tender parent holds his child by the hand, lest he should fall and hurt himself. He was assured that the Lord would guide him in wisdom through life, and at death “receive him to glory:” nor could any thing in heaven or on earth, be worthy of being put in competition with his favour, or necessary to his happiness in accession to it. He relied on none of the real or supposed inhabitants of heaven; he expected not his future happiness from the society of the most exalted or excellent creatures; he did not *delight* even in his earthly friends and comforts, when compared with the Fountain of felicity, who was in every respect his All in all. He was aware that his body would speedily decay, his natural spirits fail, and his heart no longer beat; but God would strengthen and support his soul in that last conflict which would terminate all his sorrows, and then he would be his eternal Portion. (*Notes*, lxxxiv. 11, 12. *John* xiv. 2, 3. xvii. 24. *Rom.* ii. 7—11. v. 1, 2. *2 Cor.* iii. 17, 18. iv. 13—18. *1 Pet.* i. 8, 9. v. 1—4.) This would be his felicity, while the most prosperous of those who were alienated from God, and under his wrath, must perish; and Israelites especially, who broke their national covenant by apostasy, idolatry, and rebellion against God, would be more severely punished than others.—But for his part, he was satisfied that it was “good” (advantageous, pleasant, and honourable,) for him, to wait upon God, and walk with him, confiding in his mercy, and celebrating his praises, whatever should be his outward circumstances and situation. Thus the psalm concludes with the language of assured hope, and joyful anticipation of future and eternal glory in heaven: and as the sinners, above described, are supposed to prosper even to the end of life; the firm belief of a future state of punishment and perdition to ungodly men, is likewise as explicitly avowed, as almost in any part of the new testament. (*Marg. Ref.*) ‘He who, but a little while ago, seemed to question the providence of God over the affairs of men, now exults in happy confidence of the divine mercy;... nothing doubting, but that he would ever continue to guide him upon earth, till glory should crown him in heaven. Such are the blessed effects of “going into the “sanctuary,” and consulting “the lively oracles,” in all our doubts, difficulties, and temptations.’ *Bp. Horne.*—The doctrine established in this Psalm is highly useful, in understanding the arguments contained in the book of Job. (*Notes*, *Job* viii. 20—22. ix. 22—24. xlii. 7—9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

The distinction has been obvious in every age, between mere professors of even the true religion, and those who are inwardly sanctified by the Holy Spirit: and it has always been an undisputed maxim in the church, that the Lord is kind to his people, whose hearts are upright with him. Yet appearances have often been against this truth; and Satan has had his advantage in exciting the impatience and unbelief even of pious persons, and causing them to disquiet themselves, and dishonour God, by their surmises:

9. Earnest pleas, that he would help his people, according to his former powerful works for Israel, and in remembrance of his covenant; and thus silence the blasphemies and reproaches of his enemies, 10—23.

so that many of them have had cause to say, “My feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipped; for I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.” It is indeed, at first sight, a mystery in Providence, that the wicked so often prosper, and the righteous are so much afflicted. Health, long life, affluence, and an easy death, are often granted to the basest of men. Thus their pride, ambition, covetousness, and sensuality are increased; they grow more daring in impiety and iniquity; and, by their example and discourse, widely diffuse contagion and misery around them: while their impunity emboldens them to infidelity, and they say, “How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the “most High?” The mischief which these prosperous infidels and scorners occasion in the world is indeed very great: many professed Christians are by them drawn into apostasy; and even believers are often greatly discouraged; so that sometimes they are ready to think that their repentance, faith, love, zeal, watchfulness, and conscientiousness have been in vain. For being chastened from time to time, they are apt to call this “being plagued all “the day long.”—But though temptations may thus darken and perplex a true Christian, and very rebellious thoughts may be stirred up: yet there is a holy engrafted principle within, which will counteract them, prevent their effects, and at length gain the ascendancy; and when he has escaped the snare, he will be the better able to counsel and comfort his brethren. (*Note*, *Luke* xxii. 31—34.)

V. 15—28.

Sometimes, when “the fire burns within,” an unwillingness to grieve or stumble his fellow Christians, or to gratify the malice of the wicked, imposes silence on the tempted believer: for he must perceive, on reflection, that if outward prosperity were of prime importance, “the “generation of God’s children,” in every age, have acted most imprudently, or been greatly deluded, in enduring so many afflictions for the Lord’s sake. We shall, however, never get ground against temptations of this kind, by merely speculating; and shall rather find our minds perplexed with new difficulties and objections, till we bring the whole matter and weigh it in the balance of the sanctuary. But attention to the sacred Scriptures, and fervent prayer, will soon extricate us from these labyrinths: we shall then be led to look off from things seen and temporal, to things unseen and eternal: and when we consider the end of wicked men, we shall be convinced of their folly and misery; and clearly perceive that they are no more to be envied, than a state-criminal, who is bound in chains of gold till he be put to some tormenting death. We shall then see that their wealth and prosperity were given them in anger, as a punishment of their impiety and enmity against God; and that they were “treasuring up wrath,” until the time, when they were to be cast down headlong from their slippery pre-eminence into eternal destruction; of which in the mean-while they are often tortured with the apprehension. (*Notes*, *Prov.* x. 22. xxviii. 1.) Thus

* Or, A Psalm
for Asaph to
give instruction.
lxxviii. title.

* Maschil of Asaph.

O God, ^a why hast thou cast *us* off
for ever? ^b why doth thine anger ^c smoke
against ^d the sheep of thy pasture?

2 Remember thy congregation,
^e which thou hast purchased of old;
the ^f rod of ^g thine inheritance, ^h which
thou hast redeemed; ⁱ this mount Zion,
wherein thou hast dwelt.

† Or, *tribe*. e xxxiii. 12. cvi. 40. cxxxv. 4. Deut. iv. 20. xxxii. 9. Jer. x. 16.
f Is. li. 11. lxii. 12. Tit. ii. 14. Rev. v. 9. g xlviii. 1, 2. lxxviii. 68, 69. cxxxii. 13, 14.

their happiness is only a dream; speedily they will awake, and the enchantment will be dissolved, and they will too late perceive their own misery. If we have ever envied such ruinous prosperity, or complained of the salutary corrections of our heavenly Father; and if our hearts have rebelled against his appointment; surely on reflection we must be ashamed of our folly and brutish stupidity, as well as of our perverseness and ingratitude! And indeed we do not gain a complete victory over the enemy, unless his buffetings prove the occasion of our deeper humiliation before God. (Note, 2 Cor. xii. 7—10.) Surely, that man has no right or reason to complain, or to envy, who has God for his Friend and Father, to provide for, comfort, and uphold him, to guide him here with his counsel, and then to receive him to eternal glory! Indeed heaven itself could not render us happy without his presence and love: much less could earth and all its possessions satisfy the desires of an immortal soul. And if the Lord is our Portion, we need desire no more besides him; for he is all-sufficient and everlasting. The world and all its glory vanishes; our “flesh and hearts will soon fail;” but God will be the Strength of our hearts, and our Happiness for ever. By sin we are all indeed far off from God, in the temper of our minds and the state of our souls; and at this distance misery is inevitable: but by the gospel we are invited to draw nigh to him; and as nothing, but preferring other portions and confidences to him and his salvation, can prevent our happiness, so the ruin of such as refuse this gracious offer is most certain; and a profession of Christianity, if men go on in sin, or return back to it, will increase their condemnation. May we then “choose that good part, which can never be taken from us.” May we prefer those enduring riches, those holy pleasures, and that genuine honour, which God bestows on his people. May we draw near and keep near to him by faith and prayer, and find it good to do so; that putting our trust in the Lord, and declaring our experience of his love, patiently bearing our cross, and despising worldly objects, we may encourage our brethren to resist, and teach them, by our counsel and example, to overcome these dangerous temptations of the enemy of our souls.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXIV. Title. This psalm is so adapted to the case of the Jews, during the Babylonish captivity, that if Asaph, who lived in the time of David, were the writer of it, he must have composed it by the Spirit of prophecy. But it is far more probable, that it was written

3 ^h Lift up thy feet unto ⁱ the perpetual desolations; *even* ^k all *that* the enemy hath done wickedly in the sanctuary.

4 ^l Thine enemies roar in the midst of thy congregations; ^m they set up their ensigns *for* signs.

5 *A man* ⁿ was famous according as he had lifted up axes upon the thick trees.

m Jer. vi. 1—5. Matt. xxiv. 15. Luke xxi. 20. Jer. xlv. 22, 23.

n 1 Kings v. 6. 2 Chr. ii. 14.

h xlv. 23. 24.
Josh. x. 24.
2 Sam. xxii. 39—
43. Is. x. 6. xxv.
10. lxiii. 3—6.
Mic. i. 9.
i cii. 13, 14. Neh.
i. 3. ii. 3. 13.
Is. lxiv. 10, 11.
Dan. ix. 17. Mic.
iii. 12. Luke xxi.
24. Rev. xi. 2.
k lxxix. 1. Jer. lxi.
13. Lam. i. 10.
Dan. viii. 11—
14. ix. 27. xi. 31.
Mark xi. 17.
l 2 Chr. xxxvi. 17.
Lam. ii. 7.
Luke xiii. 1.
Rev. xiii. 6.

by some other Asaph, who lived at the time of the captivity; or, as some think, by one of Asaph's descendants.

V. 1, 2. Israel as a nation was typically (what true Christians are really,) the sheep of God's pasture, his purchased congregation and ransomed inheritance, whom he redeemed by desolating Egypt; and among whom he dwelt, by the ark the symbol of his presence; which, from the days of David to the captivity, was stationed on mount Zion, and then was finally lost or destroyed. (Notes, xcv. 7. Ex. xv. 14—16. Is. xliii. 3, 4. Acts xx. 28.) Both the ten tribes and the kingdom of Judah had given abundant cause for the anger of God to smoke against them; and had even deserved to be “cast off for ever:” yet the pious remnant of the nation, remembering what the Lord had formerly done for their ancestors, and how he had repeatedly pardoned their rebellions, especially when they humbled themselves before him; knowing also that the promises and prophecies of the Messiah were not yet accomplished, and witnessing the insults of idolaters over the worshippers of the true God; were emboldened thus to plead, and as it were expostulate with him, for seeming finally to cast off his people, and to retain his anger for ever. (Notes, lxxix. 8—13. Is. lxiii. 7—19. lxiv. 5—12. Jer. xxxiii. 23—26.)—The church, and every true member of it, under persecution or oppression, though deserving worse than all that is inflicted, may on similar grounds plead for deliverance.

V. 3. The idolatrous Chaldeans had wickedly burnt the temple, and left it to perpetual desolations; and God himself seemed to stand at a distance, and pay no regard to it: but the Psalmist called on him to come speedily, that he might survey and restore his ruined Sanctuary. (Note, xlv. 23—26.)—Some render it, “Lift up thy feet, that thou mayest destroy every enemy, which hath done evil in thy Sanctuary.” (Notes, Is. xxv. 10—12. lxiii. 1—6. Rev. xiv. 14—20.)

V. 4. The Chaldeans, rushing into the temple, shouting for victory amidst the affrighted worshippers, and setting up their standards, or erecting trophies of their success, on that sacred ground, seem to be here described. (Notes, Lam. i. 8—11. ii. 6, 7.) Antiochus Epiphanes afterwards greatly profaned the temple, and dispersed the worshippers; but he did not burn it.—The prevalence of infidelity, and the triumphs of heathens, infidels, and anti-christian persecutors and corrupters of Christianity, are events equally lamentable; and the proper directory for prayer on such occasions is here given.

V. 5, 6. ‘It was heretofore thought an employment of much honour and merit in those men, who did cut down

6 But now they break down ° the carved work thereof at once, with axes and hammers.

7 ° They have * cast fire into thy sanctuary, ° they have defiled *by casting down* ° the dwelling place of thy name to the ground.

8 ° They said in their hearts, Let us † destroy them together: they have burned up ° all the synagogues of God in the land.

9 ° We see not our signs: *there is* ° no more any prophet; *neither is there* among us any that knoweth how long.

o 1 Kings vi. 18.
29. 32. 35.
p 2 Kings xxv. 9.
Is. lxiv. 11.
Matt. xxii. 7.
* Heb. sent thy
sanctuary into
the fire.
q lxxxix. 39. Ez.
xxiv. 21.
Ex. xx. 24.
Deut. xii. 5.
1 Kings viii. 20.
lxxxiii. 4.
cxxxvii. 7. Esth.
iii. 8, 9.
† Heb. break.
i 2 Kings ii. 3. 5.
iv. 25. 2 Chr.
xvii. 9. Matt. iv.
23.
u Ex. xii. 13. xiii.
9. 10. Judg. vi.
17. Ez. xx. 12.
Heb. ii. 4.
x 1 Sam. iii. 1.
Am. viii. 11, 12.
Mic. iii. 6.

10 O God, ° how long shall the adversary reproach? shall the enemy blaspheme thy name for ever?

11 Why ° withdrawest thou thy hand, even thy right hand? ° pluck *it* out of thy bosom.

12 For ° God is my King of old, ° working salvation in the midst of the earth.

13 ° Thou didst ° divide the sea by thy strength: thou ° brakest the heads of the ° dragons in the waters.

14 Thou brakest the heads of ° levi-

xiii. 1, 2. lxxxix. 4.
5. lxxxix. 46. 50.
51. Dan. xii. 6.
Rev. vi. 10.
z Is. lxiv. 12. Lam.
ii. 3.
a xlv. 23. lxxxviii.
65, 66.
b xlv. 4. Ex. xix.
5, 6. Num. xxiii.
21, 22. Is. xxxiii.
22.
c Ex. xv. 2—15.
Judg. iv. 23, 24.
1 Sam. xix. 5.
Is. lxiii. 8. Hab.
iii. 12—14.
d lxxvi. 6. lxxxviii.
13. cvi. 8, 9.
e xxxvi. 13—15.
Ex. xiv. 21. Neh.
ix. 11. Is. xi. 15.
16.
f Heb. break.
g Ex. xiv. 28. Is.
li. 9, 10. Ez.
xxix. 3.
h Or, whales. Ez. xxxii. 2.
i. Rev. xx. 2. f civ. 25, 26. Job iii. 8. Marg. xli. 1, &c. Is. xxxvii.

‘and square the timber-trees, for the building of the holy sanctuary. But now every man thinks himself to deserve ‘most thanks, that can do most havock to thy holy place.’ *Bp. Hall.*—‘As a ... skilful person ... lifteth up the axe ‘in the thick wood; so now men set themselves to work, ‘to demolish the ornaments and timbers of the sanctuary.’ *Bp. Horne.* “He that lifted the axes upon the thick trees, “was renowned as one that brought a thing to perfection: “but now they break down, &c.” *Old Version.*—The eagerness of the destroyers, and the honour which they acquired by the work of destruction, are evidently intended (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Thick trees.* (5) “The density of the “wood.” *Heb.*

V. 7, 8. (*Notes*, 2 Kings xxv. 8—10. Is. lxiv. 9—12. Zech. xi. 1—3.) The word (סִנְגֻּרִים), rendered *synagogues*, is in the fourth verse translated *congregations*. It means, according to the context, either the stated seasons of assembling, the places in which the people met stately, or the congregations collected together at the solemn feasts, or the solemn feasts themselves. As it is doubtful whether synagogues, in the common sense of the word, had become general before the captivity; it is probable, that the courts of the temple, in which the people assembled, were intended; and that the passage might be rendered, “They have burned God’s places of assembling even to the “ground.” The LXX translate the clause, ‘Let us cause ‘the feasts of the LORD to cease from the earth.’ (*Notes*, 2 Kings iv. 23. 2 Chr. xvii. 7—9.)

V. 9. The constant sacrifices on the altar, and the observance of the solemn feasts, were signs of the Lord’s presence with his people, which ceased during the captivity: neither had they any miraculous interpositions in their favour. They had little encouragement from prophets, were destitute of prudent counsellors, and could not well determine when these calamities would cease.—Jeremiah indeed prophesied in Jerusalem before the destruction of the temple, and in Egypt after that event; and Ezekiel and Daniel in Babylon: yet they were often silent for a long while together, and the case of the pious Jews was very discouraging, and their prospect gloomy. Many of the predictions, likewise, of all these prophets, after the destruction of Jerusalem, related primarily to other nations and to distant periods. (*Jer.* xlvi.—li. *Ez.* xxv.—xxxii.) And though Daniel, and doubtless many others, understood from Jeremiah’s predictions, when to expect some

favourable crisis; yet it is evident that even these eminent persons had considerable difficulty in knowing what that crisis would be, and when the nation would be restored to prosperity. (*Notes*, Dan. ix.) Consequently the pious remnant, dispersed in distant places, must in general have been greatly at a loss on these subjects; and have deeply regretted the want of prophets, bringing them explicit and encouraging messages from God, suited to their distressed condition.—The passage, however, is still more aptly descriptive of the state of the Jews, in their present long continued dispersion: and we may well suppose, that when numbers of that nation shall be led to enquire, on what account they have been left in captivity and oppression, for a term of years so vastly exceeding the duration of the Babylonish captivity, without priest, prophet, or token for good, or indication how long it will be before they are restored; this Psalm will direct or even express their complaints and devotions. (*Notes*, Gen. xlix. 10. Deut. iv. 25—28. Hos. iii. 4, 5.)—It may also suit the state of the Christian church, under the tyranny of antichrist, the entire termination of which cannot yet be precisely ascertained.

V. 10, 11. The reproaches and blasphemies, which insulting idolaters incessantly poured out against God and his worshippers, seem to have more grieved these supplicants, than their own distresses; and this was their principal plea in prayer. (*Notes*, xlv. 23—26. lxxxix. 8—13. lxxxix. 38—45. 50, 51. Is. li. 9—11.)

V. 12. ‘Why should we despair of it, since the great ‘God, whom they deride, has many ages ago undertaken ‘the government and protection of us,’ (the nation of Israel,) ‘working for us such deliverances in this land, ‘which now lies waste, as astonished all the world.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.*—2 Kings xix. 2 Chr. xiv. 9—15. xx. 1—30.)

Salvation.] The original is plural, *Salvations*; referring to the many wonderful deliverances, which God had in former ages wrought for Israel.

V. 13—17. Pharaoh as the great leviathan, (*Notes*, Job xli.) and his captains and soldiers as *sea-monsters* of inferior size, were ready to devour Israel in the Red Sea; but were themselves entirely destroyed: and the people were enriched and armed by the spoils of their enemies, as well as encouraged for their march through the wilderness. (*Notes*, Ex. xiv. xv.) There the rock was cleft to give them

^g Ex. xii. 35, 36. ^h athan in pieces, and gavest him to be
^{iv.} 30. ⁱ meat to the people inhabiting the wil-
^h cv. 41. Ex. xvii. ^j derness.
^{5, 6.} Num. xx.
^{11.} Is. xlviii. 21.
ⁱ Josh. iii. 13, &c.
² Kings ii. 8. 14.
^{Is.} xi. 16. xlv.
^{27.} Hab. iii. 9.
^{Marg.} Rev. xvi. 12.

¹⁵ Thou didst ^h cleave the fountain
and the flood: thou driedst up ⁱ mighty
rivers.
^{* Heb. rivers of strength.}

¹⁶ ^k The day is thine, the night also
is thine: thou hast ^l prepared the light
and the sun.
^k cxxxvi. 7—9.
^{Gen.} i. 3—5.
^l viii. 3. xix. 1—
^{6.} cxxxvii. 7—9.
^{Gen.} i. 14—18.
^{Matt.} v. 45.

¹⁷ Thou hast ^m set all the borders
of the earth; thou hast ⁿ made sum-
mer and winter.
^m xxiv. 1, 2. Deut.
^{xxxii.} 8. Acts
^{xvii.} 26.
^{† Heb. made them summer, &c.}
^{Gen.} viii. 22.
^{Acts} xiv. 17.

¹⁸ ⁿ Remember this, *that* the enemy
hath reproached, O Lord, and *that*
the foolish people have blasphemed
thy name.
ⁿ 22. lxxxix. 50,
^{51.} cxxxvii. 7.
^{Is.} lxii. 6, 7.
^{Marg.} Rev. xvi. 19.

¹⁹ O deliver not the soul of ^p thy
turtle-dove unto the multitude of the
wicked: ^q forget not the congregation
of thy poor for ever.
^o xiv. 1. xxxix. 8.
^{xciv.} 2—8. Deut.
^{xxii.} 27. Is.
^{xxxvii.} 23, 24.
^{Ez.} xx. 14.
^p lxxviii. 13. Cant. ii. 14. iv. 1. vi. 9. Is. lx. 8. Matt. x. 16.

turtle-dove unto the multitude of the
wicked: ^q forget not the congregation
of thy poor for ever.

²⁰ ^r Have respect unto the cove-
nant: for ^s the dark places of the
earth are full of the ^t habitations of
cruelty.

²¹ ^u O let not the oppressed return
ashamed: ^v let the poor and needy
praise thy name.

²² ^x Arise, O God, plead thine
own cause: ^y remember how the
foolish man reproacheth thee daily.

²³ ^z Forget not the voice of thine
enemies: ^a the tumult of those that
rise up against thee ^b increaseth con-
tinually.

^q lxxviii. 10. lxxii.
^{2.} Zeph. iii. 12
^{Jam} ii. 5, 6.
^r lxxxix. 28. 34—
^{36.} 39. cv. 8.
^{cvi.} 45. Gen.
^{xvii.} 7. Ex.
^{xxiv.} 6—8. Lev.
^{xxvi.} 40—42.
^{Deut.} ix. 27. Jer.
^{xxxiii.} 20—26.
^{Luke} i. 72—75.
^s Deut. xii. 31.
^{Rom.} i. 29—31.
^{Eph.} iv. 17, 18.
^{v.} 8.
^t Gen. xlix. 5—7.
^u ix. 18. xii. 5.
^{cii.} 19—21. cix.
^{22.} Is. xlv. 17.
^v cii. 21. Ezra iii.
^{11.} Jer. xxxiii.
^{11.}
^x ix. 19, 20. lxxxix.
^{9, 10.}
^y 18. lxxxv. 4, 5.
^{lxxxix.} 50, 51.
^{Is.} lii. 5.
^z x. 11. 12. xiii. 1.
^a 4. ii. 1, 2. Is.
^{xxxvii.} 29. Lam.
^{ii.} 16. Rev. xvii.
^{14.}
^{† Heb. ascendeth.}

water, and then Jordan's flood was dried up to open their passage into Canaan. (*Notes*, Ex. xvii. 1—7. Josh. iii. iv.) These had been the tokens of JEHOVAH's care of them, and his power displayed in their behalf: and the appointment of the succession of night and day, and of summer and winter, through all the borders of the earth, by Israel's God, was a most encouraging demonstration of his omnipotence; and an emblem of the favourable change, which the afflicted Jews hoped he would effect in their circumstances. (*Notes*, Gen. i. 3—5. 14—19. viii. 20—22. Is. liv. 6—10.)—The words, rendered “the people inhabiting the wilderness,” may signify the wild beasts which live in deserts; and the clause may mean, that the bodies of Pharaoh and his captains, being thrown on shore, were devoured by beasts of prey.

V. 18. *Notes*, 21, 22. xiv. 1. lxxxix. 50, 51. Deut. xxxii. 26, 27.

V. 19. The word, rendered first “multitude” and then “congregation,” signifies *living*, or *a living creature*. It is often translated “beast,” or collectively “beasts:” but in many places it evidently means *a living multitude*. (*Note*, lxxviii. 30.) Some read this verse in connexion with the foregoing, “O deliver not the life of thy turtle into the hand of *that* multitude,” namely, the multitude of the foolish people who blasphemed God.—The church, as faithful and loving, pure and harmless, destitute and defenceless, and silently mourning under the displeasure and at the absence of her Beloved, is described under this beautiful image. Surely the Lord valued his turtle-dove too much, to leave her to be devoured by the hawks and eagles which surrounded her. (*Marg. Ref.*) ‘Yet hear our cries, and at last relieve a poor helpless company, who flee unto thee, and depend upon thee alone for safety.’ *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 20. Though Israel was unworthy of God's regard, and had broken their *national* covenant; yet even that covenant gave intimation of returning favour to the nation, when brought to confess their sins and seek humbly to God, even from the ends of the earth; and of a reinstatement in Canaan, after their dispersions. (*Notes*, Lev. xxvi. 40—42. Deut. iv. 29—31. xxx. 1—10. 1 Kings viii.

46—53.) And the covenant with Abraham and his seed, and that with David and his seed, were in full force. (*Marg. Ref. r.*)—The coming of the promised Messiah from that race was thus unalterably secured: and how should the dark places of the earth, which were filled with the habitations of cruelty, be enlightened and converted, or the worship of God be at all maintained, if Israel were destroyed before the coming of that Redeemer, who was to be a “Light to the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel?”—“All places where thy word shineth not, there reigneth tyranny and ambition.” What a different view does this verse give us of those countries, where the oracles of God are not known, from that which some travellers and speculators draw of them! But the view here given is found on examination to accord with the real state of things all over the earth; and it should stimulate Christians to exert themselves in endeavouring to send the light of truth to the regions of darkness, and the habitations of cruelty, in all its varied and horrid forms.

V. 21, 22. ‘It is thy own cause, as well as our's: therefore, though thou waitest to be called on by us; yet thou wilt certainly and effectually plead it in due time: and in this hope we thus call on thee to arise for our deliverance, and the glory of thine own name.’ (*Notes*, ix. 18—20. xxi. 13. lxxxix. 8—13. cxv. 1, 2. Matt. vi. 13.)

V. 23. ‘While speaking, she seems to hear the tumultuous clamours of the approaching enemy growing every minute louder, as they advance; and we leave the turtle-dove, without the divine assistance, ready to sink under the talons of the rapacious eagle.’ *Bp. Horne*. (*Notes*, 1—4.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

Churches and nations, professing true religion, have often provoked God finally to cast them off; so that he would no longer acknowledge them as his flock or inheritance. But “the sheep” whom he has purchased, and brought into his pasture, and made to answer in character to this instructive emblem, and in whom he dwells by his Spirit, shall never be thus cast off. Yet the rod of his fatherly correction may sometimes be mistaken for the

PSALM LXXV.

The people bless God for the tokens of his presence,
1. The Psalmist determines to judge uprightly, 2, 3.
He expostulates with the wicked, warning them of
the power and righteous vengeance of God, 4—8.
He resolves to praise God, and to administer justice
impartially, 9, 10.

sword of his vengeance; the purification of his church, by the destruction or dispersion of degenerate professors, may make his people think that he intends to “make a full end” with them; and the methods used for the mortification of the evil propensities of believers, sometimes seem to threaten the destruction of their souls. (*Notes, Rom. vii. 22—25.*) But God will never utterly forsake any individual, who turns to him, by penitent faith, when he is corrected; nor any church, while there is a considerable remnant of such, as wrestle with him in fervent prayer to spare and deliver them: nor can the gates of hell prevail against his cause.—Infidels, persecutors, and hereticks, who do wickedly in God’s sanctuary, may make grievous desolations; they may erect their trophies, and glory in the mischief which they have devised; they may run down the truth, silence faithful ministers, shut up places of worship, and persecute Christians: and they may say in their hearts, ‘Let us destroy them and their religion together.’ In the mystery of Providence they may for a time prosper: and the oppressed servants of God may complain, that they see no tokens of deliverance, have none to encourage or counsel them, and cannot tell how long these calamities will last. But this remnant is the seed of a future harvest: they pray with fervent zeal for the glory of God, that he would not withdraw his hand, or delay his powerful interposition; but that he would “pluck his right hand out of his bosom,” to defend the cause of his people, and to vindicate his own insulted honour. Such prayers have hitherto prevailed: and the despised church has survived vast numbers of those assailants, who once triumphed over her, but are now perished as the dung of the earth. Indeed we cannot be too confident that the cause of God will prevail: we are allowed to expostulate with him freely, according to our feelings, when we are grieved to hear his name blasphemed, and his truth reviled; and every former mercy to his church constitutes a cogent argument, why he should again interpose to perfect what he has so gloriously begun.

V. 13—23.

The triumph of Christ over Satan, by his crucifixion and resurrection, and the consequent success of his gospel among the Gentiles, may be urged as a far greater display of his power and mercy, than any of the miracles wrought for the deliverance of Israel. If this God, who thus wrought salvation in the midst of the earth, be our King whom we willingly obey; he will make every assault of Satan, that great leviathan, and of all his progeny, to be profitable to our souls. If we drink of those waters, which flow from our smitten Rock, even the sanctifying influences of the Spirit of Christ; (*Notes, Ex. xvii. 1—6;*) he will also divide Jordan’s flood before us, that we may pass comfortably from this wilderness to the inheritance pre-

To the chief Musician, * Al-taschith,
A Psalm or Song † of Asaph.

UNTO thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks; ^a for that thy name is near, ^b thy wondrous works declare.

2 ° When I shall † receive the congregation, I will judge uprightly.

* Or, Destroy not.
lvii. lviii. titles.
† Or, for Asaph.
a lxxvi. l. cxxxviii.
2. Ex. xxxiii. 21.
xxxiv. 6, 7. Jer.
x. 6.
b Deut. iv. 7. 38,
34.
c lxxviii. 70—72.
ci. 2. 2 Sam. ii.
4. v. 3. viii. 15.
xxiii. 3, 4.
† Or, take a set
time. Ec. iii. 17.
John vii. 6.
Acts i. 7. xvii.
31.

pared for us.—The vicissitudes of day and night, summer and winter, (through the changing of our situation in respect of the sun, the fountain of light which God has prepared,) are emblematick of those changes in our circumstances and experiences, which must take place on earth; and should remind us neither to be secure, nor to despond. (*Note, Jam. i. 16—18.*) But in the world above, we shall have no more changes: “our Sun shall no more go down, and the days of our mourning will be ended.” While, in faith, and hope, and patience, we wait for this completion of our personal felicity; we may also confidently expect a glorious event of all the oppressions, persecutions, and corruptions, which have hitherto harassed the Christian church. We may indeed well enquire of the Lord, with astonishment, how long he will permit his adversaries to blaspheme his name. But it shall not be for ever: and the folly of such as reproach him and his servants, will at length be as visible to all men, as it now is to the remnant of despised believers. (*Note, 2 Tim. iii. 6—9.*)—The true church is as amiable and pleasant to the Lord as a turtle-dove, though poor and despicable in the world’s estimation. His covenant with the Redeemer engages for more extensive blessings than have yet been vouchsafed. Ere long the Jews shall be converted, the visible church purified, every antichrist destroyed, and the fulness of the Gentiles called. This time approaches: let us then call upon our God to “have respect unto his covenant;” to enlighten all the dark nations of the earth, which are filled with cruelty and wickedness; and to rescue his people from shame and dishonour, that the poor and needy may praise his name. Let us call upon him to arise and “plead his own cause,” and to silence, effectually and finally, the boastings and clamours of his enemies, which increase continually. This is our duty and privilege; and all the prayers, offered in this behalf, will at length terminate in loud acclamations of praise and thanksgiving.

NOTES

PSALM LXXV. *Title.* (*Marg. Ref.*) If Asaph wrote this psalm, it is probable that he did it by the desire of David, upon his accession to the throne over all Israel: and the psalm seems well suited to that occasion.—Some, however, think that another Asaph wrote it, in the days of Hezekiah.

V. 1. *Thy name is near.*] JEHOVAH, exercising all the perfections of his glorious name, or character, was evidently nigh unto his people; as it appeared by his wondrous works for them, which excited their fervent gratitude. (*Notes, lxxvi. 1. cxxxviii. 2. Ex. xxxiii. 20—23. xxxiv. 5—7. Jer. x. 6—8. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.*)

V. 2. The foregoing verse is the language of the congregation; this, and those which follow, of a single per-

^d lx. 1—3. lxxviii. 60—72. ¹ Sam. xxxi. 1—7. ^{Is.} xxiv. 1—12. ^e ¹ Sam. xviii. 7. xxv. 28. ² Sam. v. 2. ^{Is.} xlix. 8. Heb. i. 3.

^f ¹ Sam. ii. 8. ^g lxxxi. 2. &c. xciv. 8. Prov. i. 22. viii. 5. ix. 6. ^h lxxxix. 17. cxlviii. 14. Dan. vii. 20, 21. Zech. i. 21.

ⁱ Ex. xxxii. 9. Deut. xxxi. 27. ² Chr. xxx. 8. ^{Is.} xlviii. 4. Ez. ii. 4. Acts vii. 51. ^{* Heb. desert.}

^k l. 6. lviii. 11. ^l cxlii. 7, 8. ¹ Sam. ii. 7, 8. xv. 23. 28. xvi. 1. ² Sam. iii. 17, 18. v. 2. vi. 21. Jer. xxvii. 4—8. Dan. ii. 37. v. 18. Luke i. 52. John xv. 16. Rom. xi. 15. Gal. i. 15.

¹ ³ 'The earth and all the inhabitants thereof are dissolved: 'I bear up 'the pillars of it. Selah.

⁴ ^g I said unto the fools, Deal not foolishly: and to the wicked, ^h Lift not up the horn:

⁵ Lift not up your horn on high: speak *not* with a stiff neck.

⁶ For promotion *cometh* neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the ^{*} south.

⁷ But ^k God is the Judge: ¹ he put-

son, and that person a ruler. Some suppose, that the Lord himself is the Speaker; who declares, that when his appointed time came, he would execute judgment in righteousness. (*Marg. reading and Ref.—Note, lxxiv. 7, 8.*) But others think that David, as the type of Christ, engages to rule in equity when placed over the congregation of the Lord. (*Notes, ci.*)

V. 3. The land of Israel was reduced to great distraction, towards the close of Saul's reign; every thing in church and state was unhinged; and the defeat at Gilboa, with the intestine divisions which followed, increased the confusion: but David had been anointed, by God's command, to uphold and establish the estate of Israel. Even before his accession, he had been the chief stay of his country: and when the whole nation willingly submitted to his government, he, by those magistrates whom he appointed, and supported in the exercise of their authority, soon brought their affairs to a happy settlement. (*Notes, lx. 1—4. Is. xxiv. 1—12. xlix. 7, 8.*)

V. 4. The words rendered "fools," and "deal not foolishly," seem properly to denote *mad persons*, and *acting in an infatuated manner*.—Saul of Tarsus was exceedingly "mad" against the church of Christ; but when he came to himself, and was endued abundantly with heavenly wisdom, men began to think him mad. (*Notes, Acts xxvi. 9—11. 24—29.*)—*Lift not up the horn.*] *Marg. Ref. h.*

V. 5. The last clause may be rendered, "Ye will 'speak with a stiff neck," or, "Will ye," &c.? (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 6, 7. God, the supreme Judge, had put down Saul's family, and appointed David to the throne: and his promotion had come from no other quarter or cause. It would be madness therefore to oppose any longer the sovereign appointment of JEHOVAH. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, ii. 1 Sam. ii. 4—8.*)

V. 8. Heavenly blessings are, in scripture, represented by a cup full of wholesome, exhilarating wine: (*Notes, cxvi. 13. Matt. xxvi. 26—29.*) but the wrath of God is represented by a cup of wine, mingled with ingredients of that kind, which tend to produce fear, distress, and despondency; and, if drunk to excess, horror, infatuation, anguish, and despair. From this cup the Lord dispenses as he pleases to sinners in this world; and even his people drink some of the wine contained in it, when chastened in his fatherly displeasure: but the dregs of it will be the portion of all the impenitent hereafter; who will wring

teth down one, and setteth up another.

⁸ For ^m in the hand of the LORD ^m ^{xi. 6. lx. 3. Job} ^{xxi. 20. Is. li. 17.} ^{22. Jer. xxv. 15.} ^{17. 27. 28. Rev.} ^{xiv. 10. xvi. 19.} ⁿ ^{Prov. xxiii. 30.} ^{Is. v. 22.} ^o ^{lxxiii. 10.} there is a cup, and the wine is red;

ⁿ it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: ^o but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring *them* out, and drink *them*.

⁹ But ^p I will declare for ever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob.

¹⁰ ^q All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; *but* ^r the horns of the righteous shall be exalted.

them out, and drink them, to all eternity. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, xi. 6.*)

V. 9, 10. Before David came to the throne, he warned the wicked not to proceed in their evil courses: but he purposed, now that he had acquired authority, effectually to break the power of triumphant wickedness, and to encourage and prefer the righteous; as an apt representative of that righteous King, whom he typified. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, 2.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The whole church, militant and triumphant, unites in thanksgivings to God for exalting the Redeemer to his mediatorial throne; and the discoveries made of the glorious perfections of God, in those wonderful works, by which this was effected, especially declares his presence with his people. Without him, the earth and all its inhabitants would rush impetuously into universal confusion, impiety, iniquity, and ruin: he alone "bears up the pillars of it;" and upholds and supports all those, whom he employs in supporting his cause in the world: (*Note, 1 Tim. iii. 14, 15:*) and all the present hopes and future happiness of any of the human race spring from the righteousness, atonement, intercession, and authority of the incarnate Son of God. Having received his congregation of redeemed sinners, and the kingdom over all for their sake, he judges uprightly: and by his ministers he warns such as proudly rebel, and exalt themselves against him, not to deal madly and foolishly, or to harden their hearts to their own destruction.—That God, who exalted the Redeemer to his throne, is the Fountain of honour, as well as the Judge of all: none can prosper who do not submit to him. He will account all to be his enemies, who will not have his beloved Son to be their Lord and Saviour; and such must for ever drink of the cup of his dreadful vengeance. But while all the horns of the wicked shall be cut off, and their ruin completed, his church shall inherit the throne of glory. Let sinners then submit to him: let believers rejoice in and obey him: and let Christian magistrates remember their obligations to imitate him, from whom they have their authority; that they may judge righteously, maintain, by the improvement of their talent, and by all scriptural means, the cause of piety; that they may crush the haughty oppressor, and protect, advance, and exalt the righteous. And let the people recollect, from whom their rulers have their authority; that they "may be subject 'not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake."

PSALM LXXVI.

a iv. liv lxi. lxvii.

titles

• Or, for.

b xlviii. 1—3. The Psalmist praises God, who had defended his people and crushed their enemies, 1—10. He exhorts all to serve God reverently, 11, 12.

c xlviii. 2, 3.

cxlviii. 13, 14.

1 Chr. xxix. 10

—12, 2 Chr. ii.

5, 6. Dan. iii. 29.

iv. 1, 2.

d Gen. xiv. 18.

Heb. vii. 1, 2.

e cxxxii. 13, 14.

2 Chr. vi. 6. Is.

xii. 6.

f xlvii. 9, 2 Chr.

xiv. 12, 13. xx.

25. xxxii. 21.

Ez. xxxix. 3, 9.

10.

g Jer. iv. 7. Ez.

xix. 1—4. 6.

xxxviii. 12, 13.

Dan. vii. 4—8.

17, &c.

h Job xl. 10—12.

Is. xlvii. 12. Dan.

iv. 37. Luke i.

51, 52.

i xliii. 3. Is. xxxvii.

36. Jer. li. 39.

Nah. iii. 18.

k Is. xxxi. 8. Ez.

xxx. 21—25.

To the chief Musician on ^aNeginoth,
A Psalm or Song ^aof Asaph.

IN Judah ^bis God known: ^chis name
is great in Israel.

2 In ^dSalem also is his tabernacle,
and ^ehis dwelling-place in Zion.

3 ^fThere brake he the arrows of the
bow, the shield, and the sword, and the
battle. Selah.

4 Thou ^gart more glorious and ex-
cellent than ^hthe mountains of prey.

5 ⁱThe stout-hearted are spoiled,
^jthey have slept their sleep: ^kand none

of the men of might have found their
hands.

6 ^lAt thy rebuke, O God of Jacob,
^mboth the chariot and horse are cast
into ⁿa dead sleep.

7 Thou, ^oeven thou, ^part to be fear-
ed: and ^qwho may stand in thy sight
^rwhen once thou art angry?

8 Thou ^sdidst cause judgment to be
heard from heaven; the earth feared,
^tand was still,

9 When ^uGod arose to judgment,
^vto save all the meek of the earth.
Selah.

10 Surely ^wthe wrath of man shall
praise thee; ^xthe remainder of wrath
shalt thou restrain.

17. xv. 9—11. Acts iv. 26—28. Rev. xi. 18.
ii. 13—16. xxiv. 22. Acts xii. 3, &c.

y xlvii. 6. lxxv. 7. civ. 9. Matt.

l xviii. 15. lxxx.

16. civ. 7.

m Ex. xiv. 27, 28.

xv. 4—6. 10.

2 Sam. x. 18.

Is. xxxvii. 36.

Ez. xxxix. 20.

Nah. ii. 13. iii.

18. Zech. xii. 4.

n 1 Sam. xxvi. 12.

Jer. li. 39. 57.

o lxxxix. 7. Jer.

x. 7—10. Matt.

x. 28. Rev. xiv.

7. xv. 4.

p xc. 11. Nah. i.

6. 1 Cor. x. 22.

Rev. vi. 16, 17.

q ii. 12.

r Judg. v. 20.

2 Chr. xxxii. 29

—22. Ez. xxxviii.

20—23.

s xlvii. 10. 2 Chr.

xx. 29, 30. Hab.

ii. 20. Zech. ii.

13.

t ix. 7—9. lxxii. 4.

lxxxii. 2—6. Is.

xi. 4. Jer. v. 28.

u xxv. 9. cxlix. 4.

Zeph. ii. 3. Matt.

v. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 4.

x Gen. xxxvii. 18

—20. 26—28. 1.

20. Ex. ix. 16.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXVI. *Title.* Some copies of the Septuagint add to this title, “against the Assyrian.” The deliverance from Sennacherib indeed seems to have been celebrated in this Psalm.

V. 1. In Judah and Israel God was known and worshipped, and his name was honoured; but in no other part of the world, except as Jews or Israelites were dispersed through other nations. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xlviii. 2, 3. cxlvii. 19, 20. *Acts* xvii. 22—31. *1 Cor.* i. 20—24.)—Indeed to this day, all the genuine knowledge of the one living and true God, which is found on earth, may be traced back to writers and teachers of this despised nation. Where neither they nor their writings have come, God is still unknown; and if there be any religion, it is idolatry. This assertion admits of no exception or qualification. (*Note*, *Zech.* viii. 20—23. *Rom.* iii. 1, 2.)

V. 2. (*Marg. Ref.*) “Salem” here evidently means *Jerusalem*. (*Note*, *Gen.* xiv. 18—20.)

V. 3. The enemies of Judah had often marched to besiege Jerusalem, with every kind of warlike preparation: but, by the power of God, these formidable preparations became entirely useless, and they were unable to join battle with them. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 5, 6. xlvii. 8, 9. *2 Chr.* xiv. 9—15. xx. 22—25. xxxii. 17—22.)

V. 4. Zion, the chosen residence of *JEHOVAH*, was immensely more glorious and excellent than Babylon or Nineveh; and the kingdom of Judah, than those renowned monarchies, which contended with each other, to the destruction of the human species, as the beasts of prey on the mountains devour the feebler animals. (*Note*, *Dan.* vii. 2, 3.) The success of the ambitious warriors, in these destructive contests for power, were deemed their glory and excellency: but the church, beloved and protected by the Lord, and devoted to his service, had a glory and excellency of a nobler kind. (*Notes*, lxxxvii. 3—6. *P. O.*—*Notes*, *Ez.* xv. 1—6. *P. O.*)

V. 5, 6. These verses fix the date of this psalm, to the time of the destruction of Sennacherib’s army before Jeru-

salem. Then, his stout-hearted captains and soldiers were suddenly deprived of life: and, so far from being able to destroy Jerusalem, as they had boasted they would; they could make no more resistance to the power of the destroying angel, than if their hands had been cut off: for, at the rebuke of that God whom they had blasphemed, those who rode in chariots and on horses, as well as the common soldiers, were cast into a dead sleep. They went to sleep in the evening as in security; but they awoke no more in this world: and thus they were left to be plundered by those whom they came to plunder. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, *2 Kings* xix. 35—37.)

V. 7. (*Notes*, 10—12. *Jer.* x. 6—10. *Matt.* x. 27, 28. *Rev.* vi. 15—17. xv. 1—4.)—“Neither the wisdom of the wise, nor the power of the mighty, no, not the world itself, can stand a single moment before him, “when “once he is angry.” Yet we continue to dread any frowns “but those of heaven: and one poor, vain, sinful man “shall, through a course of sixty or seventy years, incessantly and undauntedly tempt and provoke him, who “destroyed 185,000 in a night. What is this but madness?” *Bp. Horne*.

V. 8, 9. Hezekiah referred his cause to God by fervent prayer; who by the prophet Isaiah gave judgment from heaven against the blasphemous invaders: and then the angel carried the sentence into execution. (*Notes*, *2 Kings* xix. 14—35. *Is.* x. 7—19. 24—34. xxix. 5, 6. xxx. 29—33. xxxiii.) Thus the Lord saved his humble and afflicted people throughout the land; the nations of the earth, being intimidated, silently desisted from their designs of destroying or enslaving them; and the land of Israel enjoyed profound peace.

V. 10. The rage and malice of the most mighty persecutors and tyrants, were always rendered subservient to the display of *JEHOVAH*’s glory, and to the good of his people. And if they, having undesignedly accomplished his purposes, proceeded to attempt any thing which was inconsistent with that object, he failed not to restrain or destroy them. This he had exemplified in the case of Sennacherib, who, being “ordained for correction,” (*Note*, *Hab.* i. 12—17.)

z l. 14. cxix. 106.
Num. xxx. 2.
Ec. v. 4—6.
a lxxviii. 29. lxxxix.
7. Deut. xvi. 16.
2 Chr. xxxii. 29,
23.
• Heb. to fear.
Gen. xxxi. 42.

b xlvi. 4—6.
lxxviii. 12. 35.
Josh. v. 1. 2 Chr.
xxxii. 21. Zeph.
iii. 6.
c Is. xlii. 6—8.
xxiv. 21. Rev.
vi. 15. xix. 17—
21.

11 ^a Vow, and pay unto the LORD
your God: ^a let all that be round about
him bring presents ^a unto him that
ought to be feared.

12 ^b He shall cut off the spirit of
princes: *he is* ^c terrible to the kings of
the earth.

PSALM LXXVII.

The Psalmist relates, what a sharp conflict against
despondency he had sustained, when under affliction,
1—9; and how he baffled the temptation, by medi-

tating on the wondrous works of God for Israel, 10
—20.

To the chief Musician, to ^a Jeduthun,
A Psalm ^a of Asaph.

^b I CRIED unto God with my voice,
even unto God with my voice; ^c and
he gave ear unto me.

2 ^d In the day of my trouble I sought
the Lord: ^e my ^f sore ran in the night,
and ceased not: ^f my soul refused to
be comforted.

Prov. xviii. 14. Jer. xxxi. 15. John xi. 31

a xxxix. lxxii. titles.
1 Chr. xvi. 41,
42. xxv. 3. 6.
• Or, for. 1. title.
b iii. 4. xxxiv. 6
iv. 16. 17. cxlii.
1—3.
c cxvi. 1, 2.
d xviii. 6. 1. 15.
lxxxviii. 1—3.
cii. 1, 2. cxxx.
1, 2. Gen. xxxii.
7—12. 28. 2 Kings
xix. 3, 4. 15—20.
Is. xxvi. 9, 16.
Jon. ii. 1, 2.
2 Cor. xii. 7, 8
Heb. v. 7.
e vi. 2, 3. xxxviii.
3—8. 2 Chr. vi.
28. Is. i. 5, 6.
Hos. v. 13. vi. 1.
f Heb. hand.
g Gen. xxxvii. 35.
Esth. iv. 1—4.

and sent “against a hypocritical nation,” was successful
in his undertakings, till he had fulfilled the part of the
divine counsel which had been allotted him; but when he
attempted to exceed his commission, he was suddenly and
effectually restrained from proceeding any further. And
this must be considered as a specimen of the divine con-
duct in all similar cases. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xlv. 5—11.
Gen. l. 20. *Dan.* xi. 2—4. *Acts* ii. 22—24. iv. 23—28.)

V. 11, 12. As the Lord had shewn himself terrible to
the kings of the earth, by intimidating the most courage-
ous, and crushing the most powerful and haughty; so he
ought to be worshipped with reverence and awe by all that
approached him: (*Notes*, xlvi. 4—7. lxxxix. 6—12. *Jer.*
v. 20—25. *Dan.* v. 5—9. *Heb.* xii. 26—29. *Rev.* vi. 12—
17 :) and his late interposition, in behalf of his people,
should excite them to pay the vows which they made in
the day of their distress, and to accompany their prayers
with vows on all similar occasions; being liberal as well
as fervent in expressing their gratitude to their gracious
Benefactor. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, lxvi. 13—15. cxvi. 13—
19. *Ec.* v. 4—7. *Nah.* i. 9—15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

God is more fully known, in the harmony of his attri-
butes, under the Christian dispensation, than he was in
Judah: and his glory is greater, as dwelling in human na-
ture, than it was formerly, when he had his tabernacle on
mount Zion, and was the Protector of Jerusalem. In vain
do Satan and his servants wage implacable war, with tre-
mendous preparations, against the church: the Lord has
often confounded their devices, marred their weapons of
war, and destroyed their armies. His peaceful, harmless,
and holy people have frequently been shewn to be more
formidable by their prayers, as well as more honourable
and excellent, than the most successful scourges of man-
kind: and happy is that nation, which is well fortified with
these bulwarks; for what is valour, strength, or numbers,
against the Almighty? At his rebuke they tremble, stum-
ble, and are not! He “alone is to be feared; for who
“may stand in his sight when once he is angry?” Yet
puny mortals dare madly, through their whole lives, to
defy the vengeance of that God, one of whose innumerable
company of angels in one night destroyed a hundred and
eighty-five thousand men! But if temporal judgments
excite such consternation, what will be the case when the
Lord shall arise to judgment at the last day! Happy they,
who are now meek and “poor in spirit;” who trust in his

mercy and submit to his will, who vow allegiance to him,
and dedicate their all to his service! Man may despise or
be enraged at them, and the powers of darkness may ex-
cite storms around them; but all shall turn to the glory of
God in their salvation: and when their enemies attempt
any thing, which would do them real harm, God will re-
strain this remainder of their wrath. (*Notes*, Rom. viii. 28
—39.) Let us then seek his favour as our portion; and
commit all our concerns to his wise, powerful, and gracious
care, who can dispirit or destroy the most courageous and
mighty, and is terrible to the ungodly kings of the earth.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXVII. *Title.* ‘A psalm composed by
‘Asaph, and sent by him to that Song-master, who was
‘over the children of Jeduthun.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—It is how-
ever uncertain, when the psalm was written, and whether
it refers to the personal trials of the Psalmist, or to pub-
lic calamities, or to both combined.—Some conjecture
that it was composed, as expressive of Hezekiah’s feelings,
during his sickness; and others that it was written during
the captivity: but, as no reference is made to any of God’s
dealings with Israel, subsequent to their deliverance out of
Egypt, it seems more likely that it was written as early as
the time of David, and by that Asaph who was his contem-
porary. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 1. The abruptness of the original is very expressive
of the agitation of mind, which the Psalmist had ex-
perienced. “My voice unto God, and I cried; my voice
“unto God, and he gave ear unto me.”—Till his prayer
received a gracious answer, this agitation of mind con-
tinued, and he proceeds to describe it, and to shew how
he struggled against impatience and unbelief. (*Notes*, xl.
1—5. cxvi. 1—4.)

V. 2. *My sore.*] According to this translation, the
Psalmist represents his affliction, whatever it was, as a
wound which bled or ran incessantly, wasting his strength
during the night, while others were recruiting their’s by
sleep. (*Notes*, 4. vi. 6, 7. xxxii. 3—5. xxxviii. 1—10. *Job*
vii. 1—6. 13, 14. *Is.* xxxviii. 9—13.) But the original
word is *my hand*; and it is probable the following is a just
paraphrase of the passage: “In the day of my trouble,”
‘I have restlessly implored help from the Lord. In the
‘night, when men are wont to bury their troubles in sleep,
‘I have with unwearied diligence spread out my hands
‘unto him; ... resolving to admit of no consolation, till I
‘obtained a gracious answer.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.*)

g Job vi. 4. xxiii.
15, 16. xxxi. 23.
Jer. xvii. 17.

h lxxxviii. 3, &c.
cii. 3, &c. Job
vii. 11. Lam. iii.
39.

i lv. 4, 5. lxi. 2.
cxlii. 2, 3. cxliii. 4.
k vi. 6. Esth. vi. 1.

l Job vii. 13—15.
Job ii. 13. vi. 3.
m lxxiv. 12—18.

cxlii. 5. Deut.
xxxii. 7. Is. li. 9.
lxxii. 9—15. Mic.
vii. 14. 15.

n xlii. 8. Job
xxxv. 10. Hab.
iii. 17, 18. Acts
xvi. 25.

o iv. 4. Ec. i. 16.
p cxxxix. 23, 24.
Job x. 2. Lam.
iii. 40. 1 Cor. xi.
28—32.

q xlii. 1, 2. xxxvii.
24. lxxiv. 1.
lxxxix. 38, 46.
Jer. xxxiii. 24—
26. Rom. xi. 1, 2.

r lxxix. 5. lxxxv. 1. 5.
s Is. xxvii. 11. Luke xvi. 25, 26.
t Num. xiv. 34.
xxiii. 19. Jer. xv. 18. Rom. ix. 6.

* Heb. to generation and generation.

3 ^g I remembered God, and was troubled: ^h I complained, and ⁱ my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah.

4 Thou ^k holdest mine eyes waking: ^l I am so troubled that I cannot speak.

5 ^m I have considered the days of old; the years of ancient times.

6 I call to remembrance ⁿ my song in the night: ^o I commune with mine own heart; ^p and my spirit made diligent search.

7 ^q Will the Lord cast off for ever? and ^r will he be favourable no more?

8 ^s Is his mercy clean gone for ever? ^t doth his promise fail ^u for evermore?

9 Hath ^v God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger ^w shut up his tender mercies? Selah.

10 And I said, ^x This is my infirmity: ^y but I will remember ^z the years of the right hand of the Most High.

11 I will ^a remember the works of the LORD; surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

12 I ^b will meditate also of all thy work, ^c and talk of thy doings.

13 ^d Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: ^e who is so great a God as our God?

14 Thou art ^f the God that doest

Is. xl. 27. xlix.
14, 15. lxxiii. 15.

x Luke xiii. 25—
28. Rom. xi. 32.
marg. 1 John
iii. 17.

xxxii. 22. lxxiii.
22. cxvi. 11.
Job xlii. 3. Lam.
iii. 18—23. Mark
ix. 24.

z 5. Ex. xv. 6.
Num. xxiii. 21,
22. Deut. iv. 34.
Hab. iii. 2—13.

a 10. xxxviii. 5.
lxxxviii. 11. 1 Chr.
xvi. 12. Is. v.
12.

b civ. 34. cxliii.
5.

c lxxi. 24. cv. 2.
cxlv. 4. 11.
Deut. vi. 7.

d xxvii. 4. lxxii. 2.
lxxxii. 17.

e lxxxix. 6—8.
Ex. xv. 11.
Deut. xxxii. 31.

f lxxii. 18. lxxxvi. 10. cv. 5. cxxxvi. 4. Ex. xv. 11. Rev.

V. 3. "I remembered God, and was greatly disturbed "in mind: I meditated, and my spirit was overwhelmed."—"He sheweth that we must patiently abide, although God 'deliver us not out of our troubles at the first cry.'—The Psalmist describes his inward perturbation, by a word expressive of the tumult of the waves in a storm, or that of an enraged, disorderly multitude. It is probable, that conscious guilt gave Satan the occasion of exciting in him dismay and distress, when he reflected on the divine perfections; and that impatience and despondency thus combined, in rendering his soul like the troubled sea: insomuch that the thoughts of the Lord's mercy and truth, his former kindnesses, and the comfort which he had experienced in religion on other occasions, instead of giving him encouragement, served to enhance his disquietude, now that God hid his face from him, and seemed to become his enemy. (Notes, Job vi. 1—4. xix. 5—22. xxiii. 13—17. Jer. xvii. 15—18. Matt. xxvi. 36—39.)

V. 4. Our Lord was kept watching during that dreadful night, in which, being "sore amazed and very heavy," he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death:" this was just before he stood *silent* in the presence of Caiaphas, Herod, and Pilate: and the language in this part of the psalm is so emphatical, that the attentive reader can hardly fail to recollect that of Christ during the depth of his humiliation.

V. 5—12. In these verses the Psalmist describes his inward struggle against unbelief and despair. In the depth of his distress, he applied his mind to meditate on ancient times, when God had wonderfully interposed in behalf of his people, and shewn himself most ready to pardon their sins, compassionate their sorrows, and to hear their prayers. He also determined to recollect his own experience of such mercies and deliverances, as had led him to spend a part of the night in singing praises to God: (Notes, xlii. 6—8. Acts xvi. 25—28. Jam. v. 13:) and likewise to call himself to strict account, and diligently to examine and enquire, 'both the causes, why he was chastened, and when his sorrows should have an end.' He was, however, strongly tempted to conclude, that God had cast him off for ever, and would shew him no more favour. 'But,' says he, 'Can this be? Can he who was known to delight in mercy cease to be merciful? Will he break his own pro-

mise? Is he so angry, as no more to pardon the penitent and pity the miserable? This cannot be. I will reject with abhorrence the dishonourable thought. It is the disease and weakness of my soul, that I ever harboured it. Whatever appearances may be, God continues merciful and faithful, ready to forgive, and plenteous in goodness and compassion. "The years of the right hand of the "Most High," the times when he lifted up his right hand to deliver his people, prove this; I will therefore fix my attention on those ancient works of JEHOVAH, and thus endeavour to encourage my desponding heart, and to calm my conflicting passions.' (Notes, xlii. 4, 5. lxxiii. 1. 15—22. 1 Sam. xxx. 6.)—Most expositors seem to think, that the Psalmist's alarm and distress were occasioned by public calamities, in great measure at least. But there is no intimation of this; and personal trials and temptations might be so great and complicated, as to excite the sharp conflict which he so affectingly describes: and indeed these are, in general, more apt to produce the state of mind and experience here described. (Marg. Ref.) 'This consideration makes the eucharistic psalms ever pleasing and ever comfortable to the mind: they are appeals to those attributes, which have been so often displayed, in the cause of the church; they are acts of faith, looking backward to the past, and forward to the future; they are praises, and they are prayers.' Bp. Horne.

V. 13. The Psalmist's faith and grace now obtained the ascendancy over his rebellious will, his unbelief, and his temptations; and he was satisfied, that the "way of God," (or the exercise of his sovereign authority, over the world, the church, and every individual,) is under the direction of infinite wisdom, and ordered in perfect justice, truth, and goodness. (Note, xxv. 10.) It is "*in holiness*," (שְׁפָאֵר;) and so consists with his testimonies, his promises, and his covenant. It is "in the sanctuary;" and being beyond the reach of man's wisdom cannot be understood, except by those who enter into the sanctuary, and weigh all things in the balances of the sanctuary. For his unrivalled, his infinite greatness, seems to cloud the glory of his justice and goodness, to the sinful children of Adam. (Notes, 19, 20. xxxvi. 5—9. xcii. 4—7. xcvi. 2. Rom. xi. 33—36.)

V. 14, 15. 'Thou art the mighty God, who canst do miracles, as easily as the most ordinary works: ... hav-

^g Ex. xiii. 14. xv. wonders : ⁵ thou hast declared thy strength among the people.

^h cxlvi. 11, 12. 15 Thou hast ^h with *thine* arm re- deemed thy people, ⁱ the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah.

^k cxiv. 3—6. Ex. 16 ^k The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee ; they were afraid : the depths also were troubled.

^l Heb. were poured forth with water. lxxviii. 8. 17 The clouds ^l poured out water : the skies sent out a sound : ^m thine arrows also went abroad.

18 ^m The voice of thy thunder *was* in the heaven : ⁿ the lightnings lightened the world : ^o the earth trembled and shook.

19 ^p Thy way *is* in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and ^q thy footsteps are not known.

20 ^r Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

11, 12. Hos. xii. 13. Acts vii. 35, 36.

ing delivered thy people descended from Jacob, and miraculously preserved by Joseph, from the Egyptian bondage, by a long series of stupendous judgments upon Pharaoh and his servants.' *Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.)*—The people. (14) ^o *Peoples*, plural; the surrounding nations.

V. 16—18. The waters, even to the bottom of the Red sea, are here most poetically described as affrighted, and as rendered sensible of the presence of God their Creator with Israel, and as obedient to his will; nay, all nature is represented, as put into consternation and violent commotion before him. (*Note*, cxiv. 3—8.) It is probable, that the destruction of the Egyptians was attended by most tremendous and destructive tempests, thunders, lightnings, and earthquakes. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, Ex. xiv. xv. 1—19.)

V. 19, 20. All the dispensations of God towards his people are in mercy; but, like Israel's passage through the Red sea, they are often attended with circumstances of dismay. His ways of dealing with them can no more be traced, than the path of Israel, when he led them, as a flock, through the Red sea; (*Notes*, Is. lxiii. 11—14;) and they are called to trust in him, while he conducts them by a way, with which they are wholly unacquainted, and which is displeasing and discouraging to the flesh. (*Marg. Ref.*)—By these meditations the Psalmist at length found his heart encouraged; and therefore he left them upon record for the benefit of posterity. (*Notes*, lxxiii. 18—28.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In this world our praises are often interrupted by complaints. Sin, temptation, affliction, the calamities of the church, and the miseries of the world, must cause us to "groan, being burdened." (*Note*, Rom. viii. 18—23.) When the heart is greatly pained, *nature* expresses that pain by the voice; but *grace* will teach us to send our cries to heaven with earnest importunity for relief. Yet sometimes even those, who are instant in prayer, may be tempted to despond, and to overlook the sources of comfort which are pointed out to them; and a deep sense of their own unworthiness may afford Satan an opportunity of suggesting such gloomy apprehensions, that even thoughts of God may increase their disquietude and horror. Thus the eyes may be holden from sleep, and the mouth may be closed, while sorrows too big for utterance distend and distract the heart. But this will not last very long with the upright believer: the troubled fountain will work itself clear again; and even the recollection of former times of more joyful experience, though it cause his

wounds to bleed afresh, will often suggest a hint, or inspire a hope, tending to his relief. It is, however, always good to "commune with our own hearts;" and to "make diligent search," concerning the cause, the intention, and the remedy of our distresses; especially, that we may ascertain, whether, notwithstanding our unworthiness, we be indeed truly humbled believers. And if the enemy would lead us to suspect, that the "Lord will cast off his people for ever," and be no more favourable to them, we should reject the injurious suggestion with horror and indignation. What! will God no more favour those who have walked with him, and are now mourning after him? Has his everlasting mercy come to an end? Is his faithful promise failed? Has God forgotten to be gracious, and in anger shut up his tender mercy? And will he dishonour himself, by leaving the humble, penitent, praying soul to perish? (*Note*, xiii. 5, 6.) It is our *infirmity*, for which we should rebuke ourselves, if we have for a moment entertained such thoughts: and we should without delay turn our minds to more encouraging meditation. The years of ancient times, and the Lord's wonders for his people of old, form proper subjects for our contemplation and discourse on such occasions; as they are illustrious evidences of his power, mercy, and love to his church. But the mysteries of redeeming love, and the great events which attended the Saviour's sufferings, and exaltation to his glorious throne, should be our favourite theme. There all the divine perfections are displayed: and the sinner, who understands and believes the sure testimony of Scripture on this subject, will be encouraged to expect every thing from the power, truth, and love of that God, who "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, that with him, he might freely give us all things." (*Notes*, Rom. viii. 28—34.) It is true, that the Lord's way is "in the sea," but it is also "in the sanctuary:" he leads his people through deep waters of affliction or temptation; but he goes with them, and brings them forth, when he has thus destroyed their enemies. We cannot trace his footsteps, nor understand the reasons of his dispensations: but we are called to believe that he will guide us by his counsel; and that those things, which we are tempted to ascribe to his having "forgotten to be gracious," are the result of his unsearchable wisdom choosing for us, in order to our good, what we should never have chosen for ourselves. If he see proper, he can soon raise up such instruments as Moses and Aaron, to lead his people, like a flock, through intervening seas and deserts, to their inheritance: and if the under shepherds neglect their charge, he will feed and guide them himself. "Happy then are

PSALM LXXVIII.

An exhortation to Israel to consider the works and word of God; that what they had learned from their fathers, they might teach their children, for the benefit of even their remote posterity, 1—8. An abstract of the history of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, passage through the wilderness, settlement in Canaan, and the subsequent events; in which the mercies of God to them are contrasted with an account of their unbelief, apostasies, and idolatries, 9—66. God at length chooses Judah, Zion, and David, 67—72.

* Maschil of Asaph.

* Or, A Psalm for Asaph, to give instruction.
lxxiv. title.
a xlix. 1—3. Judg. v. 3. Prov. viii. 4—6. Is. li. 4. lv. 3. Matt. xiii. 9.

GIVE ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

b xlix. 4. Matt. xiii. 34, 35.
c Prov. i. 6. Matt. xiii. 11—13. Mark iv. 34.

I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old;

d xlv. 1. xlviii. 8. Ex. xii. 26, 27. xiii. 5. 14, 15.

Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.

e cxlv. 4—6. Deut. iv. 9. vi. 7. Joel i. 3.

We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.

f lxxi. 18. Deut. xi. 19. Josh. iv. 6, 7. 21—24.
g ix. 14. cv. 1—5. cxlv. 5, 6. Is. lxiii. 7, &c.

For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:

That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to their children:

That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:

And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.

The children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle.

They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law;

And forgot his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them.

10. xxxi. 1. t Heb. throwing forth. t Judg. ix. 28. 38—40. Luke xxii. 33. 56—60. u Deut. xxxi. 16. 20. Judg. ii. 10—12. 2 Kings xvii. 14, 15. Neh. ix. 26—29. Jer. xxxi. 32. x 7. cvi. 13. 21, 22. Deut. xxxii. 18. Jer. ii. 32.

h lxxxi. 5. cxix. 152. cxlvii. 19. Deut. iv. 45. Is. viii. 20. Rom. iii. 2. 1 John v. 9—12.
i Ex. xxv. 16. 21. xl. 3. 20.
k 3, 4. Gen. xxviii. 19. Is. xxxviii. 19. Eph. vi. 4.
l xlviii. 13. lxxi. 18. cii. 18. cxlv. 4. Esth. ix. 28.
m xc. 16. Deut. iv. 10. Josh. xxii. 24, 25. Joel i. 3.
n xl. 4. lxii. 5. xci. 14. cxxx. 6. 7. cxlvi. 5. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. 1 Pet. i. 21.
o lxxvii. 10—12. ciii. 2. cv. 5. Ex. xii. 24—27. Deut. iv. 9. vi. 18, 19. viii. 2. 11. Esth. ix. 27. 28. 1 Cor. xi. 24.
p Deut. v. 29. John xiv. 21—24. 1 John iii. 22—24. v. 3. Rev. xiv. 12.
q cvi. 7. Ex. xxxii. 9. xxxiii. 5. xxxiv. 9. Deut. ix. 6. 13. xxxi. 27. 2 Kings xvii. 14. Ez. xx. 8. 18. Matt. xxiii. 31—33. Acts vii. 51.
r Heb. prepared not their heart. 37. 2 Chr. xii. 14. xix. 3. xx. 33. xxx. 19.
s 37. Deut. iv. 4. Josh. xiv. 8, 9. Acts xi. 23. Deut. i. 41—44. Josh. xvii. 16—18. 1 Sam. iv. 18. Luke xxii. 33. Neh. ix. 26—29.

“the people who are in such a case; yea, blessed are the people, who have the LORD for their God.”

NOTES.

PSALM LXXVIII. *Title.* It is probable that Asaph wrote this psalm some time after the death of David. As nothing is referred to, later than David's advancement to the throne, and his subsequent conduct, there is no ground for supposing that it was written at a much later period.

V. 1. The word rendered *law*, in this connexion, evidently means the *doctrine*, or *instruction*, which the Psalmist was divinely inspired to set before the people: to which, in the name of the Lord, he demanded their reverent attention. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xix. 7—11. cxix. 1.)

V. 2. The Evangelist says that this was fulfilled, when Christ spake to the people in parables. (*Notes*, Ps. xlix. 1—4. Matt. xiii. 34, 35.) Yet the psalm contains nothing but a plain narrative of facts, without any thing of parable or riddle in it; except as the history of Israel, like the parables of Christ, was a picture, or similitude, of heavenly things; and these records would remain, in this respect, dark sayings to those who understood not the typical meaning of them. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 1 Cor. x. 1—10.)

V. 3—8. The Israelites were frequently and earnestly instructed, to render their children, by every means, familiarly acquainted with the works and commandments of God: and as the Psalmist, and his contemporaries, had derived the benefit of this most useful information from their ancestors, he was determined, and aimed to induce

others also, to deliver down the same to the rising race, and through them to the next generation, and thus successively to the end of time. For this was the proper method of bringing them to trust in God and obey him; to imitate the faith and holiness of their pious ancestors; and to take warning not to copy the rebellion, unbelief, and ungodliness of such as had brought the judgments of God upon them by their sins. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, lxxi. 17, 18. cxlv. 4—7. Ex. xiii. 11—16, v. 14. Deut. vi. 6—9.) The word *testimony* is used for the ark, and for the law written on tables of stone put within the ark, and covered with the mercy-seat. This testified the Lord's gracious presence with his people, and seemed to point out to them both the way of access and acceptance, and the standard or rule of their duty. (*Note*, Ex. xxv. 10—21.)

V. 9—11. Nothing is recorded in the history of Israel, concerning the cowardice of the Ephraimites, as distinct from that of the other tribes: some therefore think, that “the children of Ephraim” is put by a figure of speech, for the nation in general. Others suppose, that this tribe greatly influenced their brethren, when they refused to go up and possess the land, at the express command of God, who promised to fight for them: and then, after the sentence of exclusion was irrevocably passed, they armed themselves, and presumptuously would go up, contrary to the warning of God by Moses; but when the Amorites came out against them, they fled, and were chased like bees to Hormah. (*Notes*, Num. xiv.) But the passage may relate to the defeat of Israel by the Philistines, when the ark of God was taken.—Shiloh was situated in the lot

12 ¶ ^y Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of ^z Zoan.

13 ^a He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and ^b he made the waters to stand as an heap.

14 ^c In the day-time also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.

15 He ^d clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave *them* drink as out of the great depths.

16 He ^e brought streams also out of the rock, and caused waters to run down like rivers.

17 ¶ And ^f they sinned yet more against him by provoking the most High in the wilderness.

18 And they tempted God in their heart, ^g by asking meat for their lust.

19 Yea, ^h they spake against God: they said, ⁱ Can God ^j furnish a table in the wilderness?

20 Behold, ^k he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; ^l can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people?

21 Therefore ^m the LORD heard *this*, and was wroth: so ⁿ a fire was kindled

against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel;

22 ^o Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation:

23 Though ^p he had commanded the clouds from above, and ^q opened the doors of heaven,

24 And ^r had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven.

25 ^t Man did eat angels' food: ^u he sent them meat to the full.

26 ^v He caused an east wind to blow in the heaven: and by his power he brought in the south wind.

27 ^w He rained flesh also upon them as dust, and ^x feathered fowls like as the sand of the sea.

28 And he let *it* fall in the midst of their camp, round about their habitations.

29 So they did eat, and were well filled: ^y for he gave them their own desire;

30 They were not estranged from their lust: ^z but while their meat *was* yet in their mouths,

31 The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and ^a smote down the ^b chosen *men* of Israel.

^c cvi. 24. ^d Is. vii. 9. ^e Heb. iii. 12. 18. 19. ^f xi. 6. 1 John v. 10. ^g xxxiii. 9. ^h Is. v. 6.

ⁱ Gen. vii. 11. ^j 2 Kings vii. 2. 19. ^k Mal. iii. 12.

^l lxviii. 9. ^m cv. 40. ⁿ Ex. xvi. 4. ^o Deut. viii. 3. ^p Neh. ix. 15. 20. ^q John vi. 31. &c. ^r 1 Cor. x. 3.

^s Or, Every one did eat the bread of the mighty. ^t ciii. 20.

^u Ex. xvi. 8. ^v Matt. xiv. 20. ^w xv. 37. ^x cxxxv. 7. ^y Num. xi. 31. ^z Heb. go.

^a Ex. xvi. 12, 13. ^b Num. xi. 18, 19. ^c 32. ^d Heb. fowl of wing.

^e cvi. 15. ^f Num. xi. 20.

^g Num. xi. 33, 34. ^h xxii. 20—22. ⁱ Prov. i. 32. ^j Luke xvi. 19—23.

^k Heb. made to bow. ^l Or, young men.

of Ephraim: and perhaps the men of that tribe led on the battle; but, giving way, their misconduct brought on a general defeat. (*Notes*, 1 Sam. iv.) In either case, the cowardice of the people was the effect of their unbelief and disobedience. They answered not the expectations formed of them; “they kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law; and forgot his works and his wonders that he shewed them.”—These verses however may be understood of Israel, who, in their general conduct, imitated that of Ephraim, in some notorious instances of cowardice and ill behaviour.

V. 12. The reader must once for all be referred to the notes upon the parts of the preceding history, pointed out in the margin, in which all the events here recapitulated have been fully considered. This poetical abstract would greatly assist the people, in becoming acquainted with their most instructive history, and preserving a ready remembrance of it. Zoan was a principal city of Egypt, in which perhaps Pharaoh kept his court. (*Marg. Ref.*—43—49.)

V. 13—16. These verses are read in some versions in the pluperfect tense: “He had divided, &c.” He had wrought these miracles for Israel, before those rebellions which the Psalmist was enumerating; and this rendered their unbelief and disobedience the more inexcusable.—Two rocks were smitten in the wilderness. (*Notes*, Ex. xvii. 1—7. Num. xx. 8—13.)—“Let us,” says Bishop Taylor, “by the aids of memory and fancy, con-

sider the children of Israel in the wilderness, “in a barren and dry land where no water was,” marching in dust and fire, not wet with the dew of heaven, but wholly without moisture, save only what dropt from their own brows: ... suppose, I say, these thirsty souls hearing Moses promise that he will smite the rock, and that a river should break forth from thence; observe how presently they run to the foot of the springing stone thrusting forth their heads and tongues to meet the water, impatient of delay, crying out that the water did not move, like light, all at once: and then suppose the pleasure of their drink, the insatiableness of their desire: ... they took in as much as they could, and they desired much more. This was their sacrament, and this was their manner of receiving it. And if that water was a type of our sacrament, or a sacrament of the same secret blessing, then is their thirst a signification of our duty.”

V. 17—31. Some time after the manna and the water from the rock had been vouchsafed, the people began again to murmur and rebel against God, and some of them were consumed by lightning; “and yet for all this his anger was not turned away,” because they murmured still more. The table, which they insolently required, was not the manna; for that had been sent with a multitude of quails also, before the water from the rock. (*Notes*, Ex. xvi.) But they loathed and despised manna as light bread; and wanted such provisions, as the inhabitants of cultivated countries live upon, which they thought God was

^z Num. xiv. xvi. ^{xxv} Ez. xx. 13. ^a 22 Luke xvi. 31. ^b John xii. 37. ^c Gen. iii. 16—19. ^d Job v. 6, 7. xiv. 1. Ec. i. 2, 13, 14. xii. 8, 13, 14. ^e 7, 11, 42. cvi. 13. 21. ^f Deut. xxxii. 4. 15, 30, 31. ^g Ex. vi. 6. xv. 13. Deut. vii. 8. xv. 15. Is. xli. 14. xlv. 6. xlviii. 17. lxiii. 8, 9. Tit. ii. 14. ^h cvi. 12, 13. Is. xxxix. 13. Ez. xxxiii. 31. Hos. xi. 12. ⁱ xviii. 44. *marg.* ^k cxix. 80. Hos. vii. 14. 16. x. 2. Acts viii. 21.

32 ¶ For all this ^a they sinned still, and ^a believed not for his wondrous works.

33 Therefore ^b their days did he consume in vanity, and ^c their years in trouble.

34 ^d When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and enquired early after God.

35 And ^e they remembered that God *was* their Rock, and the high God ^f their Redeemer.

36 Nevertheless ^h they did flatter him with their mouth, and ⁱ they lied unto him with their tongues.

37 For ^k their heart was not right

with him, neither were they ^l steadfast in his covenant.

38 But ^m he, *being* full of compassion, forgave *their* iniquity, and destroyed *them* not: yea, ⁿ many a time turned he his anger away, and did not stir up all his wrath.

39 For ^o he remembered that they *were but* flesh; ^p a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again.

40 ^q How oft did they ^r provoke him in the wilderness, and ^s grieve him in the desert!

41 Yea ^t they turned back and tempted God, and ^u limited the Holy One of Israel.

not able to provide in the desert. Perhaps they endeavoured to persuade themselves, that the manna, and the water from the rock, were supplied from natural resources; and only directed or regulated in a supernatural manner by JEHOVAH's power: but they supposed it to be impossible even for Omnipotence to furnish bread and flesh to so vast a multitude. This conclusion, after all the works of God which they had witnessed, and his special favours and express promises to them, was exceedingly provoking: he therefore determined to vindicate the honour of his own name, by shewing that he was able to *feed*, as well as feed them, in the wilderness: and then amidst their excessive indulgence, to punish their unbelief and rebellion, by cutting off the most powerful, healthy, and luxurious among them. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, Num. xi. 1—23. 31—34.)—Manna, descending from the clouds, is here called “the corn of heaven,” and “angels’ food,” or “the bread of the mighty;” perhaps, because it rendered the people healthy, and vigorous for their marches and wars. But it typified “that Bread which came down from heaven, and giveth life to the world;” by which man is brought to feed on angels’ food, and to participate their felicity. (*Notes*, John vi. 30—35. 41—58.) “The blessings chosen for us by God are blessings indeed, and, like the manna, bring no sorrow with them; but when we chuse for ourselves, and are so unhappy as to be gratified in that choice, our portion too often proves a curse; and while the much loved morsel is yet between our teeth, “the wrath of God comes upon us,” for making a wrong choice. This will always be the case, ... whenever earth is preferred to heaven, and sense to faith.” *Bp. Horne.*

V. 32, 33. Here, that instance of unbelief and rebellion, which provoked God to exclude the whole generation from the promised land, is peculiarly adverted to: for that sin, they were condemned to die in the wilderness, without ever enjoying or witnessing the comforts of a cultivated country, and a settled abode.—Their lives, even more than those of other men, were indeed spent in vanity; and as scarcely any of that vast multitude had arrived at the age of sixty, when their wanderings were ended, (“for the hand of the LORD was against them to consume them,”) it might well be said, “their years were

“consumed in trouble” or perturbation of mind. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes* and *P. O.* Num. xiv.)—“Though they travelled up and down, very much and long, yet it was to no purpose; for they were never the nearer to their journey’s end; nor were ever free from one plague or other, till they” (that generation) “were utterly destroyed.” *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 34. “Who, that hath been conversant in the house of mourning, and about the bed of sickness, but must have seen frequent instances of a temporary and deceitful repentance?” *Bp. Horne.* (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, Jer. xxii. 20—23. Hos. v. 15. Luke xvii. 11—19.)

V. 35. *Redeemer.*] That is, from Egyptian bondage; for the bulk of the people did not understand the spiritual redemption, which was typified by that transaction. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 36, 37. “Such was their hypocrisy, that they sought unto God for fear of punishment, though in their heart they loved him not.”—“Whatsoever cometh not from the pure fountain of the heart, is hypocrisy.” (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Right.* (37) נָבִיז, *constant.* (*Note*, li. 10.)

V. 38. “Had God stirred up all his wrath, the Israelites must have been exterminated in the wilderness. But then the promises made to Abraham and to all mankind had failed.—Therefore they were forgiven and not destroyed; judgment was executed from time to time upon ... offenders; but the nation subsisted, until the Seed came, to whom the promise was made. Nay, ... the race is yet marvellously preserved, and, we trust, preserved for mercy, to be shewn them in the last days.” *Bp. Horne.* (*Notes*, Num. xiv. 13—19. 27—30.)

V. 39. (*Marg. Ref.*) The frailty of man, as incapable of enduring the wrath of God, is here emphatically described; as well as the divine compassion for such feeble worms: but it is not to be supposed, nor can the language be fairly interpreted to mean, that God considers man’s sinful nature as a palliation of his actual rebellions; yet the passage is sometimes thus explained. (*Notes*, Gen. vi. 3. Matt. xxvi. 40, 41.)

V. 41. *Limited.*] The Israelites did not believe, that God could and would destroy the Anakims before them, and give them the land of Canaan: but in this and many

u 11.21,22.cxxxvi.
10—15. Ex. xiii.
9. Is. xi. 11. Jer.
xxxii. 21
x cvi. 7—10. Ex.
xiv. 12. 30, 31.
* Or, affliction.
y cv. 27—38.
cxxxv. 9. Ex.
iii. 19, 20. Deut.
iv. 34. vi. 22.
Neh. ix. 10.
† Heb. set.
z 12.
a cv. 29. Ex. vii.
17—21. Rev. xvi.
3—6.

42 They ^uremembered not his hand,
^{nor} ^xthe day when he delivered them
from ^{*}the enemy.

43 How ^yhe had [†]wrought his signs
in Egypt, and his ^zwonders in the field
of Zoan;

44 And had ^aturned their rivers
into blood; and their floods, that they
could not drink.

45 He ^bsent divers sorts of flies
among them, which devoured them;
and ^cfrogs, which destroyed them.

46 He ^dgave also their increase
unto the caterpillar, and their labour
unto the locust.

47 He ^edestroyed their vines ^ewith
hail, and their sycamore-trees with
frost.

48 He ^fgave up their cattle also to
the hail, and their flocks to ^{*}hot thun-
derbolts.

49 He ^gcast upon them the fierce-
ness of his anger, wrath, and indigna-
tion, and trouble, ^hby sending evil
angels *among them*.

50 He ⁱmade a way to his anger;
^hhe spared not their soul from death,
but gave their ⁱlife over to the pes-
tilence;

51 And ⁱsmote all the first-born in

Egypt; ^kthe chief of *their* strength in
^lthe tabernacles of Ham:

52 But ^mmade his own people to go
forth like sheep, and guided them in
the wilderness ⁿlike a flock.

53 And he led them on safely, ^oso
that they feared not: ^pbut the sea
^qoverwhelmed their enemies.

54 ^rAnd he brought them to the
border of his sanctuary, *even to this*
mountain, *which* ^shis right hand had
purchased.

55 He ^tcast out the heathen also be-
fore them, and ^udivided them an inhe-
ritance by line, ^vand made the tribes
of Israel to dwell in their tents.

56 ^xYet they tempted and provoked
the most high God, and kept not his
testimonies;

57 But ^yturned back, and dealt un-
faithfully like their fathers: ^zthey were
turned aside like a deceitful bow.

58 For they provoked him to anger
with ^atheir high places, and ^bmoved
him to jealousy ^cwith their graven
images.

59 When ^dGod heard *this*, he was
wroth, ^eand greatly abhorred Israel:

60 ^fSo that he forsook the taber-

Gen. xviii. 20, 21. e cvi. 40. Lev. xx. 23. xxvi. 44. Lam. ii. 7. Zech. xi. 8.
f Josh. xviii. 1. 1 Sam. i. 3. iv. 4—11. Jer. vii. 12—14. xxvi. 6—9.

k Gen. xlix. 3.
l cv. 23. cvi. 22.
Gen. ix. 22—25.
x. 6
m lxxvii. 20. cv.
37. Neh. ix. 12.
Is. lxiii. 11—14.
n xcv. 7. c. 3. Is.
xl. 11. Jer. xxiii.
2—4. Ez. xxxiv.
11, &c. Luke xv.
4—6. John x. 11,
&c.
o Ex. xiv. 19, 20.
Heb. xi. 29.
p cxxxvi. 15. Ex.
xiv. 27. xv. 10.
q Heb. covered.
r Ex. xv. 13, 17.
Dan. ix. 16—20.
xi. 45.
s xlv. 3. Eph. i.
14.
t xlv. 2. cv. 44,
45. cxxxv. 10—
12. cxxxvi. 18—
22. Josh. vi—xxi.
Neh. ix. 22—25.
u Num. xxxiii. 54.
Josh. xiii. 7. xix.
51.
v Deut. vi. 10—
12.
x 40, 41. Deut.
xxxi. 16—20.
xxxii. 15—21.
Judg. ii. 11, 12.
2 Kings xvii. 7,
&c. Neh. ix. 25,
26. Ez. xvi. 15—
26.
y 41. Judg. iii. 5—
7. 12.
z 8—10. 37. Hos.
vii. 16.
a Lev. xxvii. 30.
Num. xxxiii. 52.
Ez. xx. 28, 29.
b lxxix. 5. Ex.
xxxiv. 14. Deut.
xxxii. 16, 17, 21.
Ez. viii. 3—5.
1 Cor. x. 22.
c xcvi. 7. Ex. xx.
4, 5. Deut. iv.
16—25. xxvii. 15.
Judg. ii. 11. 17.
x. 6. 1 Kings xi.
10. Jer. viii. 19.
Hos. xiii. 2.
d xi. 4. xiv. 2—5.

other instances they set bounds to his power, as if some things were beyond it. (Notes, 17—31. John xi. 20—32.)

V. 42—45. Notes, Ex. vii—ix.—Devoured. (45) This word shews, that, besides the loathsomeness of flies, and their maggots; a variety of venomous insects, reptiles, or animals, were sent among the Egyptians, to bite, and sting, and harass them; and that in many instances their bite or sting was mortal. Indeed the word rendered “divers sorts of flies,” is so general, that even devouring wild beasts may be meant by it, as well as insects and reptiles. (Note, Ex. viii. 21.)

V. 46—49. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. ix, x.) Perhaps evil angels terrified the Egyptians, during the plague of darkness: they were, however, permitted to deceive and harden them to their destruction. They were ‘horribly astonished, and troubled with strange apparitions. For neither might the corner that held them keep them from fear: but noises as of waters falling down sounded about them; and sad visions appeared unto them with heavy countenances. No power of the fire might give them light; neither could the bright flames of the stars endure to enlighten that horrible night. ... Though no terrible thing did fear them; yet being scared with beasts that passed by, and hissing of serpents, they died for fear.’ Wisdom of Solomon, xvii. 3—5. 9, 10. Such were the traditions of the Jews on this subject, when this apocryphal book was written.

V. 50, 51. The preceding miracles and judgments, during which the long suffering of God had given the Egyptians space for repentance, had only proved an occasion to them of filling up the measure of their sins; and this made a way (or, weighed a path, marg.) for the execution of his righteous vengeance in a still more awful manner, by the sudden destruction of all the first-born in the land, as by a pestilence. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xii. 29, 30. 2 Sam. xxiv. 15, 16.)

V. 52—55. Notes, lxxvii. 19, 20. lxxx. 1. Gen. ix. 24, 25. Ex. xiv. 21—31. Heb. xi. 29.—Purchased. (54) Or, claimed, and taken possession of, for the inheritance of his chosen people. The whole land of Canaan seems to have been intended.—Notwithstanding Israel’s multiplied rebellions, and the terrible judgments inflicted on them, mercy at last prevailed, and the nation enjoyed the promised inheritance. (Marg. Ref.—Note, Ex. xv. 13.)

V. 56—60. The history of Israel, from the death of Moses to that of Eli, as contained in the books of Joshua and Judges, and the first four chapters of the first of Samuel, forms the best comment on these verses. (Notes, cvi. 7—46. 2 Kings xvii. 7—23. Neh. ix. 7—35. Jer. vii. 12—15. xxvi. 3—9. Ez. xvi. xx. 10—38. xxiii.) ‘We can hardly read two chapters in the book of Judges, but we meet with the words, “And the children of Israel did “evil in the sight of the Lord.”’ Bp. Horne. These continually repeated apostasies of the Israelites to idolatry

nacle of Shiloh, the tent *which* he placed among men:

g cxxxii. 8. 1 Sam. v. 1, 2. 2 Chr. vi. 41. h xxiv. 7. Ex. xl. 34. 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22. i 1 Sam. iv. 2. 10

61 And delivered ^s his strength into captivity, ^h and his glory into the enemy's hand.

k lxxxix. 38. Is. lxiv. 9.

62 He ¹ gave his people over also unto the sword, and was ^k wroth with his inheritance.

l 21. Deut. xxix. 20. xxxii. 22. m Is. iv. 1. Jer. vii. 34. xvi. 9. xxv. 10. * Heb. praised.

63 ¹ The fire consumed their young men; and ^m their maidens were not given to marriage.

n 1 Sam. ii. 33, 34. iv. 11. 17. xxii. 18, 19. o 1 Sam. iv. 19, 20. Job xxvii. 15. Ez. xxiv. 23.

64 ^a Their priests fell by the sword; ^o and their widows made no lamentation.

p vii. 6. xlv. 23. Is. li. 9. q Is. xlii. 13, 14.

65 Then ^p the Lord awaked as one out of sleep, ^a and like a mighty man that shouteth by reason of wine.

r 1 Sam. v. 6—12. vi. 4. Job xl. 12. s Jer. xxiii. 40.

66 And ^r he smote his enemies in the hinder part: ^s he put them to a perpetual reproach.

t 1 Sam. vi. 21. vii. 1, 2. 2 Sam. vi. 17. u Gen. xlix. 8—10. Ruth iv. 17—22. 1 Sam. xvi. 1. 2 Chr. vi. 6. x lxxxvii. 2. cxxxii. 12—14. y 1 Kings vi. 2. ix. 8. 2 Chr. iii. 4. z 1 Chr. xxix. 1. 19. 2 Chr. ii. 9. a cii. 25. civ. 5. cxix. 90, 91. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Job xxvi. 7. Is. xlviii. 13. li. 6. Col. i. 16, 17. Rev. xx. 11. † Heb. founded.

67 Moreover ^t he refused the tabernacle of Joseph, and chose not the tribe of Ephraim:

b lxxxix. 19, 20. 1 Sam. xvi. 12. 2 Sam. iii. 18. vi. 21. Acts xiii. 22. c Ex. iii. 1. 10. 1 Sam. xvii. 15. &c. 2 Sam. vii. 8. 1 Kings xix. 19, 20. Am. vii. 14, 15. Matt. iv. 18—22. ‡ Heb. From after.

68 But ^u chose the tribe of Judah, ^x the mount Zion, which he loved.

d Gen. xxxiii. 13. Is. xl. 11. e lxxxv. 6, 7. cxiii. 7, 8. 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. Jer. xxvii. 4. f 2 Sam. v. 2. 1 Chr. xi. 2. Ez. xxxiv. 23, 24. Mic. v. 2—4. Zech. xi. 4. &c. Matt. ii. 6. marg. John xxi. 15—17. 1 Pet. v. 2. g lxxxv. 2. ci. 1—8. 2 Sam. viii. 15. 1 Kings ix. 4. xv. 5. Is. xi. 2—4. Acts xiii. 22. 36. h 1 Kings iii. 6—9. 28. Zech. xi. 15—17. 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. 2 Tim. ii. 15. Jam. i. 5.

69 And ^y he built his sanctuary like ^z high palaces, like ^a the earth which he hath [†] established for ever.

70 He ^b chose David also his servant, ^c and took him from the sheepfolds:

71 [†] From following ^d the ewes great with young, ^e he brought him to ^f feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.

72 So he fed them ^g according to the integrity of his heart: and ^h guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.

5, 6. f 2 Sam. v. 2. 1 Chr. xi. 2. Ez. xxxiv. 23, 24. Mic. v. 2—4. Zech. xi. 4. &c. Matt. ii. 6. marg. John xxi. 15—17. 1 Pet. v. 2. g lxxxv. 2. ci. 1—8. 2 Sam. viii. 15. 1 Kings ix. 4. xv. 5. Is. xi. 2—4. Acts xiii. 22. 36. h 1 Kings iii. 6—9. 28. Zech. xi. 15—17. 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6. 2 Tim. ii. 15. Jam. i. 5.

rendered them like a deceitful bow, that never sends the arrow to the mark, but always disappoints the archer's expectations. (Notes, 9—11. 36, 37.)

V. 61. *His strength.*] That is, The ark, the symbol of JEHOVAH's protecting presence with his people, and which, as typifying the harmonious display of his perfections in the salvation of Christ, is also called "his glory," or his *beauty*. (Notes, Ex. xxv. 10—21. 2 Chr. vi. 41, 42.)

V. 63. The wrath of God gave up the army of Israel into the hands of the Philistines, to be consumed as by fire. Thus their young men perished, their enemies triumphed, and their virgins were not *praised*, (*marg.*) according to the custom of commending them in songs, when they were married. Either they remained single; or in a time of public calamity, amidst the insulting oppressions of their enemies, all the customary tokens of joy were omitted. (Notes, 1 Sam. iv.)

V. 64. The wife of Phinehas, hearing of his death, soon expired, and so did not survive to lament her loss: others, perhaps, had been previously taken off; or they were made captives, and dared not lament, lest they should enrage their conquerors. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 65, 66. While the Philistines were inflicting deserved punishment on the Israelites, the Lord seemed like one asleep, and as not regarding either his people, or even "the Ark of his strength." But when their resentment or their ambition had accomplished his purposes, he suddenly and effectually interposed to rebuke the impious triumphs of the idolaters, and to put them and their idol to a perpetual shame: (Note, lxxvi. 10 :) even as a mighty man of valour would rest, or refresh himself, notwithstanding the advance of the enemy, till the moment arrived for executing his own plan; and then he would burst forth on them with unexpected and irresistible fury. (Notes, Is. xlii. 13—17. li. 9—11.) By the emerods, the Lord *disgraced* as well as discomfited the Philistines, and constrained them to send back the ark: and by the golden images of the emerods and of the mice that marred

the land, they were led to publish and perpetuate their own disgrace. (Notes, 1 Sam. v. vi. 1—18.)

V. 67—69. (*Marg. Ref.*—Notes, cxxxii. 6—17. Gen. xlix. 8—10. John iv. 19—24.) These verses shew that the Psalm was written after the building of the temple, and consequently not sooner than eleven or twelve years after the death of David. For the language cannot suit the tabernacle which he placed on mount Zion; as that was soon to be superseded by a magnificent temple, which was at length erected so strong, that it appeared likely to stand as long as the earth endured. It was, however, destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar: and though Zion continued the centre of JEHOVAH's worship, till the coming of Christ; yet it has now been trodden under foot of the Gentiles for above seventeen hundred years. (Note, Luke xxi. 20—24.)

V. 70—72. (Notes, lxxxix. 19—37. 1 Sam. xv. 26—28. xvi. 1—13. xvii. 2 Sam. v. 1, 2. vii. 8—11. Is. xl. 9—11. Ez. xxxiv. 23—31.) What an emphatical attestation to the excellence of David's general conduct, as king of Israel, does this passage contain! (Notes, 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4. 1 Chr. xxix. 10—19. 26—28. 2 Chr. xxxi. 20, 21.) In this especially he was a type of our Saviour, and a pattern both to rulers, and to Christian ministers. 'The qualifications, requisite for the due discharge of high offices, are best learned, at first, in an inferior station; especially if it be one that will inure them to labour and vigilance.' *Bp. Horne.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

The instructions of the sacred word are dark sayings to the inattentive and self-confident: and yet they are very plain to the humble, diligent, and obedient enquirer, who earnestly prays for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and reduces to practice, and realizes in his experience, what he learns from thence. (Notes, Prov. i. 1—6. ii. 1—6. xiv. 6.) The truths, precepts, and works of God, which have been recorded and transmitted to us by our progenitors, form a sacred deposit, which we must hand down to pos-

PSALM LXXIX.

The Psalmist complains to God of the desolations

of Jerusalem, and the cruel insults of the heathen,
1—5. He prays for deliverance and forgiveness; and
that the Lord would glorify himself, by avenging his
people on their oppressors, 6—13.

terity: "shewing to the generation to come the praises of
"the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works
"that he hath done; that they...should arise, and declare
"them to their children; that they might set their hope
"in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his
"commandments." (*Note, Rom. iii. 1, 2.*) To perform
this important duty to good purpose, we must enforce our
instructions by a consistent example: and it is awful to
think how many parents, by their negligence and wicked-
ness, become the murderers of the souls of their children.
But should any young persons read these observations,
who cannot but know that their parents are stubborn and
rebellious: let them remember, that, though they must
not expose their faults, or neglect to submit to them in
all things lawful; yet they must neither obey their sinful
orders, nor copy their examples. On the contrary, they
are bound to requite their kindness in things temporal, by
earnestly praying for their conversion: and by recommend-
ing the profession of the gospel to them, with the most
respectful, obliging, and affectionate behaviour; and by
such modest hints, as may consist with the honour due to
that superior relation.—The lax principles, the disobe-
dience, and the apostasy of many professed Christians shew,
that they never set their hearts aright, and that their spirit
was never stedfast with God: they were never duly hum-
bled and set against sin; they never were weaned from
the world, or prepared for the cross and the conflict; they
never cordially received the Lord for their Portion and Sal-
vation, counting all but loss in comparison of him. In
time of temptation, therefore, like the cowardly Ephraim-
ites, though armed as soldiers, they basely turn their backs
on the enemy; "they renounce the covenant of God, and
"refuse to walk in his law."

V. 12—54.

We cannot avoid repeating, that in Israel's history we
have a picture of our own hearts and lives, and a compen-
dium of the history of the world, and of the church. (*P. O.*
Neh. ix.) The common benefits afforded by the Creator
to the whole human race, when viewed in connexion with
our conduct towards him, evidently leave us without ex-
cuse. His sun rises to give us light, his rain descends to
make the earth fruitful, and the seasons in succession pour
forth an exuberance for our use and indulgence: yet these
blessings are generally received with unthankfulness, and
abused in intemperance; few are content with meat for
their use, but almost all crave provision for their lusts, and
are unwilling to trust the power and goodness of God for
the future. Insensible of the protecting hand of him, "in
"whom they live, and move, and are," most men spend
their lives in rebellion: and when he is provoked to bring
them into troubles and dangers, there are but few who
seem to return to him and enquire after him; and the
event proves, that most of these few only "flatter him
"with their mouth, and lie unto him with their tongues."
So that the patience of God, and the warnings and mercies
which he sends, "to lead men to repentance," embolden

them to harden their hearts, and treasure up wrath, until
the measure of their iniquities is full; and then he casts
upon them the fierceness of his wrath, and gives them up
to be hardened and destroyed.

The history of nations is in many respects the same.
God has not indeed dealt with any nation, in every respect,
as he did with Israel: but increasing affluence and prospe-
rity have almost uniformly produced proportionable pride,
luxury, licentiousness, and impiety: and judgments and
mercies have generally been neglected, or very superfi-
cially attended to, until the measure of national guilt was
filled; and then some other people were employed to exe-
cute the vengeance of God upon them. This has appeared
with peculiar evidence, in nations favoured with the word
of God and professing his truth. The outward means of
grace have been to them, like the pillar of cloud and fire,
and the Bread and Water of life; and manifold providen-
tial favours have been vouchsafed. But where is that
nation professing Christianity, which has not copied Israel's
example? Certainly Britain is no exception to this rule.
On us the manna has been rained all around our habita-
tions; and wells of salvation have been opened, and the
waters of life have flowed, in almost every corner of our
land. We have been equally favoured by an indulgent
Providence, and have experienced many former and later
extraordinary deliverances: but neither judgments nor
mercies have prevented the rapid increase of infidelity,
profligacy, impiety, and oppression. And if, under any
pressing calamities, we have seemed sensible of our obli-
gations and dependence; and have returned, and enquired
after God "our Rock and our Redeemer;" the event has
detected our base hypocrisy. Hitherto, the Lord, being
full of compassion, has spared us: but if we still forget his
mercies, and neglect and abuse his gospel, what can we
expect, but that he will cast us off, and number us with
the hardened Egyptians; that he will make a way for his
anger, and glorify himself by inflicting judgments on us,
as singular as our mercies have been?

Even in those collective bodies, which have made a
stricter profession of his truth, the case has been similar.
Distinguished advantages have not prevented churches,
one after another, from degenerating into formality or
heresy, from forsaking the covenant of God, and casting
off his commandments. The profession and knowledge
of the truth have in many instances only increased pride
and presumption; men have administered the sacred ordi-
nances as mere external forms; and they have rested upon
the baptism of water, and the sacramental bread and wine,
without the inward and spiritual grace signified by them.
(*Notes, 1 Cor. x. 1—12.*) Many religious societies have
split into parties, and turned aside unto vain jangling;
many have evidently returned back into the world; and
others have declined to superstition and will-worship, and
provoked God to jealousy with their high places and graven
images: and neither warnings, mercies, nor judgments
have stopped their course, till their candlesticks have been
removed, and their privileges given to others. Nor has

* Or, *Job*. lxxiv.
title. *Marg.*
a lxxiv 3, 4. lxxx.
12, 13. 2 Kings
xxi. 12—16. xxv.
4—10. 2 Chr.
xxxvi. 3, 4, 6, 7, 17.

A Psalm * of Asaph.

O God, ^athe heathen are come ^binto

xxxvi. 3, 4, 6, 7, 17. Luke xxi. 24. Rev. xi. 2. b lxxiv. 2. lxxviii. 71. Is. xlvii. 6.

any collective body yet been found, which has been durably preserved from such declensions. Let those “who think they stand, take heed lest they fall.”

Even true believers are not unconcerned. Many of them can recollect, that for years they perverted the kindness of Providence into an occasion of sin. The Lord's patience emboldened them in their evil courses; his bounty increased their self-indulgence; and even the warnings of his word, and their convictions of conscience, served only to discover their obstinacy in rebellion. Perhaps a near prospect of death sometimes frightened them to their devotions, but upon recovery they relapsed into ungodliness. They must therefore now admire the Lord's compassion and forbearance, in that he did not stir up all his wrath against them and destroy them. At length he came with an outstretched arm for their deliverance: and he found them slaves of Satan and in love with their bondage, nor could they be persuaded to accede to his invitations; nay, they hated and resisted his truths and convictions, until his new-creating grace had powerfully made them willing. Then he broke off their chains, and rescued them from their oppressor; he forgave their sins, and supplied their wants, and opened their way to liberty: and their salvation in its full latitude, far exceeded in love and power, that which Israel experienced when brought up out of Egypt. Since that time of mercy, he has guided and guarded them: they have fed upon the Bread of heaven, and drunk water from the wells of salvation. But though many of them have been mercifully preserved from scandalous offences; yet how often have they grieved his Holy Spirit, and provoked his chastening rod! Frequently they have been discontented with their temporal provision, and “craved meat for their lusts:” they have secretly murmured at his appointments, and distrusted his power and love; they have limited him to their methods, and doubted whether he could otherwise provide or deliver! Alas! we have all provoked him by our unbelief, forgetfulness, and ingratitude; and have often been chastened, by having our inordinate desires granted in anger. Severe afflictions have been necessary to recover us from our backslidings; and though we were not mere hypocrites in returning to the Lord, yet we have soon forgotten the salutary lesson: if our hearts have perhaps been *sincere*, yet they have not been *stedfast* with him. So that “it is of the Lord's mercies, that we are not consumed” with our fellow-sinners; and we have cause to review, with shame and gratitude, every stage of our journey through the wilderness. And when we shall come to our inheritance, how shall we admire the Lord's patience and mercy, who led us forth like a flock, safely, and without cause of fear; who destroyed our enemies, and brought us, through every intervening difficulty, to the “purchased possession” of his heavenly kingdom! Then indeed we shall no more distrust or dishonour our God; we shall no more rebel or be ungrateful. In the mean time we should walk humbly and watchfully; trusting only in his mercy, and cheerfully submitting to the discipline and chastisement, which our remaining perverseness renders necessary; and praying daily and fer-

thine inheritance; ^cthy holy temple have they defiled; ^dthey have laid Jerusalem on heaps.

c lxxiv. 7, 8. 2 Kings xxiv. 13. Lam. i. 10. Ez. vii. 20, 21. ix. 7. d 2 Kings xxv. 9, 10. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 19. Jer. xxvi. 18. xxxix. 8. lli. 13. Mic. iii. 12.

vently that we may profit by all our trials, our miscarriages, and our mercies.

V. 55—72.

The power and mercy of God have been as conspicuous, in preserving the church at large from being ruined by intestine corruptions, as in protecting her against external violence. Her history, from the first promise to fallen Adam, to the coming of the Redeemer, has appeared to be a constant succession of gracious interpositions of God in her behalf, requited with continual rebellions and apostasies. Often did the Lord pour contempt upon the externals, in which his professing people confided; and even delivered “the ark of his glory and strength” into captivity, and suffered their priests to be massacred by the heathen: yet in due time he arose again for their help, and put their enemies to shame, or cast them down into destruction. This appears very remarkably in the history of Israel till the days of David, whom he took from the sheepfolds to rule and feed his people, and to promote their prosperity and religious advantage. And their subsequent history, until the coming of the Son of David, is of the same kind. Then Christianity succeeded to the Mosaic dispensation; and Jerusalem being desolated, the Jews as a nation were deprived of all their distinguished privileges. Under the rule and guidance of the good Shepherd, who feeds his flock with most perfect integrity and skilfulness, one would have expected a better state of affairs: yet the history of the Christian church hitherto has been of the same cast; and nothing but the patience of God could have borne with the abominations, which have prevailed among men who are called by the name of Christ! Nor are matters yet much mended: and the result of all the methods, by which God has made trial of human nature, under every dispensation, confirms his testimony, “that the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked:” and that nothing but a new creation by the power of the Holy Spirit, can cure any of the human race, of their propensity to ungodliness and iniquity. May the Lord then arise as one awaked out of sleep, and put his enemies to a perpetual reproach! may he purify and unite his church; and raise up kings and pastors like David, and like Christ, under whom his work may prosper, and true religion spread throughout the earth! And let us not limit our God: he can do all things, and can easily form proper instruments and make them successful, and render true piety as universal as iniquity has hitherto been.—But let every reader fear the doom of his enemies, and read with reverent attention, in the history of the Egyptians, and of those Israelites whose “days were consumed in vanity and their years in trouble,” the power of the wrath of God against the workers of iniquity. Let us all diligently seek the privileges of his true people, whom he spares and “pities, as a father doth his children;” “for he remembereth, that they are but flesh; a wind that passeth away and cometh not again:” (*Notes*, ciii. 11—18 :) but let us be careful not to grieve our kind Friend, by distrust and ingratitude, and forgetfulness of his mercies, which will tend to our own loss. And if we would

e Jer. vii. 33. xv.
3. xvi. 4. xxxiv.
20.
f 10. Matt. xxiii.
35. Rom. viii.
36. Rev. xvi. 6.
xvii. 6. xviii. 24.
g cxli. 7. Jer. viii.
1, 2. xiv. 16. xv.
8. xxv. 33. Rev.
xi. 9.

h xlii. 13, 14.
lxxx. 6. lxxxix.
41. Jer. xxiv. 9.
xxv. 18. xlii. 18.
Lam. ii. 15, 16.
v. 1. Ez. xxxv.
12. xxxvi. 3. 15.
i 1 Kings ix. 7.
Neh. ii. 19. iv.
1—4.

k xlii. 1, 2. lxxxiv.
10. lxxx. 4.
lxxxix. 46. Rev.
i. 10.
l lxxxv. 5. ciii. 9.
s. lxix. 9. Mic.
vii. 18.

m Deut. xxix. 20.
xxxii. 16. 22.
Ez. xxxvi. 5.
Zeph. i. 13. iii.
8.
n lxix. 24. Is. xlii.
25. Rev. xvi. 1.
&c.

o Is. xlii. xxi.
xxiii. Jer. x. 25.
xxv. 29. xli. —
li.
p ix. 16, 17. Is.
xlv. 4, 5. John
xvii. 3. xvii. 25.
Acts xvii. 23.
Rom. i. 23. 2 Thes. i. 8.

r lxxx. 13. Is. ix. 12. Jer. i. 7. li. 34, 35. Zech. i. 15.
Is. xxiv. 1—12. lxiv. 10, 11. t xxv. 7. Ex. xxxii. 34. 1 Kings xvii. 18. Is. lxiv.
9. Hos. viii. 13. ix. 9. Rev. xviii. 5. * Or, the iniquities of them that were before
us. Gen. xv. 16. Ez. ii. 3. Dan. ix. 16. Matt. xxiii. 32—36. u xxi. 3. lxix. 16, 17.

q xiv. 4. cxlv. 18. Rom. x. 12—14. 1 Cor. i. 2.
s 2 Chr. xxxvi. 21.

2 * The dead bodies of thy servants
have they given *to be* meat unto the
fowls of the heaven, the flesh of thy
saints unto the beasts of the earth.

3 ^f Their blood have they shed like
water round about Jerusalem; ^g and
there was none to bury them.

4 We are ^h become a reproach to
our neighbours, ⁱ a scorn and derision
to them that are round about us.

5 ^k How long, LORD? ^l wilt thou be
angry for ever? shall ^m thy jealousy
burn like fire?

6 ⁿ Pour out thy wrath ^o upon the
heathen that ^p have not known thee,
and upon the kingdoms ^q that have not
called upon thy name.

7 For ^r they have devoured Jacob,
and ^s laid waste his dwelling-place.

8 ^t O remember not against us ^u for-
mer iniquities: ^v let thy tender mer-

cies speedily prevent us; for ^x we are
brought very low.

9 Help us, O God of our salvation,
^y for the glory of thy name; and deli-
ver us, ^z and purge away our sins, ^a for
thy name's sake.

10 ^b Wherefore should the heathen
say, Where *is* their God? ^c let him be
known among the heathen in our sight,
^d by the ^e revenging of the blood of thy
servants *which is* shed.

11 Let ^f the sighing of the prisoner
come before thee: ^g according to the
greatness of ^h thy power ⁱ preserve thou
those that are appointed to die;

12 And ^j render unto our neighbours
sevenfold into their bosom, their re-
proach, ^k wherewith they have re-
proached thee, O Lord.

13 So we ^l thy people and sheep of
thy pasture will give thee thanks for
ever: ^m we will shew forth thy praise
to ⁿ all generations.

x cvi. 43. cxvi. 6.
cxlii. 6. Deut.
xxviii. 43.
y cxv. 1. 2 Chr.
xiv. 11. Mal. ii.
2. Eph. i. 6.
z xxv. 11. lxx. 3.
Dan. ix. 9. 19.
a Josh. vii. 9. Is.
xliii. 25. xlviii.
9. Jer. xiv. 7.
Ez. xx. 9. 14.
b xlii. 3. 10. cxv.
2. Joel ii. 17.
Mic. vii. 10.
c ix. 16. lviii. 11.
lxxxiii. 17, 18.
Ex. vi. 7. vii. 5.
Ez. xxxvi. 23.
xxxix. 21, 22.
d Jer. li. 35. Rev.
xviii. 20.
† Heb. vengeance.
Rom. xii. 19.
e xii. 5. lxix. 33.
cii. 30. Ex. ii. 23,
24. Is. xlii. 7.
f cxvi. 6, 7. Num.
xiv. 17—19.
Matt. vi. 13.
Eph. iii. 20.
† Heb. thine arm.
Is. xxxiii. 2.
§ Heb. reserve the
children of death.
cii. 20. marg.
g Gen. iv. 15. Lev.
xxvi. 21. 28. Is.
lxv. 6, 7. Jer.
xxxii. 18. Luke
vi. 38.
h See on xlii. 16.
lxxxiv. 18. 22.
i lxxxiv. 1. xcv. 7.
c. 3.
k xlv. 17. cxlv. 4.
Is. xliii. 21.
† Heb. generation
and generation.

be useful and honourable in our generation, we must learn to stoop, to labour, to deny ourselves, and to be faithful and diligent in lower situations. For persons of this character have often been advanced to more eminent stations: and if as magistrates or ministers they feed the Lord's flock with integrity and skill, by the allowance of candid and liberal men; it will prove no real objection or reproach to them, in the judgment of the wise and holy, though they have been formerly employed with Moses, with Amos, and with David, in tending sheep, with Elisha in following the plow, or with the apostles in the fisherman's boat, or even at the receipt of custom. (*Notes, Ex. ii. 16—21. 1 Kings xix. 19—21. Am. vii. 14—17. Matt. iv. 18—22. ix. 9.*)

NOTES.

PSALM LXXIX. V. 1—5. This psalm unavoidably leads our thoughts to the Babylonish captivity: yet some think that it was written long before; the Holy Spirit directing the Psalmist thus to furnish the church with proper meditations, in all such seasons of public calamity. (*Notes, xlv. lxxiv. Deut. xxxi. 14—23. xxxii.*)—When Judah was desolated by hostile armies, the heathen possessed the inheritance which God had given his people. When Jerusalem was taken, the temple was profaned and destroyed; part of the inhabitants were buried in the ruins of the city; and others of them, whose blood was shed abundantly on every side, were left to be devoured by birds and beasts of prey: thus the people of JEHOVAH were exposed to reproach and contempt, because they had provoked him to jealousy by their idolatries: and the pious remnant was led earnestly to enquire, “how long” these calamities, and this triumph of their blaspheming oppressors would continue; and was ready to fear, that the anger

and jealousy of the Lord would burn like fire for ever. The case has often been similar, when persecutors and corrupters of the faith have profaned the church, and murdered the saints of God. (*Notes, lxxx. 8—13. Jer. viii. 1—3. xxvi. 16—19. Lam. ii. 11, 12. iv. 1—6. Ez. ix. 5—7. Mic. iii. 8—12. Rom. viii. 35—39. Rev. xi. 1—12.*)—‘To behold, or even to imagine, heaps of slaughtered bodies, lying unburied and exposed to birds and beasts of prey, is inexpressibly shocking to humanity. But with what unconcern are we accustomed to view, on all sides of us, multitudes “dead in trespasses and sins,” torn in pieces and devoured by wild passions, filthy lusts, and infernal spirits, those dogs and vultures of the moral world! Yet, to a discerning eye and a thinking mind, the latter is by far the more melancholy sight of the two.’ *Bp. Horne. (Marg. Ref.)*

V. 6, 7. The Jews deserved their sufferings from God; but their ravagers were extremely unjust, cruel, and impious.—As the church cannot be delivered without the confusion and destruction of implacable persecutors; so we cannot pray for the one, without at least implying the other. (*Notes, lxix. 22—28. Is. lxiii. 17—19.*) Jeremiah has the same prayer with little variation; but it is not agreed whether he took it from this psalm, or the Psalmist from him; though the latter is most probable. (*Note, Jer. x. 23—25.*)—The Chaldeans, whose destruction God had foretold, were especially meant: and, so far from worshipping JEHOVAH, they blasphemed him, and cruelly oppressed his worshippers. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Lam. iii. 52—57.*)

V. 8—13. The Psalmist does not plead, as in some other places, that his people, though oppressed and persecuted, were free from the guilt of idolatry and other atrocious crimes: (*Note, xlv. 9—22:*) but, allowing that they

PSALM LXXX.

The Psalmist prays for the tokens of God's special presence with his people, and deprecates his displeasure, 1—7. The former and present state of Israel is represented by a vine, planted, and flourishing here-

tofore, but now wasted and trodden down, 8—13. A prayer that the Lord would cause this vine again to prosper, 14—19.

To the chief Musician upon *Shoshan-^{a xlv. lx. titles.}
nim-eduth, a Psalm *of Asaph. ^{• Or, for Asaph.}

and their fathers had been so criminal as to deserve extirpation, (to which they seemed fast approaching,) he draws all his pleas from the compassion and tender mercies of God; from his *regard*, or rather *zeal*, for the honour of his name, which the idolaters would insolently blaspheme, if Israel should be destroyed; from the abject condition to which they were reduced, in which, unless prevented by speedy help, they must perish; from the greatness of JEHOVAH's power; and from the importance of his still having a people to praise his name, to the end of time.—The word rendered “purge away our sins,” means *cover them with an atonement*.—No sacrifices were offered during the captivity; but this was a prayer for the restoration of the temple and those expiatory oblations, as typifying the great atonement of Christ, which purges away the guilt of all believers, to the praise of the glory of God.—Some expressions towards the close, are like those used by the martyrs and saints in St. John's prophetic vision, or revelation; and it seems obvious to conclude, that the captivity of the church, under the New-Testament Babylon, was specially intended by the Holy Spirit. (*Notes, Rev. xviii. 4—8. 11—20. xix. 1—6.*)—The plea, taken from the greatness of JEHOVAH's power, exactly resembles that doxology which concludes the Lord's prayer:—“For thine “is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever “and ever. Amen.” (*Notes, xxi. 13. Matt. vi. 13.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought to be very thankful, that we are not called to “resist unto blood,” and that the murderous rage of persecution is suspended for a season. Yet it is grievous to consider, how many, who are *heathens* in their tempers and conduct, and in their principles or instructions, occupy most important stations in the visible church, by which “the holy temple is defiled,” and Christianity is exposed to the reproach and scorn of infidels. It is also lamentable, that the horrors and carnage of war are so much known among nations, professing themselves the disciples of “the Prince of peace;” and that ambition and avarice shed the blood of Christians like water on every side, and render Jerusalem, as it were, “a heap of ruins.” (*Note, Lam. iv. 1, 2.*)—The believer has also continual cause to lament, that in-dwelling sin, and the incursions of temptation, often pollute his body and soul, which are “the “temple of God.”—But every trouble, personal or publick, springs from the anger of God, whom we often provoke to jealousy by our idolatrous attachments to earthly objects. We should therefore first deprecate his wrath, and seek forgiveness of our iniquities; and beseech “the God “of our salvation” to cleanse away the pollution and the guilt of our sin: and then he will prevent us with his tender mercies, and deliver us, however low we may be brought. When our calamities, or those of the church, give occasion to infidels and blasphemers to reproach the gospel, or to enquire, “Where is their God?” we have got a prevailing plea in prayer; for wherefore should per-

sons of this character have cause given them to triumph over the Lord's servants? (*Notes, xlii. 1—3. 9, 10. cxv. 1, 2.*) But we have no cause to be uneasy on our own account, if we are reproached for our piety or our sufferings: we should chiefly fear being reproached for acting inconsistently with our profession. We ought, however, to pray for the deliverance of the church from the contempt, as well as oppressions, of her enemies; and in so doing, should our desires for *their* conversion not be granted, our prayers for the church will eventually be answered, in the ruin of all such as “devour Jacob, and lay waste his “dwelling-place.”—The blood of JEHOVAH's servants will at length be avenged seven-fold upon those who shed it, and do not repent; and his wrath will be poured out upon all kingdoms, families, and persons, who have not known or called upon his name. But by the greatness of his power, and for the glory of his name, he will rescue his oppressed people: their sighing in captivity and in imprisonment comes before him; and he will either preserve the lives of those whom persecutors appoint to die, or he will receive them to glory. So that the harmless “sheep “of his pasture will give him thanks for ever,” according to the desire of their hearts; a succession of believers shall praise him to all generations; and the cause of God, however now run down, will finally triumph upon earth, as well as eternally in heaven.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXX. *Title.* (*Marg. Ref.*) Many are of opinion, that this psalm was written, at the time when Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar: but some think, that it relates to the desolations made by Sennacherib. The reasons for the latter opinion are, that after the destruction of the city and temple by Nebuchadnezzar, God no longer “dwelt between the cherubim,” above the mercy-seat (1); for the ark and the mercy-seat, and the cherubim of gold, were destroyed, and never replaced: nor is the Lord, ever after that event, thus spoken of in Scripture; but Hezekiah, praying against Sennacherib, addressed God by this very title. (*Is. xxxvii. 16, 17.*)—The Septuagint also expressly call this, “A psalm concerning the Assyrian.” Again, Ephraim and Manasseh (2), seem to have had but little concern in the affairs of Judah, at the time of the Babylonish captivity: but during the reign of Hezekiah, many of these, and the other tribes constituting the kingdom of Israel, accepted of his invitation, joined the Jews in keeping the passover, and afterwards assisted in breaking down the idolatrous high places and altars, not only in Judah, and in Benjamin as connected with Judah; but likewise in Ephraim and Manasseh. (*Notes, 2 Chr. xxx. xxxi. 1.*)—Yet soon after, Sennacherib invaded the land, reduced the remnant of the ten tribes to abject slavery, invaded Judah, and threatened to destroy Jerusalem and the temple. It was therefore natural, at this crisis, to implore, that God would stir up his strength, and come to save Judah; and thus shew his glory,

^b **GIVE** ear, ° O Shepherd of Israel, thou that ^d leadest Joseph like a flock: thou that ° dwellest *between* the cherubims, ^f shine forth.

2 ^g Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, ^h stir up thy strength, and * come *and* save us.

3 ⁱ Turn us again, O God, and ^k cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

4 O LORD God of hosts, ^l how long wilt thou ^m be angry against the prayer of thy people?

5 Thou ⁿ feedest them with the bread of tears; and givest them tears to drink in great measure.

6 ^o Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours: and ° our enemies laugh among themselves.

^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d ^e ^f ^g ^h ⁱ ^j ^k ^l ^m ⁿ ^o ^p ^q ^r ^s ^t ^u ^v ^w ^x ^y ^z ^a ^b ^c ^d

^b vii. 7. xc. 13. Is. lxiii. 17. Joel ii. 14. Mal. iii. 7. Acts xv. 16. ^c xxxiii. 13. Is. lxiii. 15. Lam. iii. 50. Dan. ix. 16—19. ^d 8. Is. v. 1, 2. Jer. ii. 21. Mark xii. 1. John xv. 1. ^e lxxxix. 21. Is. xi. 1. xlix. 5. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Ez. xvii. 22—24. Zech. vi. 12. ^f lxxxix. 5. Is. xxvii. 11. Ez. xx. 47, 48. John xv. 6. ^g xxxix. 11. lxxvi. 6, 7. xc. 7. 2 Thes. i. 9.

14 ^b Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: ^c look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;

15 And ^d the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and ^e the Branch *that* thou madest strong for thyself.

16 *It* ^f is burned with fire, *it* is cut down: ^g they perish at the rebuke of thy countenance.

17 Let thy hand be upon ^h the Man of thy right hand, upon the Son of man *whom* thou madest strong for thyself.

18 ⁱ So will not we go back from thee: ^k quicken us, and we will call upon thy name.

19 ^l Turn us again, O LORD God of hosts, ^m cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved.

It produces a large quantity of luxuriant branches, which not only yield no grapes, but must be pruned away, or they will hinder those upon the fruitful branches from ripening. Thus mere professors of Christianity are branches of the true Vine, which must be taken away and cast into the fire, in order that true believers may become more abundantly fruitful. (*Notes, John xv. 1—8.*)—*Goodly cedars.* (10) “Cedars of God.” *Marg.* (*Note, civ. 16.*)

V. 14, 15. (*Marg. Ref.*) The family of David, (which God had advanced and prospered for the good of Israel, and for his own glory,) as typical of Christ, was perhaps meant by this Branch. Yet Christ himself, even the promised Messiah, seems to have been principally intended. The Septuagint translate it, ‘The Son of man’ (17).—The clause may be literally rendered, “The son, *whom* thou hast made strong for thyself.” (*Note, lxxxix. 19—37.*) ‘The Chaldee Paraphrast expounds the Branch of ‘Messiah himself, ... ‘On King Messiah, whom thou hast ‘established, &c.’ So do the Rabbies, Aben Ezra, and ‘Obadiah, cited by Dr. Hammond. ... To the advent of ‘this Son of man, Israel was ever accustomed to look forward in time of affliction; on his second and glorious ‘advent the Christian church must fix her eye, in the day ‘of her calamities.’ *Bp. Horne.*

V. 16. The vine, above described, (or the nation which God had brought out of Egypt, and planted in Canaan,) was in great measure cut down and burned with fire, by the dispersion of the ten tribes, and the success of the Assyrians in Judah: and though a remnant still remained, and a strong branch of David’s race; yet if the anger of God were not turned away from them, they likewise must soon perish. (*Notes, 2 Kings xix. 4. 30, 31.*)

V. 17, 18. This may imply a request that God would uphold, strengthen, and defend his king, of David’s race, on the throne of Judah, for the protection of his people and the maintenance of true religion. (*Note, 2 Kings xix. 14—19.*) But “the Man of God’s right hand,” and “the Son of man,” point out the promised Messiah very clearly, and may be considered as a prayer of the church for his coming, as “the power of God,” for the conversion of sinners, and the salvation of his people. (*Note, 14, 15.*) Those who refer the Psalm to the Babylonish captivity, interpret the preceding verse of the subversion of the kingdom, in the family of David after the death of Josiah; and these verses as a prayer for another king of the same race to be advanced to the throne, in order that the people might be induced and encouraged to adhere to the worship of God, and to call on him in every time of

trouble.—*Quicken us.* (18) *Make us to live, or to be lively.* (*Notes, xxii. 29. cxix. 25. Eph. ii. 4—10.*)

V. 19. An increase of earnestness in prayer seems discernible, in comparing the three repetitions of this important request. (3. 7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

He, who dwells on the mercy-seat, is the good Shepherd of his people, and leads them as a valued flock with all attention and tenderness. In all troubles and dangers let us beseech him to “shine upon our souls,” and upon our path, that we may be cheered and directed by his presence and favour: and let us intreat him continually to “stir up his strength, and come” and save us. But we can neither expect the comforts of his love, nor the protection of his powerful arm, except we are partakers of his converting grace. When we discover our need of this invaluable blessing, we ought to pray earnestly for it: the same must be our conduct, when we have lost our comfort, and are exposed to rebukes by having relapsed into sin, and are become sensible of the necessity of returning to the Lord our Rest: (*Notes, li. 10. 12, 13. cxvi. 7.*) and in all public calamities, whether of churches or nations, we must observe the same order, and pray that they may be prepared by conversion, for returning comfort and prosperity.—The Lord is *really angry* at the prayers of the hypocrite, who employs them as a cloke for his iniquity: but not with those of any sinner, however vile, who sincerely seeks his mercy and grace. (*Note, Prov. xv. 8, 9.*) Yet, while he proves our sincerity, and increases our humility and fervency, by delays; we often think that he is *angry* against our prayers, and will not accept them: but we shall certainly find the contrary, if we persevere in asking and seeking.—The church of God in times of grievous oppressions, and the believer in times of darkness and distress, (especially when occasioned by sin,) may for a while be sunk in sorrows, and exposed to contempt and reproach: but when this leads to repentance, having sown in tears they will reap in more abundant joy. (*Notes, cxxvi. 5, 6. Matt. v. 4. 2 Cor. vii. 8—11.*)—When we, in this favoured land, consider our manifold advantages, and our very disproportionate improvement of them, we shall perceive great cause for humiliation. We are planted, as in a well cultivated enclosure, with every means of being fruitful in the works of righteousness: but alas! the useless leaves of profession, and the empty boughs of notions and forms, abound far more, than substantial piety and charity. The Christian religion also, as planted by the apostles and primitive evangelists, took deep root, and

PSALM LXXXI.

An exhortation to praise God with psalms and musical instruments, especially on the solemn feasts, 1—3. God ordained this, when he delivered Israel from the Egyptians, 4—7. He commands the people to renounce idolatry, and trust in him alone; and complains of their disobedience, which had turned to their own loss, 8—16.

To the chief Musician upon ^aGittith, *A Psalm* ^{*}of Asaph.

^bSING aloud unto God ^cour Strength: ^dmake a joyful noise unto ^ethe God of Jacob.

2 Take ^fa psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.

3 ^gBlow up the trumpet ^hin the new moon, in the time appointed, on ⁱour solemn feast-day.

4 For this *was* a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob.

5 This he ordained ^kin Joseph ^lfor ⁱa testimony, when he went out [†]through the land of Egypt; ^mwhere I heard a language *that* I understood not.

6 ⁿI removed his shoulder from the burden: his hands [‡]were delivered [§]from the [¶]pots.

7 ^pThou calledst in trouble, and I delivered thee; I answered thee in ^qthe secret place of thunder: ^rI

^g xcviii. 6. Num. x. 1—9. 1 Chr. xv. 24. xvi. 6. 42. 2 Chr. v. 12. xiii. 12. 14. ^h Lev. xxiii. 24. Num. x. 10. xxviii. 11. 2 Kings iv. 23. Col. ii. 16. ⁱ Num. xv. 3. Deut. xvi. 15. 2 Chr. ii. 4. viii. 13. Lam. ii. 6. Nah. i. 15. ^k lxxvii. 15. lxxx. 1. 2. Am. vi. 6. ^l lxxviii. 6. Ex. xiii. 8. 9. 14—16. Deut. iv. 45. Ez. xx. 20. [†] Or, against. Ex. xii. 12. 27. 29. ^m cxiv. 1. Deut. xxviii. 49. Is. xxviii. 11. Jer. v. 15. 1 Cor. xiv. 21. 22. ⁿ Ex. i. 14. vi. 6. Is. ix. 4. x. 27. Matt. xi. 29. [‡] Heb. passed away. [§] Or, baskets. [¶] Ex. ii. 23. xiv. 10. 30. 31. xvii. 6. 7. Num. xx. 13. 24. Deut. xxxiii. 8. ^p l. 15. xci. ^r Ex.

^a viii. title. ^{*} Or, for Asaph. ^b lxxvii. 4. Jer. xxxi. 7. ^c xcviii. 1. 2. xxviii. 7. lli. 7. Phil. iv. 13. ^d xxxiii. 1—3. xlvii. 1—7. lxxvi. 1. c. 1. 2. ^e xlvii. 11. Gen. i. 17. Matt. xxii. 32. ^f xcii. 3. xcv. 1. 2. cxlix. 1—3. Mark xiv. 26. Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16. Jam. v. 13.

spread very wide, so that it has filled many nations; but it has too generally proved an empty vine. The Lord's zeal for the honour of his own truth, precepts, and ordinances, may be pleaded with him as a reason, why he should not break down the hedges, and permit infidels, and hereticks, and persecutors, to root up the vineyard; and may suggest an enquiry why he permits them so long to practise and prosper. But when we consider the state of the purest parts of the visible church, we cannot wonder that we are visited with sharp corrections. He, however, who is not only the strongest Branch, but the Root and Stem of the vine; who is "the Man of God's right hand," "the Son of man whom" the Father "hath made so strong for himself;" has been carried through his work for his church, and is possessed of all power in heaven and earth for her benefit. The vine cannot therefore be ruined, nor can any fruitful branch perish: but the unfruitful will be cut off and cast into the fire. Let us then come to him and abide in him, "without whom we can do nothing;" let us beg of him to uphold and strengthen us, that we may not go back from him; and let us still call upon his name, in behalf of ourselves and of the whole church: "Turn us again, O LORD God of Hosts; cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved."

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXI. V. 1—5. It is probable, that this psalm was composed in the time of David, when the ark had been removed to mount Zion; and that it was especially intended for the new moons, and that in particular which began the seventh month, called the feast of trumpets, or the new year according to the old computation. (Notes, Ex. xii. 2. Lev. xxiii. 24, 25. Num. x. 2—10. xxix. 1—6.) Some think, that on this day Moses came down from the mount the second time, with the tables of the law, and full orders to erect a tabernacle, in the most sacred place of which these tables might be placed, in the ark of the covenant, and covered with the mercy-seat, over which the glory of God, as dwelling among his people was displayed; and that this day was observed as a memorial of that event, and a testimony of the relation which subsisted between God and Israel.—The word ren-

dered "Psalm (2)," may signify the instruments of psalmody, some of which are afterwards enumerated.—'Joseph's family was counted the chief before that Judah was preferred.' No doubt the descendants of Joseph were counted the chief, during most of the time, that the Israelites continued in Egypt; as Joseph had there been the protector of the whole family.—God went through the land of Egypt destroying all the first born; or against the land (marg.) in all the plagues which he inflicted: (Notes, Ex. xi. 4, 5. xii. 11—14. 29, 30:) yet the feast of trumpets did not take place till almost seven months after Israel left Egypt; for their deliverance was in some sense incomplete, till Moses descended the second time from the mount, with the tokens of God's reconciliation to his offending people.—In the last clause, the Psalmist evidently speaks in the name of the nation, or the church of God, as a corporate body from age to age. It seems that the Israelites did not understand the language of their haughty oppressors, which must have tended to render their bondage more distressing. (Notes, cxiv. 1, 2. Gen. xlii. 23.)

V. 6. It is evident that the Lord himself speaks, through the remainder of the psalm, though the change of person is not noticed. Some suppose, that the voice of God, with which Israel in Egypt was unacquainted, was meant by "the language which he understood not (5);" and then this and the following verses may be considered as a recapitulation of the messages of God to the nation, by Moses, during the events attending its deliverance.—God then said concerning Israel, "I remove his shoulder, &c."—It is not certain what is meant by the word (רִי) translated "the pots:" whether any earthen vessels which the Israelites were employed to make; or the kilns in which the bricks were burnt, or baskets used in their work; (marg.) or the pots, in which the food for this immense number of slaves was prepared, the flesh pots which they afterwards regretted. (Note, Ex. xvi. 1—3.)

V. 7. (Marg. Ref.) The secret place, &c.] Some think that this refers to the cloudy pillar, from the hidden recess of which JEHOVAH spake in mercy to his people, and in thunder to his enemies. (Notes, xcix. 6, 7.) But perhaps mount Sinai is meant, from whose inaccessible summit, out of the midst of the thunder and lightning

* Or, *strife*. proved thee at the waters of * Meribah. Selah.

8 ^a Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, 'if thou wilt hearken unto me;

9 ^u There shall no ^{*} strange god be in thee; neither shalt thou worship any strange god.

10 ^y I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.

11 But ^a my people would not hearken to my voice; and Israel ^b would none of me.

12 So ^c I gave them up unto [†] their own hearts' lust: and ^d they walked in their own counsels.

own hearts' lust: and ^d they walked in their own counsels.

13 ^e Oh, that my people had hearkened unto me, and Israel had walked in my ways!

14 ^f I should soon have subdued their enemies, and ^g turned my hand against their adversaries.

15 ^h The haters of the LORD should have [†] submitted themselves unto him: but ⁱ their time should have endured for ever.

16 He should have ^k fed them also with the ^l finest of the wheat: and with ^l honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee.

the Lord spake the ten commandments, the first of which is afterwards referred to. (10. *Notes*, Ex. xix. xx.)—*I proved thee*, &c.] *Notes*, Ex. xvii. 1—7. Num. xx. 2—13.

V. 8—10. The old translation of these verses seems as literal as the present version, and more expressive.—“Hear, “O my people, and I will protest unto thee: O Israel, if “thou wilt hearken unto me, and wilt have no strange god “in thee, neither worship any strange god; (For I am the “LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of “Egypt;) open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.” “If thou adherest to the worship of JEHOVAH alone, according to the terms of the national covenant; I will grant the largest desires of thy heart, and requests of thy lips.”—According to the present translation of the ninth verse, the future is evidently put for the imperative, as is the case with several of the ten commandments; and it means “Let no strange God, &c.” “There will be no need; I will abundantly supply all thy wants.” The larger their desires and expectations were, and the more copious and comprehensive their prayers, the more abundantly would they receive from the all-sufficiency of God.—It is almost impossible not to think in this place of our Lord's address to the Jews, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me “and drink.” (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, John vii. 37—39.)—The former part of the tenth verse may perhaps be rendered; “I, JEHOVAH, who brought thee out of the land “of Egypt, am thy God.” “With such an omnipotent and all-sufficient Protector and Friend, thou canst not want any other god.” (*Notes*, Ex. xx. 7—9. 17—22.)

V. 11, 12. Israel, as a nation, were the people of God, by profession, covenant, and the strongest obligations; but they were not so by their own choice of him. They would not have him for their *Portion*, and their Lord; but expected more advantages from their dumb idols than from him: and therefore they were left to be judicially deceived, hardened, and ruined, as the just punishment of their sins.—Thus wisdom (that is, Christ) complains, “They would “none of my counsel, they despised all my reproof;” and this was the cause of their destruction. (*Notes*, Prov. i. 20—33. Acts vii. 37—43. Rom. i. 24—27. 2 Thes. ii. 8—12.)

V. 13. (*Notes*, Deut. v. 28, 29. xxxii. 29.) Such expressions denote the Lord's willingness to receive returning

sinner, and the delight which he takes in shewing mercy and doing good, and in the faith and obedience of his people: and they prove, that the ruin of sinners is altogether the effect of their own pride and obstinacy. But it would be absurd to draw inferences from them, which cannot consist with other parts of Scripture. (*Notes*, Is. xlviii. 17—19, Ez. xviii. 23. xxxiii. 11. 1 Tim. ii. 3, 4.)—“One “cannot help observing the similitude between the complaint here uttered, and one which hath been since “breathed forth over the same people; “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem... how often would I have gathered thy children “together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under “her wings, and ye would not!”’ *Bp. Horne*. (*Note*, Matt. xxiii. 37—39.)

V. 14, 15. ‘I should in a short time have quelled all ‘their enemies; and by one victory after another have quite ‘destroyed their adversaries. ... All that maligned their ‘prosperity, and set themselves against the design of the ‘LORD to make them victorious over their enemies, should ‘have been so daunted, that they should have dissembled ‘their inward hatred, and been forced, at least, to a counterfeit submission: but his people should have seen ‘blessed days, and enjoyed a substantial and durable happiness, without any interruption.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—The nation of Israel, if they had been obedient, would have possessed their privileges to the coming of Christ, and have been then incorporated into his church, which shall continue on earth to the end of time, and in heaven to all eternity.—*Submitted*. (15) “Lied.” *Marg.* (*Note*, lvi. 1—3.)

V. 16. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, Deut. xxxii. 13, 14.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is our duty and privilege to attend on the ordinances of God, and to abound in praise and thanksgiving: and we should excite one another to these pleasant services, embracing every opportunity for them, and improving all our ability in them. For the Lord is the Strength of his people; and all the worship, which we can render, is far beneath his glorious excellences, and our immense obligations to him, especially in our redemption from wrath and sin. When therefore he commands this reasonable service, and intimates his acceptance of it, he testifies his

PSALM LXXXII.

The Psalmist reminds magistrates of God's authority over them, reproves their injustice, and urges them to do their duty, 1—4. He exposes their ignorance and wickedness, and warns them of their approaching doom, 5—7. He prays for the establishment of God's kingdom, 8.

A Psalm * of Asaph.

GOD standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among ^b the gods.

2 ^c How long will ye ^d judge unjustly, and ^e accept the persons of the wicked? Selah.

3 [†] Defend the poor and fatherless: ^f do justice to the afflicted and needy.

4 ^g Deliver the poor and needy: ^h rid *them* out of the hand of the wicked.

5 They ⁱ know not, neither will they understand; ^k they walk on in darkness: ^l all the foundations of the earth are [†] out of course.

6 ^m I have said, Ye *are* gods; and all of you *are* children of the most High.

7 But ⁿ ye shall die like men, and fall ^o like one of the princes.

† Heb. *Judge*. x. 18. Deut. x. 18. Is. i. 17. 23. f Jer. v. 28. xxii. 3. 16 Jam. i. 27.

g lxxii. 12—14. Job xxix. 12. 16. 17. Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.

h cxi. 12. Neh. v. 1—13. Job v. 15, 16.

i liii. 4. Prov. i. 29. Mic. iii. 1. Rom. i. 28.

k Prov. ii. 13. iv. 19. Ec. ii. 14. John iii. 19. xii. 35. 1 John ii. 11.

l xi. 3. lxxv. 3. Ec. iii. 16. Is. v. 7.

† Heb. *moved*. m 1. Ex. xxii. 28. John x. 34—36.

n xlix. 12. Job xxi. 32. Ez. xxxi. 14. o lxxxiii. 11.

* Gr. for *Asaph*.
a Ex. xviii. 21.
2 Chr. xix. 6, 7.
Ec. v. 8.
b 6, 7. cxxxviii.
1. Ex. xxii. 28.
John x. 35.
c lxxii. 3. Ex. x. 3.
1 Kings xviii. 21.
Matt. xvii. 17.
d lviii. 1, 2. Ex. xxiii. 6, 7. Lev. xix. 15. Mic. iii. 1—3. 9—12.
e Job xxxiv. 19. Prov. xviii. 5. Gal. ii. 6.

mercy and condescending love to us. For we ought never to forget the base and ruinous drudgery to which Satan had reduced us; or our rebellions against God, for which we deserved to be left the bond-slaves of this cruel tyrant, and to have our final portion with him. But when in distress of conscience we are led to cry for deliverance, the Lord answers our prayers, and sets us at liberty.—As the giving of the law from mount Sinai, and the trials of Israel in the wilderness, were proofs of the Lord's peculiar regard to that people; so humiliating convictions of sin, and sharp afflictions, are generally, and the law written in our heart is always, evidential of the love of God to our souls.—But he speaks to multitudes, both by the awful requirements and sanctions of his law, and by the invitations and promises of his gospel, and even to many who profess themselves his people, who yet will not hearken to his voice, or have him for their Portion; for they foolishly expect more satisfaction from their sins, than from the all-sufficient God. Thus they provoke him to give them up to their own heart's lust, and to leave them to their perverse choice: and then, whilst they prosper in wickedness, and are envied by their fellow sinners, they ripen apace for eternal ruin. But the Lord delights in the conversion of sinners, and in the faith and obedience of his people. They may desire and ask as much as they will; and he will answer and exceed their expectations: their enemies shall be subdued; and their souls satisfied with those unspeakable blessings, which flow from "the Rock of salvation:" their bodies also shall be fed with "food convenient for them," and their eternal inheritance secured to them; while all the haters of the Lord shall fall under his power, and perish for ever. May he then incline our hearts to obey his call, and walk in his ways: and may he enlarge and assist our prayers; that, being delivered from our enemies, we may "open our mouths wide," both in fervent, and copious, and large requests, and take in abundantly the waters of life and salvation, and so to drink and live for ever.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXII. V. 1. JEHOVAH, who judges the principalities and powers of the invisible world, will call to account the greatest of those, who exercise dominion over their fellow-creatures on earth. "He judgeth in the midst of gods." Rulers seem as gods to their subjects,

and they indeed are the Lord's appointed vicegerents: (Notes, 6, 7. Rom. xiii. 1—7:) but they are the subjects of his kingdom, even as other men; and he is especially at all times present in their courts, to animadvert on the justice or injustice of their decisions; to receive appeals from their sentence, when unrighteous; and to call them to a strict account if they abuse their power. (*Marg. Ref.*)—It is not known by whom, or when, this psalm was written: some date it in David's time, and others in that of Hezekiah.

V. 2—4. 'Is it not time to leave off your partiality; and no longer to favour a bad cause, because the man is rich and great; and can either give you a large bribe, if you will judge it for him, or do you a mischief if you give sentence against him? Your duty is to do equal justice to all men that come before you; and to take a particular care, that the poor and the fatherless do not suffer because they have no money to give, nor any friend to solicit.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.*—Notes, lviii. 1, 2. Ex. xxiii. 6—9. 2 Chr. xix. 5—11.) 'Every upright judge will endeavour to resemble the Redeemer. For this purpose, he will be always willing to admit, diligent to discuss, solicitous to expedite the cause of a poor and injured person, and to afford such a one the speediest, the cheapest, and the most effectual redress, equally despising the offers of opulence, and the frowns of power.' *Bp. Horne.* (Notes, lxxii. 1—7. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4.)—*Do justice, &c.* (3) "Justify the afflicted, &c." (*Note, Prov. xvii. 5.*)

V. 5. 'They will not study the laws of God; or if they do, will not think it their interest to be governed by them; ... insomuch, that the foundations of the kingdom, which are justice and truth, are shaken; all things are in confusion, and in danger to come to utter ruin. *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.*—Note, lxxv. 3.)

V. 6, 7. The rulers of Israel, as immediately appointed by JEHOVAH to be his representatives, to judge according to his law, and to be types of his Anointed, were especially honoured with this high title, "Ye are gods;" in which other magistrates share, in proportion to their religious advantages. But though outwardly honoured as "gods," as "children of the most High," and as representing the Son of God himself; yet, seeing they in general abused these distinctions, the Lord would soon shew

p vii. 6. xlii. 26. 8 ^p Arise, O God, judge the earth:
xvi. 13. cii. 13. for ^q thou shalt inherit all nations.
Is. li. 9. Zeph. iii. 8.

q ii. 8. xxii. 28.
Rev. xi. 15. xv
4

PSALM LXXXIII.

The Psalmist appeals to God concerning a formidable conspiracy of the enemies of Israel, 1—8. He prays that they may be confounded, for a warning to others, and for the honour of God, 9—18.

* Or, for Asaph.

a xxviii. 1. xxxv.
22. xlii. 23. 1. 3.
cix. 1. 2.

b Is. xlii. 14.
c ii. 1. 2. lxxiv. 4.
23. 2 Kings xix.
28. Jer. i. 19.

Matt. xxvii. 24.
Acts iv. 26, 27.
xvi. 22. xvii. 5.

xix. 28, &c. xxi.
80. xxii. 22.
xxiii. 10.

d lxxxi. 15.
e lxxv. 4, 5. xciii.
3. Is. xxxvii. 23.

Dan. v. 20—23.
f x. 9. lvi. 6. lxiv.
2. 1 Sam. xiii.

19. Is. vii. 6, 7.
Luke xx. 20—
23.

A Song or Psalm * of Asaph.

^a **KEEP** not thou silence, O God:
hold not thy peace, and ^b be not still,
O God.

2 For, lo, ^c thine enemies make a
tumult: and they ^d that hate thee have
^e lifted up the head.

3 They ^f have taken crafty counsel

against thy people, and consulted
against ^g thy hidden ones.

4 They have said, ^h Come, and let
us cut them off from *being* a nation;
that the name of Israel may be no
more in remembrance.

5 For ⁱ they have consulted together
with one ^j consent; ^k they are confederate
against thee:

6 The tabernacles of ^l Edom, and the
Ishmaelites; of Moab, and ^m the Hagarenes;

7 ⁿ Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek;
the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre;

8 ^o Assur also is joined with them:
they have ^p holpen ^q the children of Lot. Selah.

g xxviii. 5. xxxi.
20. xci. 1. Col.
iii. 5.

h Ex. i. 10. Esth.
iii. 6—9. Prov.
i. 12. Jer. xi. 19.

xxxi. 36. Dan.
vii. 25. Matt.
xxvii. 62—66.

Acts iv. 17. ix.
1, 2.

i Prov. xxi. 30.
Is. vii. 5—7.

viii. 9, 10. John
xi. 47—53. Acts
xxiii. 12, 13.

Rev. xvii. 13.
xix. 19.

† Heb. heart.
k Josh. x. 3—5.

2 Sam. x. 6—8.
Is. vii. 2.

l 2 Chr. xx. 1. 10,
11.

m Gen. xxv. 12—
18. 1 Chr. v. 10.

19, 20. Hagarites.
n Josh. xiii. 5. Ez.
xxvii. 9.

o Gen. x. 11. Ashur.
xxv. 3.

† Heb. been an
arm to, &c. Is.
xxxiii. 2.

p Gen. xix. 37,
38. Deut. ii. 9.

them their weakness, as mean mortal men; and leave them to be cast down from their dignity, like one of the princes whom Israel crushed when they came up out of Egypt, or in their subsequent wars. (lxxxiii. 6—11. *Notes*, John x. 32—39.)

V. 8. 'Seeing none amendment, he desireth God to undertake the matter, and execute justice himself.'—This verse, however, is evidently a prophetic prayer for the coming of the Messiah, and the conversion of the nations to him. (*Notes*, ii. 7—9. lxxii. 8—11. lxxxvi. 9, 10. xcvi. 7—9. Rev. xi. 15—18.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The authority of God should be acknowledged, honoured, and submitted to, in those governors whom his providence places over us. But *they* also must be reminded, that they are only viceroys of the King of heaven, bound under the strictest obligations, and the most awful responsibility, to do his will, and copy his example; that he witnesses the use which they make of their authority, and will judge them for it; and that if, with present impunity, they "judge unjustly and accept the persons of the wicked," they will have a most terrible sentence denounced on them at last.—These plain truths are too generally forgotten or discredited by those in authority: they know not, because they "*will not understand*;" therefore they walk on still in darkness: (*Note*, John iii. 19—21:) and the perversion of law and justice, through their impiety and iniquity, subverts the foundations of social felicity, and enhances exceedingly the miseries of mankind. (*Notes*, xi. 1—3. xiv. 1—7. Mic. vii. 1—4.) God has indeed honoured rulers, (especially those placed over his people,) by entrusting to them, as it were, a share of his authority; and favouring them, as children, with a portion of his inheritance: and honourable and happy are they, who, out of a regard to him, "defend the poor and fatherless," do justice to the afflicted and needy, and deliver them out of the hands of the wicked.—But as for ungodly rulers, their disgrace and misery will equal their present abused distinctions; and they will feel the insignificance of that

pre-eminence, which made them forget that they were men, when death shall arrest them and hurry them to judgment; and they shall be condemned with those princes who made war against Israel of old.—We should, however, be thankful for the blessings of civil government, which, with all its defects, is of immense advantage to mankind. And we should pray for our rulers, and leave such as misbehave to the judgment of God, and be thankful for our peculiar advantages in this respect. But, considering the state of affairs in the world, from the beginning hitherto, we have need even on that account, to pray most earnestly and constantly, that the Lord Jesus would arise and take possession of his inheritance, and rule over all nations, in truth, and righteousness, and peace.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXIII. V. 1—5. It is generally and with probability conjectured, that this psalm was written, (perhaps by some of Asaph's descendants,) in the reign of Jehoshaphat, when a most formidable confederacy was formed against him; and when Judah was invaded by a very large army composed of many nations, of whom the Moabites and Ammonites seem to have been the principal, and the others their allies: and it appears, that enmity to God and religion, stirred up by Jehoshaphat's zeal for reformation, had a considerable effect in exciting them against him. (*Notes*, 2 Chr. xx. 1—4.) So that it was, in fact, the cause of God which they opposed; uniting crafty policy with powerful exertions, entirely to destroy his people, and to blot out the memorial of them from the earth. (*Notes*, Esth. iii. 6—15.) The term "hidden ones" seems to denote the Lord's peculiar people, who were hidden under his immediate protection from the devices of their enemies. (*Marg. Ref.* g.)—Some render the words, "hidden things," understanding them of the treasures reposed in the treasuries of the temple.

V. 6—8. (*Marg. Ref.*) Assur (or the Assyrians,) was called in by the other confederates, as a powerful ally, to ensure the destruction of the hated nation. (*Note*, 2 Kings xv. 19, 20.)

9 Do unto them ^a as unto the Midianites ; ^r as to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the brook ^s of Kison :

10 Which perished at ^t En-dor : they became ^u as dung for the earth.

11 Make their nobles like ^v Oreb, and like Zeeb : yea, all their princes as ^w Zebah, and as Zalmunna :

12 Who said, ^x Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession.

13 ^y O my God, make them ^z like a wheel ; ^a as the stubble before the wind.

14 ^b As the fire burneth the wood,

and as ^c the flame setteth the mountains on fire ;

15 So ^d persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm.

16 ^e Fill their faces with shame ; that they may seek thy name, O LORD.

17 ^f Let them be confounded and troubled for ever ; yea, let them be put to shame, and perish :

18 ^g That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art ^h the most High over all the earth.

V. 9—11. (Notes, Judg. iv—viii.) Endor lay in the north of Canaan, near the place in which Sisera's army was destroyed. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 12. "The houses of God" seem to denote, not only the temple and its out-buildings, but also the palaces and houses, in which the princes, priests, and chief persons of God's people dwelt. It is not certain, that any buildings for the public worship of God (like the synagogues of later ages,) were at this time erected. (Note, lxxiv. 7, 8.) But perhaps these idolaters might consider the high places as houses of God, especially such as were not used in idolatry. (Note, 2 Kings xviii. 22.)

V. 13—18. These verses must be interpreted as a prayer, and not merely as a prediction : but it should be observed, that the persons prayed against were the enemies and haters of God, who sought with implacable malice to extirpate his people, and destroy true religion ; and that the honour of God, and the interests of truth and righteousness, as well as the preservation of Israel, required this example of severity. The images employed are very striking, and are best explained by the marginal references. The expression "that they may seek thy name" implies, that the imprecation was only meant, in the strongest sense, on the supposition that the invaders remained incorrigible in enmity to God, in which case, "let them be confounded and troubled for ever," that men of other nations may take warning, and learn by their doom, that JEHOVAH, the God of Israel, is alone the almighty Lord and Sovereign of the whole earth, and not merely the local Deity of one nation.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Enmity to the holiness and authority of God is the real cause of the hatred borne to his people. Men of different nations, interests, parties, humours, and sentiments, readily unite against the church. The formal self-righteous Pharisee, the time-serving Herodian, and the infidel Sadducee, agreed to hate and oppose Christ : Herod and Pilate, though before at enmity, were made friends, as being of one mind to treat Jesus with contempt : (Notes, Matt. xvi. 1—4, v. 1. xxii. 15—33. Luke xxiii. 6—12 :) and hypocrisy and profaneness, superstition and scepticism, and even enthusiasm and atheism often confederate against his

humbling doctrine and holy cause. For the consultation has been from the beginning, how to extirpate the church, that neither preacher nor professor of the truth should be left, and "that the name of Israel should be had no more in remembrance." (Notes, Acts v. 17—28.) But whatever arrogance, tumult, subtlety, or resolution, may be found among those who hate the Lord, and would lay hands on his worshippers, and "take to themselves his houses in possession ;" their intentions must ultimately be frustrated. His people, whose "life is hid with Christ in God," and whose excellency is equally hidden from the carnal eye, are safe under his protection. (Note, Col. iii. 1—4.)—While the Lord is still and keeps silence, and persecutors insult and triumph, the apparent danger often excites believers to great fervency in prayer ; and then in due time he arises to plead their cause : so that the doom of the ancient enemies of the church, or one even more dreadful, will be that of all others to the end of the world. For such are "vessels of wrath fitted for destruction," even as a bowl is fitted to roll impetuously down a declivity ; as stubble to be driven before a vehement wind ; or as the dry wood, thorns, and brambles upon the mountains, are fitted to be consumed by the flames. (Note, Luke xxiii. 26—31, v. 31.) Thus the stormy tempest of divine vengeance will persecute them with dreadful consternation into "the fire prepared for the devil and his angels ;" unless they be so humbled, and ashamed of their sins, as to repent and seek the pardoning mercy of their offended Lord : for assuredly all impenitent sinners shall be troubled, and ashamed, and perish for ever.—The Lord will be glorified in the punishments which he inflicts : if present judgments fail of bringing those who suffer them to repentance, they are often so evidential of his power and justice, as to warn others to flee from his wrath and seek his favour : and doubtless the final punishment of the wicked will answer most important purposes, throughout the universal and everlasting kingdom of God. But may we so know, that "he whose name is JEHOVAH, is most high over all the earth," as to fear his powerful wrath, seek his inestimable favour, trust his mercy and grace, and yield ourselves to be his willing and devoted worshippers and servants : and may we chiefly seek the destruction of those tumultuous and confederated enemies, our "fleshly lusts, which war against the soul."

PSALM LXXXIV.

The Psalmist expresses his strong affection for the courts of God, 1—3. He shews the blessedness of those who attend there, or cordially resort thither, 4—7. He prays to be restored to them; and celebrates the great goodness of God to his people, 8—12.

a viii. lxxxi. titles.

* Or, of.

b xxvi. 8. xxvii.

4. xlviii. 1, 2.

lxxxvii. 2, 3.

cxxii. 1. Heb.

ix. 23, 24. Rev.

xxi. 2, 3. 22, 23.

ciii. 20, 21.

1 Kings xxii. 19.

Neh. ix. 6. Is.

vi. 2, 3.

d xliii. 1, 2. lxiii.

1, 2. lxxiii. 26.

cxix. 20. 81.

cxliii. 6. Cant.

ii. 4, 5. v. 8.

e Job xxiii. 3. Is.

xxvi. 9. lxiv. 1.

To the chief Musician upon ^aGittith,
A Psalm ^{*}for the sons of Korah.

HOW amiable *are* thy tabernacles,
O LORD of hosts!

2 ^dMy soul longeth, yea, even faint-
eth, for the courts of the LORD: ^emy
heart and my flesh crieth out for the
living God.

3 Yea, ^fthe sparrow hath found an
house, and the swallow a nest for her-
self, where she may lay her young,
even thine altars, O LORD of hosts, my
King and my God.

4 ^gBlessed *are* they that dwell in
thy house: ^hthey will be still praising
thee. Selah.

5 Blessed *is* the man ⁱwhose strength
is in thee; ^kin whose heart *are* the
ways of *them*.

6 ^lWho passing through the valley
of [†]Baca, make it a well; ^mthe rain [†]
also [†]filleth the pools.

7 ⁿThey go from [†]strength to

xc. 1. xci. 1.
cxvi. 7. Matt.
viii. 20. xxiii.
37.

g xxiii. 6. xxvii. 4.
lxv. 4. cxxxiv.
1—3.

h lxxi. 8. 15. cxlv
1, 2. 21. Is. xii.
4, 5. Rev. vii. 15.

i xxviii. 7, 8. Is.
xiv. 24. Zech. x.
12. 2 Cor. xii.

9. Phil. iv. 13.
k xl. 8. xlii. 4. lv.

14. Is. xxvi. 9.
Jer. xxxi. 33. l.

4, 5. Mic. iv. 2.
lxxvi. 10—12.

John xvi. 33.
Acts xiv. 22.

Rom. v. 3—5.
viii. 37. 2 Cor.

iv. 17. Rev. vii.
14.

† Or, mulberry-
trees, make him
a well, &c.

2 Sam. v. 22—
24.
m lxxviii. 9. 2 Kings
Is. xl. 31. John
Luke ii. 44.

iii. 9—20.

xv. 2. 2 Cor. iii. 18.

† Heb. covereth.

2 Pet. iii. 18.

n Job xvii. 9. Prov. iv. 18.

† Heb. company to company.

NOTES

PSALM LXXXIV. V. 1, 2. It is not said, by whom, or on what occasion, this psalm was written; but it is generally thought, that David composed it, when driven from Jerusalem by Absalom's rebellion. (Notes, xlii. xliii. lxiii.) Yet this is by no means certain: and some think that it was written by some pious Levite, in the days of Hezekiah, when kept from the temple by the Assyrian army.—The Psalmist, however, reflecting with regret on the beauties of the sanctuary from which he was banished, and the delight which he had taken in attending on the ordinances there administered, not only breaks out in the language of strong and ardent desire, to be restored to the courts of God; but declares that his soul so earnestly longed after the living God himself, and the enjoyment of his love, that his body also was affected by it. (Notes, lxxiii. 23—28. cxix. 19—21. 81, 82. Cant. ii. 5. v. 8.) Or he may mean, that he longed to “present his body as a “living sacrifice,” by such external acts of worship, as would most suitably express the fervent affections of his soul.—*Living God*. (2) Notes, Josh. iii. 10—13. 1 Sam. xvii. 25, 26. Jer. x. 9, 10. Dan. vi. 25—28. 1 Thes. i. 9, 10.

V. 3. The Psalmist seems here to envy the birds their privilege of building their nests at, or near to, the altars of God; (meaning the tabernacle or temple, where were the altar of burnt-offering and the altar of incense;) while he was driven as an exile to a great distance from them. Yet, as it can scarcely be conceived, that the birds were left unmolested in their nests to hatch and brood their young, at the altar of God, in the days of David or Hezekiah; it has been supposed, that ne only meant, that the birds found in their nests that tranquillity, repose, and satisfaction, which the ordinances of God had afforded him, but of which he was now deprived. (Note, Matt. viii. 18—20.)—*My King*, &c.] Notes, xlv. 4. xlv. 1. cxlv. 1, 2. Matt. xxv. 34—40, v. 34.

V. 4. Some of the priests and Levites dwelt continually at the sanctuary, which to a carnal mind might appear a wearisome confinement: but the Psalmist deemed them very happy; and those also who resided so near to the courts of God, that they could constantly join in the

praises and adorations there presented, and who counted this their delightful employment. (Notes, 10. xxvi. 6—8. xxvii. 4—6. lxv. 4. cxxxiv, cxxxv. 1—3. 1 Chr. xvi. 37—43.) The Septuagint render the latter clause; Εἰς τὰς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων ἀνεστῶσι σε, “They will praise thee for ever and ever,” the strongest term for *eternity* contained in the Greek language; and no doubt the Psalmist counted those happy who perpetually praised God at the sanctuary on earth; because this was both a preparation for the eternal worship of heaven, and an earnest of it. (Notes, xxx. 11, 12. cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2.)

V. 5. (Notes, 11, 12. i. 1—3. xxxii. 1, 2. cxix. 1.) ‘Happy also is that man, (how mean soever his outward condition be,) who, relying on the divine protection, (Ex. xxxiv. 24,) goes up three times a year to the solemn feasts at Jerusalem; or when he is debarred that liberty, as I now am, is one of those devout persons, whose hearts are more in the high ways that lead thither, than at their own home.’ Bp. Patrick.—The man, who trusting in God for strength and protection, pressed through dangers and difficulties, from cordial love to the courts of God, aptly represented those, who, being strong in the Lord, walk with alacrity in his ways, aspiring after and longing for the joys of heaven. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Phil. iii. 12—14. 20, 21.)

V. 6, 7 The valley of Baca, or ‘of mulberry-trees,’ was a barren place; so that they which passed through must dig pits for water; signifying that no lets can hinder them, that are fully bent to come to Christ’s church; neither yet that God will ever fail them.—Some translate “Baca,” *weeping*: and probably it was a dreary valley, through which from some parts of the land the people must pass, in going up to Jerusalem: but in one way or other, those, who from regard to the ordinances of God encountered the difficulty, were carried well through it. They pass it as cheerfully, as if it abounded in pleasant springs; and depending on God, as the Fountain of what they want, receive from him the blessing of plentiful and seasonable showers to refresh them on their journey. So that the whole company go from stage to stage with unwearied vigour.’ Bp. Patrick.—The word (בְּקָעָה) rendered “pools,” signifies also *blessings*. (Notes, Is. xliii. 14—21, v. 19, 20. Jer. xxxi. 8, 9. Ez. xxxiv. 23—31. v. 26.) Thus they

strength, every one of them ° in Zion appeareth before God.

8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer : give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

9 Behold, O God ° our Shield, and look upon ° the face of thine anointed.

10 For ° a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. ° I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my

• Heb. I would choose rather to sit at the threshold. Jam. ii. 3.

God, than ° to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

11 For the LORD God is ° a Sun and ° Shield : ° the LORD will give grace and glory : ° no good thing will he withhold from them that ° walk uprightly.

12 O LORD of hosts, ° blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

vi. 33. Phil. iv. 19. z xv. 2. Prov. ii. 7. x. 9. xxviii. 6. 18. Mic. ii. 7. Gal. ii. 14. a ii. 12. xxxiv. 8. lxii. 8. cxlvi. 5, 6. 1s. xxx. 18. l. 10. Jer. xvii. 7, 8.

xvii. 14. 15. xxvi. 8-10. cxli. 4, 5. t xxvii. 1. 1s. lx. 19, 20. Mal. iv. 2. John i. 9, 10. viii. 12. Rev. xxi. 23. u 9. iii. 3. xlvii. 9. cxv. 9-11. cxix. 114. Gen. xv. 1. Prov. ii. 7. x John i. 16. Rom. viii. 16-18. 2 Cor. iii. 18. iv. 17. Phil. i. 6. y xxxiv. 9. 10. lxxxv. 12. Matt. 14.

were enabled to proceed with increasing vigour and alacrity, till each of them appeared before God in his courts on mount Zion; or, till "the God of gods appeared to them "in Zion," manifesting his glory and communicating spiritual blessings through his holy ordinances. (Notes, Job xvii. 8, 9. Is. xl. 27-31.)—The whole description may be properly accommodated to the Christian's pilgrimage, through this vale of tears to the felicity of heaven.

V. 8, 9. The power of the LORD God of hosts to repel every enemy, and remove every obstacle, and his readiness to hear the requests of the patriarch Jacob and his descendants, encouraged the Psalmist's earnest prayer, to be permitted, according to the desire of his heart, to return to the courts of God. (Notes, Gen. xxxii. 9-12. 24-30. Hos. xii. 3-6.)—He also intreated him to "look on "the face of his Anointed,"—his Messiah,—his Christ, the king, as the type of Christ. If David wrote this psalm, he might mean to request God, that he would favour his king, whom he had expressly chosen, and ordered to be anointed; and not suffer a rebel and an usurper to prevail against him. (Notes, ii. 1-6.) But he is generally supposed to have looked forward to the promised Messiah, of whom he was the type and progenitor: and indeed he might plead this as a powerful argument, why the Lord should rescue him from his enemies, that the Messiah was to descend from him; and he might expect that the root should be preserved for the sake of that illustrious Branch. (Notes, Is. vi. 13. vii. 2. lxxv. 8-10. Matt. xxiv. 21, 22.)

V. 10. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1, 2. Luke ii. 41-52. Rom. viii. 5-9. Rev. iii. 12, 13.) "I would rather ° choose to be in the lowest and basest room in thy holy ° tabernacle, than to be settled in whatsoever dignity out ° of the bounds of thy church." Bp. Hall.

V. 11, 12. The sun enlightens, warms, enlivens, and fructifies the face of the earth: thus the Lord gives light, comfort, and fruitfulness to those, on whom he shines with the beams of his saving grace. This sun may indeed be clouded or eclipsed; but it remains unchanged, and will soon burst forth again, as if with increasing splendour. (Notes, 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4. Mal. iv. 2, 3. John viii. 12. Rev. xxi. 22-27.)—In this world the Lord gives "grace," which he, as a Sun, ripens into "glory" in the world above: (Notes, lxxiii. 23-28. Rom. v. 1, 2 :) while as a Shield, he protects the happy man who trusts in him, against all assailants, however formidable; and withholds nothing truly good from any who walk before him in uprightness of heart. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. xv. 1. Deut. xxxiii. 29. 2 Sam. xii. 8. Matt. vi. 33, 34. 1 Tim. iv. 6-10.)—This the Psalmist knew, which cheered his spirits

amidst his tribulations, and while he waited the answer to his prayers: and he concludes with most emphatically declaring that man happy, however poor or persecuted, tempted or afflicted, who trusted in the Lord.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

Divine ordinances are the believer's solace in this evil world; because in them he communes with "the living "God," and enjoys his gracious presence. (Notes, cxxii. 1, 2. Is. lviii. 13, 14.) This renders his tabernacles so amiable in his eyes, and dear to his heart: this causes him to value the privilege of attending them; and to regret, as the greatest calamity, the banishment or confinement from them. Indeed the Lord himself is "the Rest" of his people; (Notes, xc. 1, 2. xci. 1, 2. cxvi. 7;) but on earth, they cannot approach him, except through his appointed means of grace: so that these are to their souls, as the nest to the bird, which resorts thither and is contented and easy, but is unsettled when absent: yet this is only an earnest of the happiness of heaven, where the blessed inhabitants are always praising their God. But how can they dream of entering that holy habitation, and sharing its pure pleasures and society, who complain of the worship of God on earth as a tedious and wearisome task? (Note, Am. viii. 4-10, v. 5 :) who think those wretched, that spend all their days in his service; because they share not the carnal pleasure and dissipation, which they themselves prefer to the employment of angels? But not only are those happy, who have arrived at heaven: they likewise may be congratulated, who have set out, with the desire of their hearts, in the search and pursuit of that felicity; and who, making the Lord their Strength, walk with pleasure in his ways and approve them in their hearts. They may have to pass through many a valley of weeping, and many a thirsty desert: but wells of salvation shall be opened for them, and consolations sent for their support. The journey itself, and the prospect of its happy end, will revive their hearts; they shall go from strength to strength, with increasing cheerfulness and confidence, till every one of them arrives safe in the holy city, to appear before God, to see him as he is, and to be for ever with him, and like unto him. (Note, 1 John iii. 1-3.) May the Lord then incline the heart of every one of us to set out and proceed with alacrity in this pilgrimage, and may he defend us through it: may we pray without ceasing, (through the great Mediator, "the Lord's Anointed," whose face he beholds, and whose intercession he delights in,) for ourselves and for all our fellow-travellers. Thus we shall learn to count one day in the courts of God better than a

PSALM LXXXV.

Thankful recollections of former mercies from God to Israel, 1—3. Earnest prayers for grace, mercy, and peace, 4—7. Prophetical assurances of a gracious answer, especially by the coming of the Messiah, and in his glorious salvation, 8—13.

* Or, of xlii. title. To the chief Musician, A Psalm * for the sons of Korah.

LORD, ^a thou hast been [†] favourable unto thy land: ^b thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob.

2 Thou hast ^c forgiven the iniquity of thy people; thou hast covered all their sin. Selah.

3 Thou hast ^d taken away all thy wrath: thou hast ^e turned *thyself* from the fierceness of thine anger.

4 ^e Turn us, ^f O God of our salvation, ^g and cause thine anger toward us to cease.

5 ^h Wilt thou be angry with us for ever? wilt thou ⁱ draw out thine anger to all generations?

6 Wilt thou not ^k revive us again; ^l that thy people may rejoice in thee?

7 ^m Shew us thy mercy, O LORD, and grant us thy salvation.

8 ⁿ I will hear what God the LORD ^o will speak: ^p for he will speak peace unto his people, and ^q to his saints: ^r but let them not turn again to ^s folly.

27. xx. 19. 26. Acts x. 36. 2 Cor. v. 18—20. Eph. ii. 17. 2 Thes. iii. 16. Eph. i. 1, 2. q John v. 14. viii. 11. Acts iii. 26. Gal. iv. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 19. Heb. x. 26—29. 2 Pet. ii. 20—22 Rev. ii. 4, 5. iii. 19. r Gen. xxxiv. 7. 1 Sam. xxv. 25. Prov. xxvi. 11. xxvii. 22.

thousand spent elsewhere; to value the little time which we have employed with him, more than all the rest of our lives; and to deem the meanest place in his service preferable to the highest preferments in the tents, or even in the palaces, of the ungodly. If we do not choose in this manner, we are *carnally-minded*; and “to be carnally-minded is death.” But what can all the honours, riches, and distinctions of the world do for us, compared with the blessings of his favour, who is a “Sun and a Shield?” If he gives us grace here and glory hereafter, he will not withhold any thing truly good from us. He has not indeed engaged to give riches and temporal dignities; but he has promised to give grace and glory to every one, who seeks them in his appointed way; and he delights in fulfilling this promise. What is grace, but heaven begun below, in the knowledge, love, and service of God? What is glory, but the completion of this felicity, in perfect conformity to him, and the full enjoyment of him for ever? And if he has begun to give us grace, his grace will be sufficient for us, and will certainly ripen into glory. Let us then seek this true happiness; and desire to be fruitful, through the benign influences of the Sun of righteousness, as well as safe and cheerful under the protection of “the Shield of salvation.” Let us study to walk uprightly in his ways, and to trust in his mercies: let us thankfully receive what he gives, and be well satisfied to be without what he withholds, or takes away; for we may be sure that he sees it evil for us: and let us hold it fast, as an indisputable principle, notwithstanding all possible tribulation, that the man is happy, who trusts in the LORD of hosts, the God of Jacob.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXV. V. 1—3. This psalm seems to have been written, either during the Babylonish captivity, or before the people were re-established in their own land.—‘It might be much better used by them,’ (the Jews,) ‘after their return from the captivity of Babylon, than at any other time; when they were infested with many enemies, who disturbed the peaceable enjoyment of their country and religion.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Ezra iv—vi.)—The

Lord had formerly been favourable unto their fathers, and had often brought back their captivity, having pardoned those sins for which they had been sold into the hands of their enemies; and this gave the captive Jews encouragement again to expect deliverance. (Marg. Ref.) Or, ‘We have received the beginnings of deliverance, as a token of thy forgiveness and reconciliation: therefore “perfect what concerneth us.”’ (Note, cxxxviii. 8.)

Covered, &c. (2) Note, xxxii. 1, 2.

V. 4. ‘Our sins indeed deserve worse than all our sufferings, and retard our re-establishment: but turn and convert us to thyself by thy special grace, and make way for the more complete effects of thy reconciliation to us. (Notes, lxxx. 3. 19. Jer. xxxi. 18—20. Dan. ix. 14—19.)

V. 5—7. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, lxxiv. 1, 2. lxxvii. 5—12.) ‘He confesseth that our salvation cometh only of God’s mercy.’ (Notes, Ezra iii. 8—13. Jer. xxxiii. 10, 11.) ‘Though we deserve to be more miserable than we are, yet let thy mercy prevail with thee to grant us a complete deliverance.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 8. The prophet, having prayed for mercy and salvation, waited to hear what message “God the LORD” would send by him; being assured that he had thoughts of peace towards the nation of Israel, whom he had taken for his people and specially favoured, and that a Peacemaker would at length be sent to them. But as folly, or idolatry and wickedness, had brought on them their former miseries, he warned them to beware, when again favoured and prospered, not to return to the same foolish and rebellious conduct.—After the captivity, the nation was preserved from gross idolatry till the Redeemer came; and he both went himself and sent his apostles and ministers, to speak peace to Israel first, and to “bless them by turning every one of them from his iniquities.” (Notes, Acts iii. 22—26.) But the nation rejected him and his message, and, returning to rebellion and folly, was deprived of its peculiar privileges; and then peace was spoken in Christ’s name to the Gentiles, who became the people and “saints” of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and returned no more to their dumb idols and evil courses. (Marg. Ref.)

^s xxiv. 4, 5. 1. 23
cxix. 155. Is.
xvi. 13. Mark
xii. 32—34. John
vii. 17. Acts x.
2—4. xi. 13, 14.
xiii. 26.
^t Is. iv. 5. Ez.
xxvi. 20. Hag. ii.
7—9. Zech. ii. 5.
8. Luke ii. 32.
John i. 14.
^u lxxxix. 14. c. 5.
Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7.
Mic. vii. 20. Luke i. 54, 55. John i. 17.
Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Rom. iii. 25, 26. v. 1. 21. Heb. vii. 2.
2. John xiv. 6. 1 John v. 20, 21.

9 Surely ^a his salvation is nigh them
that fear him; that ^b glory may dwell
in our land.

10 ^a Mercy and truth are met toge-
ther; ^x righteousness and peace have
kissed *each other*.

11 ^y Truth shall spring out of the

earth; and ^z righteousness shall look
down from heaven.

12 Yea, ^a the LORD shall give *that*
which is good; and ^b our land shall
yield her increase.

13 ^c Righteousness shall go before
him; and ^d shall set *us* in the way of
his steps.

lxxxix. 14. Is. lviii. 8. d Matt. xx. 27, 28. John xiii. 14—16. 34. 2 Cor. iii. 18. Gal. ii.
20. Eph. v. 1, 2. Phil. ii. 5—8. Heb. xii. 1, 2. 1 Pet. ii. 18—24. iv. 1. 1 John ii. 6.

Is. xlii. 21.
Matt. iii. 17.
xvii. 5. Luke ii.
14. 2 Cor. v. 21.
Eph. i. 6.
lxxxiv. 11. Mic.
vi. 8. 1 Cor. i.
30. Eph. i. 3.
Jam. i. 17.
b lxvii. 6. lxxii.
16. Is. xxx. 23,
24. xxxii. 15.
Matt. xiii. 8.
23. Acts ii. 41.
xxi. 20. Gr.
1 Cor. iii. 6—9.
c lxxii. 2, 3.

V. 9. The temple and ordinances of God had been
“the glory” of Israel: and that glory in some measure
dwelt among them again after the captivity. But the Re-
deemer, who appeared in that land, was its chief Glory; his
coming approached, and his salvation was, at all times, nigh
those who feared the Lord. (Notes, Luke i. 46—55, v. 50.
ii. 25—32.) Christ himself, “the Salvation of God,” and
“the glory of his people Israel,” was evidently predicted;
and the expectation of this great Deliverer was intended to
be the support of true believers under their trials, through
successive ages; even as the expectation of his coming to
make his cause triumphant, and at length to raise the
dead, and judge the world, is, under the new testament-
dispensation. (Notes, 1 Cor. iv. 3—5. Tit. ii. 11—14. Heb.
ix. 27, 28.)

V. 10—13. When God restored the captive Jews, he
mercifully fulfilled his *faithful* promises to them. He had
glorified his justice in their sufferings, and he might con-
sistently return unto them in peace. Thus while *truth* was
performed on earth, *righteousness* looked down from heaven
with approbation. The Lord conferred manifold benefits
on his people: their land again gave its increase, both of
the fruits of the earth, and of the fruits of righteousness:
for the justice and holiness of God, which had been so
conspicuous in those dispensations, had a powerful effect
to attach the people to his ordinances and commandments,
and to teach them to copy the example of his equity, truth,
and mercy.—Thus this passage may be explained; but the
interpretation is comparatively uninteresting, and falls
greatly below the energy of the expressions made use of.
It is therefore generally, and no doubt justly, interpreted
in a far higher and fuller sense, of the harmony of the
divine attributes in the redemption of sinners by Jesus
Christ. The *truth* of the promises is manifested by the
mercy of God in sending the Redeemer; and the *truth* of
the types and prophecies, in his person, miracles, obedi-
ence, and atonement: (Notes, John i. 17. xiv. 4—6:) but
especially the *truth* of the threatenings now consists with
the exercise of mercy to believers, through the great Surety,
“who bare our sins in his own body on the tree.” (Notes,
Is. liii. 4—12. Dan. ix. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 18—25. 1 John ii. 1,
2.) The *justice* of God, which renders to all their due,
demanded the punishment of the transgressor, and seemed
to preclude all hope of his obtaining favour: but it is now
satisfied by the great atonement, and amicably embraces
and unites with *peace*; and entirely approves of the believ-
ing sinner’s being treated as a righteous person by a recon-
ciled Judge. (Notes, Is. ix. 6, 7. xlv. 23—25. 2 Cor. v. 18
—21. Eph. ii. 11—18. Heb. vii. 1—3.) Thus Christ, “the
“TRUTH and the LIFE,” sprang out of the earth, when he
was born of a woman: and “justice” looked down upon

his character, obedience, and atonement, well pleased and
satisfied. (Notes, Matt. iii. 16, 17. xvii. 5—8. John xiv. 4—
6.) For his sake the Father gives all *good things*, especi-
ally his Holy Spirit, to those who ask him; (Notes, Matt.
vii. 7—11. Luke xi. 5—13;) and by his influence every
land, where the gospel is preached, produces an increase
of believers, and of holiness to the glory of God. “Right-
eousness,” as a harbinger, marched before, and marked
out the Redeemer’s path, which he pursued without devi-
ation through his whole course: his *righteousness* went
before to prepare his mediatorial throne; and when it is
discovered to the believer for his justification, by the teach-
ing of the Holy Spirit, it becomes also his example, and
he learns to walk in the steps of Christ, as well as to rely
on his merits. This harmony of the divine attributes in
man’s salvation is the grand peculiarity of the Christian
religion, by which it displays the glory of God in full per-
fection. No other religion, no other view of Christianity,
than that for substance here stated, makes any provision
for the honour of the divine justice in the exercise of
mercy: and this accords to the language of the prophets
and apostles in many places. (Notes, Is. xlv. 20—22. Jer.
xxiii. 5, 6. Rom. iii. 21—26.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The mercies shewn to Israel, in their deliverance from
bondage and captivity, were external signs of that redemp-
tion afforded, in all ages, to the remnant of believers, in
setting them free from the bondage of sin and Satan,
which always accompanies the “covering of their sins,”
and the turning away of the fierce wrath of God from
them.—The awakened sinner, when distressed in consci-
ence, should attend to this report, and cry earnestly to
“the God of salvation,” to convert him by his grace, and
mercifully to cause his anger to cease from him: nor will
that anger endure for ever against any, but the impenitent
and unbelieving.—Even the true people of God, when
they commit sin, may expect sharp and tedious afflictions:
but when they return to him, humbly praying, that he
would “shew them his mercy, and grant them his salva-
tion;” he will in due time revive their comforts, and
make them again to rejoice in him. (Note, li. 12, 13.)—
Having spoken unto the Lord in prayer, we should com-
pose ourselves to hear him speak to us by his word; and
to expect an answer by his Spirit, or in his providence.
He will certainly “speak peace to his people,” whom he
has separated and sanctified to himself. Yet let them take
warning that they do not turn again to folly, forgetful of
his rebukes and corrections, and abusing his mercy: for
this conduct so much resembles that of hypocrites, that
it must bring them into uncertainty and distress; and the

* Or, *A prayer,*
being a Psalm
of David, &c.
cii. cxlii. titles.

PSALM LXXXVI.

a xxxi. 2. 1s.
xxxvii. 17. Dan.
ix. 18.

b x. 14. xxxiv. 6.
xl. 17. lxxii. 12
—14. cii. 17.
cxix. 22. cxi. 12.
Is. lxvi. 2. Matt.
v. 3. Luke iv. 18.
Jam. i. 9, 10. ii.
5.

c iv. 3. xxxvii. 28.
cxix. 94. 1 Sam.
ii. 9. John x. 27
—29. xvii. 11.
1 Pet. v. 3—5.

† Or, *one whom a*
thou favourest.
xviii. 19. Deut.
vii. 7, 8. Rom.
ix. 18. 23, 24.

d cxix. 124, 125.
cxliii. 12. John
xii. 26.

e xlii. 5. xvi. 1.
xxx. 1. Is. xxvi.
3, 4. Rom. xv.
12, 13. Eph. i.
12, 13.

f lvii. 1.
g lv. 17. lxxxviii. 8
9. Luke ii. 37.
xi. 8—13. xviii. 7.

David pleads his indigence, and the fervour of his devotion, in imploring help from the God of grace and mercy, 1—7. He praises God, as alone worthy of universal adoration; and prophesies that all nations shall thus adore him, 8—10. He prays for teaching and grace, renders thanks for former mercies, complains of his haughty foes, and craves some special token of divine favour, 11—17.

* A Prayer of David.

BOW down thine ear, O LORD, hear me; ^b for I *am* poor and needy.

2 ° Preserve my soul; for I *am* [†] holy: O thou my God, ^d save thy servant that ° trusteth in thee.

3 ^f Be merciful unto me, O Lord; ^g for I cry unto thee [†] daily.

xi. 8—13. xviii. 7. Eph. vi. 18. : Or, *all the day.* xxv. 5.

4 ^b Rejoice the soul of thy servant; for unto thee, O Lord, ⁱ do I lift up my soul.

5 For ^k thou, Lord, *art* good, and ^l ready to forgive; and ^m plenteous in mercy ⁿ unto all them that call upon thee.

6 ° Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend to the voice of my supplications.

7 ^p In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee; for thou wilt answer me.

8 ^q Among the gods *there is none* like unto thee, O Lord; ^r neither *are there any works* like unto thy works.

ii. 2. Luke xxii. 44. Heb. v. 7. q lxxxix. 6, 8. Ex. xv. 11. Is. xl. 18. 25. Jer. x. 6, 7, 16. Dan. iii. 29. r cxxxvi. 4. Deut. iii. 24. iv. 34.

Lord will greatly resent it, if their falls do not teach them watchfulness, and their recoveries gratitude.—The preaching of the gospel, and the lively ordinances of God, confer more honour on any land, city, or village, than all external distinctions can do: and “his salvation is nigh those, who “fear” his wrath, reverence his authority, and humbly seek his mercy. For in the Redeemer’s person and work, all things are ready for the reception of every one, whose heart is prepared to accept of mercy: all the Persons and perfections in the Godhead will be eternally glorified in the salvation of sinners: and the redemption of their souls, when they repent and believe the gospel, is a continuation of the display, which was made of the divine truth, justice, and mercy, when the Redeemer paid the all-sufficient ransom. Through him the sinner asks and receives “all “things pertaining to life and godliness,” and thus becomes fruitful in every good work: and, by looking unto the Saviour’s righteousness, he finds his feet “set in the “way of his steps.” (Note, 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18.)—May this salvation be communicated to our hearts, and appear in our lives; that as the divine attributes harmonize in our redemption, so all Christian graces may harmonize in our characters. (Note, 2 Pet. i. 5—7.) May this glory dwell in our land, and yield a large increase of truth and goodness, of purity and equity, through successive generations. May the Lord revive his church throughout all the earth, that his people may rejoice in him: may he grant, that ‘all who are called Christians may be led into the way of ‘truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond ‘of peace, and in righteousness of life:’ and may he put an end to all remains of idolatry and vice, and fill the world with truth and righteousness.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXVI. *Title.* It is not certain, whether David offered this prayer when persecuted by Saul, or when driven out of the land by Absalom; though the latter seems most probable.

V. 1, 2. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 16, 17. xxxiv. 1—6. Matt. v. 3.)—‘All prayer is founded on a sense of our own wants, ‘and God’s ability to supply them. In the sight of his

‘Maker, every sinner is “poor and needy,” and he must ‘become so in his own, that his petitions may be regarded; ‘he must pray with the humility and importunity of a ‘starving beggar, at the gate of heaven, if he expect the ‘great King to “bow down his ear, and hear him.”’ Bp. Horne.

Holy. (2) ‘One whom thou favourest, (marg.) hast set apart for thyself, and made partaker of sanctifying grace:’ one who has found favour and learned mercy. It is the same word as in the sixteenth Psalm is translated “holy “One,” and it is generally rendered “a saint.” When St. Paul spoke of himself, as “less than the least of all “saints;” he, as David does here, united the deepest poverty of spirit, with the fullest confidence that he was in a state of grace, and an accepted servant of God. (Marg. Ref.—Note, Eph. iii. 8.)

V. 3—5. David prayed not only *every day*, but *all the day*, that is, frequently, constantly, and importunately: (Notes, xxv. 4, 5. Luke xviii. 1—8:) and he not only lifted up his voice, but his soul, his most earnest desires, unto God: (Notes, xxv. 1. 1 Sam. i. 12—16, v. 15:) and therefore he expected that he should, and prayed that he might, be made joyful by an answer to his supplications; because, though conscious of sin in many instances, yet he firmly believed that God was abundantly kind, propitious, and compassionate to all who thus called on him. (Marg. Ref.—Note, 14, 15.) Thou ‘art no less bountiful...than I am indigent; ready also to pardon those ‘that have offended thee; yea to shew abundant kindness ‘to every one of them in their greatest distress, when with ‘unfeigned devotion they call upon thee.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 6—8. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1. 7—15. xci. 14—16. cxxx. 1—4.) The Gentiles indeed might call on their gods, and yet perish in their perils and miseries; as the objects of their idolatry had no power to save them: but the God, whom David worshipped, was not like them, but infinitely powerful as well as merciful; and his former works for his people encouraged the expectation of effectual aid to all his upright worshippers. (Notes, Ex. xv. 11. Deut. xxxii. 30, 31. xxxiii. 26. 2 Kings xix. 14—19. Is. xl. 18—20, 25, 26. Jer. x. 16.)

^s xxii. 27—31. ^l xvi. 4. ^l xvii. 7. ^l xxii. 8. 19. ^{cii}. 15. ^{Is}. ii. 2—4. ^{xi}. 9. ^{lix}. 19. ^{lxvi}. 23. ^{Zech}. xiv. 9. ^{Rom}. xi. 25. ^{Rev}. xi. 15. ^{xv}. 4. ^{xx}. 3. ^{Rom}. xv. 9. ^{Eph}. i. 12. 1 ^{Pet}. ii. 9.

9 ^s All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall ^t glorify thy name.

10 For ^u thou art great, and doest wondrous things: ^{*} thou art God alone.

11 ^y Teach me thy way, O LORD;

^z I will walk in thy truth: ^a unite my heart to fear thy name.

12 ^b I will praise thee, O Lord my God, ^c with all my heart: and ^d I will glorify thy name for evermore.

13 For ^e great is thy mercy toward

^{xxvii}. 11. ^{cxix}. 33. 73. ^{cxliii}. 8—10. ^{Job} xxxiv. 32. ^{John} vi. 45, 46. ^{Eph}. iv. 21. ^z xxvi. 3. ^{cxix}. 30. ^{Mal}. ii. 6. ^{2 John} 4. ^{3 John} 3, 4. ^a ^{Jer}. xxxii. 38, 39. ^{Hos}. x. 2. ^{xiv}. 8. ^{Zeph}. i. 5. ^{Matt}. vi. 22—24. ^{Acts} ii. 46. ^{1 Cor}. x. 21. ^{2 Cor} xi. 3. ^{Col}. iii. 17. 22, 23. ^b xxxiv. 1. ^{ciii}. 1—3. ^{civ}. 33. ^{cxlv}. 1—5. ^{cxlvi}. 1, 2. ^{1 Chr}. xxix. 13. 20. ^{Is}. xii. 1. ^{Rev}. v. 9—13. ^{xix}. 5, 6. ^c ix. 1. ^{Deut}. vi. 5. ^{Prov}. iii. 5, 6. ^{Acts} viii. 37. ^{Eph}. v. 19. ^d ^{Rom}. xv. 6. ^{1 Cor}. vi. 20. ^x. 31. ^e lvii. 10. ^{ciii}. 8—12. ^{cviii}. 4. ^{Luke} i. 58.

me: and thou ^f hast delivered my soul from the lowest ^{*} hell.

14 O God, ^g the proud are risen against me, and ^h the assemblies of ^t violent men have sought after my soul; ⁱ and have not set thee before them.

15 ^k But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious; long-suffering, and plenteous in ^l mercy and truth.

16 O ^m turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; ⁿ give thy strength unto thy servant, and save ^o the son of thine handmaid.

^m xxv. 16. ^{lxix}. 16. ^{xc}. 13. ^{cxix}. 132. ⁿ xxviii. 7, 8. ^{lxxxv}. 5. ^{cxixviii}. 3. ^{Is}. xl. 29—31. ^{Zech}. x. 12. ^{Eph}. iii. 16. ^{vi}. 10. ^{Phil}. iv. 13. ^{Col}. i. 11. ^o cxvi. 16. ^{cxix}. 94. ^{Luke} i. 38.

^{xvi}. 10. ^{lv}. 13. ^{lxxxviii}. 6. ^{cxvi}. 8. ^{Job} xxxiii. 18. 22. 24. 28. ^{Is}. xxxviii. 17. ^{Jon}. ii. 3—6. ^{*} Or, grave. ^g xxxvi. 11. ^{liv}. 3. ^{cxix}. 51. 69. ⁸⁵. ^{cxl}. 5. ^{2 Sam}. xv. 1, &c. ^h 2 ^{Sam}. xvi. 20—23. ^{xvii}. 1—4. ¹⁴. ^{Matt}. xxvi. 3, 4. ^{xxvii}. 1, 2. ^{Acts} iv. 27, 28. [†] Heb. terrible. ⁱ x. 4. 11. 13. ^{xiv}. 4. ^{xxxvi}. 1. ^{Ez}. viii. 12. ^{ix}. 9. ^k 5 ^{ciii}. 8. ^{cxix}. 4. ^{cxlv}. 8. ^{Ex}. xxxiv. 6, 7. ^{Num}. xiv. 18. ^{Neh}. ix. 17. ^{Joel} ii. 13. ^{Mic}. vii. 18. ^{Rom}. v. 20. ²¹. ^{Eph}. i. 7. ⁱⁱ. 4—7. ^l ^{xxviii}. 3. ^{John} i. 17. ^{Rom}. xv. 8, 9. ^{Is}. xl. 29—31. ^{Zech}. x. 12. ^{Eph}. iii. 16. ^{vi}. 10. ^{Phil}. iv. 13. ^{Col}. i. 11. ^o cxvi. 16. ^{cxix}. 94. ^{Luke} i. 38.

V. 9, 10. Probably David hoped, that God's interposition in his behalf, and the celebration of his glory and wonderful works by him and his subjects, would bring many of the neighbouring nations to renounce idolatry and worship the Creator: but "the Spirit of God which spake by him, and whose words were on his tongue," evidently predicted the calling of the gentiles by the gospel, and the universal prevalence of Christianity. The original is expressly a prediction; and is generally so translated.—'This proveth that David prayed in the name of... the Messias, of whose kingdom he doth here prophesy.' (Notes, xxii. 27—31. ^{lxvii}. ^{lxxii}. 8—11. 17—19. ^{Is}. ii. 2—5. ^{xi}. 6—9. ^{xliii}. 8—13. ^{Jer}. x. 6—11. ^{Zech}. viii. 20—23. ^{xiv}. 6—9. ^{Rev}. xi. 15—18. ^{xx}. 1—6.)—Alone. (10) Notes, ^{Deut}. vi. 4, 5. ^{xxxii}. 37—39. ^{Is}. xlv. 6—8. ^{Rev}. i. 8—11.

V. 11. Unite, &c.] Naturally all the powers of our mind are "out of course." The judgment is darkened, the will perverted, and the affections, instead of cheerfully following the directions of the higher powers of the soul, tumultuate and rebel against them. The effect of grace is, to correct this disorder; and to subject the passions to the dominion of right reason, by subjecting the whole soul to the authority of God. But its operations are never in this world carried to perfection. Still the mind which loves God, and "delights in his law after the inner man," "finds another law" within "warring against the law" which it would fain obey. "It cannot therefore do the things which it would:" still the affections are apt to wander after forbidden objects; and too often the consent of the will is, for the time, drawn over to that which it habitually rejects. (Notes, ^{Rom}. vii. 15—25. ^{Gal}. v. 16—18.) The harmony of holiness is broken, or not yet perfectly restored: "the flesh lusteth against the spirit," and is contrary to it. Thus the heart is divided and an inward strife maintained, to the deep affliction of the believer who cries out, "Oh wretched man that I am!" and at all times prays, "Unite my heart," so liable to distraction, so prone to division between God and the world, "to fear thy name." (Notes, ^{Matt}. vi. 24. ^{2 Cor}. xi. 1—6, v. 3.)

V. 12, 13. (Marg. Ref.) Many confine the meaning of these words to the imminent danger of death, from which God had delivered his servant. But probably David referred to the guilt of murder and adultery, which he had

contracted, and which merited the severest vengeance, temporal and eternal: yet the Lord, of his great mercy, had pardoned these, as well as all his other sins, and had thus "delivered his soul from the lowest hell."—It is the same word as is used concerning Christ, and translated hell. (Note, xvi. 8—11.) It means the invisible state, whether of the body in the grave, or of the soul in the world of spirits: but the word "lowest" greatly favours the latter interpretation. Some think that David here also spake as the type of Christ.

I will glorify thy name for evermore (12). Notes, ^{cxlv}. 1, 2. ^{cxlvi}. 2.—'I do now most thankfully acknowledge thee; and will never cease to honour thee, and to do thee service, so long as I have any being.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 14, 15. Many a time God had rescued his servant from the most extreme danger; but again he stood in urgent need of the same powerful aid. Absalom, Ahithophel, and the other conspirators, being proud, violent, cruel, and impious men, sought to murder him; and perhaps were encouraged to hope for success by an idea, that David's crimes had provoked God to forsake him. (Notes, iii. 1, 2. ^{lxxi}. 10, 11.) And indeed, David seems here to allow, that this would have been the case, had the Lord dealt with him in strict justice: but the abundant compassion, long-suffering, and mercy of God to the most guilty and miserable, and his faithfulness to his promises, gave the humble penitent a firm ground of confidence, that he was pardoned, and should be delivered from such haughty and impious assailants. (Marg. Ref.—5. Notes, ^{Ex}. xxxiv. 5—7. ^{Lam}. iii. 21—23. ^{Mic}. vii. 18—20. ^{John} i. 17.)

V. 16. 'As thou O Lord, art a God full of compassion, mercy, and truth, for thy name's sake both pardon my sins, and by thy strength uphold me in thy ways, and defend and save me from my powerful assailants.' (Notes, ^{cxliii}. 10—12.)—The son of thine handmaid.] David seems here to plead, that his pious mother had brought him up in the fear of God, and offered many prayers for him; and therefore he was devoted to him from his birth, and entrusted to his keeping, having been brought up as a servant in his family; as the children of the female slaves were brought up in their master's family, were considered as his property, and were entitled to his protection. (Notes, li. 5, 6. ^{cxvi}. 16. ^{2 Tim}. i. 3—5.)—The Lord Jesus was

p xii. 10, 11.
lxxiv. 9. 1s.
xxxviii. 22.
q lxxi. 9—13. cix.
29. Mic. vii. 8—10.

17^p Shew me a token for good ;
that they which hate me may see it,

and be ashamed : because ' thou, LORD, ^{r xl. 1. lxxi. 20,}
hast holpen me, and comforted me.

the Son of her, who said, " Behold the handmaid of the
" Lord, be it unto me according to thy word." (*Luke i.*
38.)

V. 17. Perhaps David hoped, that, if God would shew
some evident token of favour, and so evidently interpose
that all might see his determination to help and comfort
his servant, even his virulent enemies might be put to
shame, and brought to repentance, and so share the plen-
teous mercy of God.—The resurrection of Christ and the
descent of the Holy Spirit were " tokens for good " to the
church ; which put all those, who had crucified the Lord
of glory, to shame and confusion, and many of them were
likewise brought to repent and believe the gospel.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

The condescension of our God, in bowing down his ear
to receive the prayers of us miserable sinners, is very won-
derful : yet our very poverty and wretchedness, when felt
and acknowledged, form a powerful plea at the throne
of grace : and the greatest, and most powerful and prosper-
ous, among the rulers of the world, must thus feel,
acknowledge, and plead them in penitent faith, or their
prayers will in no way resemble those of king David, or
be accepted and answered, as his were.—It is a great en-
couragement in prayer, to be conscious that we have ex-
perienced the converting grace of God, and have learned
to trust in him and to be his servants : for, once we served
other masters, and leaned on other dependences ; but he
has mercifully effected the important change.—If we " cry
" unto the Lord *daily*," and lift up our souls unto him, we
may hope that he will both preserve and " rejoice our
" souls." Yet our defective holiness, our scanty services,
and our imperfect prayers, would be no ground of confi-
dence, if we had not a God of infinite mercy to approach
unto. His " readiness to forgive," through that great
atonement which he has provided, and his " plentiful
" mercy to all that call upon him," is the original source
of our encouragement : and our own consciousness of in-
tegrity and most devoted obedience, is merely evidential of
the reality of our faith, and of the grace of God bestowed
upon us.—The abundance of his mercy, to pardon the sins
and to supply the wants of those who call upon him, how
many soever they may be, is sufficient to encourage all,
who come with the desire of their hearts to pray before
him : yet even this plentiful mercy will not profit those
who remain too careless, proud, carnal, and unbelieving,
to call on him for grace and salvation.—The vanities of
the heathen could not assist their deluded votaries ; angels
and saints cannot relieve those who worship them : our
God alone possesses omnipresence and omniscience, al-
mighty power, and infinite love ; without which none can
know all our necessities, or help us in them, and bear
with all our provocations. None of the works ascribed to
idols, are at all like the works of *JEHOVAH*, among which
that of redemption stands pre-eminent. Nor can those
worldly objects, which men idolize, give them any assist-
ance in the hour of distress, at the approach of death, or

at the day of judgment. " All nations " therefore, " whom
" God hath made," are bound, in interest as well as in
duty, to come and worship before him, and to glorify his
name ; seeing " he is great, and doeth wondrous things,
" and is God alone : " and the time approaches, when
they shall understand their interest, and in this respect do
their duty ; and for this we should pray without ceasing,
and use whatever means we can.—The soul that is born of
God is often more desirous to be taught the way and truth
of God, in order to walk in them, than to be delivered
out of severe distress.

V. 11—17.

The most upright believers find it difficult to attain to
that simplicity and " singleness of heart," which they
long for ; and they still find cause to pray, " Unite my
" heart to fear thy name," O LORD. Nay, the most emi-
nent Christian will most readily confess, that he has de-
served " the lowest hell," and expects deliverance from it
only by the rich mercy of God : and being thus humbled,
and taught to trust in him for salvation, and prepared to
" praise him for it with his whole heart, and to glorify his
" name for evermore," he possesses an evidence, that he
is indeed " delivered from the wrath to come." (*Note,*
1 Thes. i. 9, 10.) But men of this character will often
have reason to complain, that the proud, the violent, and
those who " set not God before them," have arisen against
them to conspire their hurt ; and especially that the powers
of darkness seek after their souls. Still however, the com-
passion, long-suffering, and plentiful mercy and truth of
God, will be their refuge and consolation : to him they
will look for help and strength, as well as for pardon ; and
they will wait on him to give them, from time to time,
some token for good, in their own experience and from
his comforting Spirit, and in the sight of others from his
providential interpositions ; that those who hate them may
see and be ashamed, and either converted or intimidated.—
It is an encouragement to us, when we pray, to recollect,
that others have prayed, or are praying for us : and they,
whose parents were the servants of the Lord, and who
brought them up for him, may urge that as a plea why he
should hear and help them.—But in considering David's
experience, and that of the believer as corresponding with
it ; we must not lose sight of him, " who, though he was
" rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through his
" poverty might be rich." (*Note, 2 Cor. viii. 6—9.*) He
most perfectly served and continually called upon his hea-
venly Father ; and through him the plentiful mercy of our
God is exercised towards the chief of sinners. Being raised
from the dead, he is made triumphant over the assemblies
of proud and violent men, who sought after his soul ; and
" all nations shall come and worship before him," and
glorify the name of the Lord ; but all who hate him shall
be ashamed and perish for ever. May we rely wholly on
his righteousness, propitiation, and intercession, and copy
his example ; and may we learn from him to bear poverty,
hardship, or persecution, with cheerfulness and resigna-
tion ; and to hope and wait for a happy issue out of all
our tribulations.

PSALM LXXXVII.

Zion is honourable above the rest of the land, 1—3; and the church, above the nations of the earth, 4—7.

A Psalm or Song * for the sons of Korah.

^a HIS foundation is in ^b the holy mountains.

2 ^c The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.

3 ^d Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.

4 I will make mention of * Rahab and * Babylon to them that know me: ^f behold Philistia, and ^g Tyre, with ^h Ethiopia; ⁱ this man was born there.

5 And ^k of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and ^l the Highest himself shall establish her.

6 The LORD shall count, ^m when he writeth up the people, ⁿ that ⁿ this man was born there. Selah.

7 ^o As well the singers as the players on instruments *shall be there*: ^p all my springs are in thee.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXVII. V. 1. Some think that this Psalm was composed to be sung, when the foundation of the temple on mount Moriah was laid; or when David fixed on the spot where the temple was to be erected. (Notes, Gen. xxii. 2. 1 Chr. xxi. 26—30. xxii. 1. 2 Chr. iii. 1, 2.) Mount Moriah seems to have been a part of mount Zion. —“It is his” (that is, God’s) “foundation in the mountains of holiness.” Or, “Its foundation,” that is, the temple’s. The abruptness of the beginning shews how full the Psalmist’s mind was of joy and admiration. The tabernacle placed, and the temple afterwards built, by express divine direction, on these holy mountains, were typical of Christ as the Foundation, and of his church, as built on this Foundation, for “an habitation of God through the Spirit.” (Notes, Is. xxviii. 16. 1 Cor. iii. 10—15. Eph. ii. 19—22.)

V. 2. Because of the temple and its typical ordinances, the Lord delighted in Zion more than in all the dwellings of Jacob, and in all the secret and social worship performed by that people, who were selected from the nations of the earth, to be near unto him as his worshippers. (Marg. Ref.—Note, lxxviii. 67—69.)

V. 3. ‘Pleasant for situation, and magnificent in its buildings, Jerusalem was...the joy of the whole earth. ‘There was the royal residence of the kings of Judah; ‘there was the temple and the ark, and the glory, and the ‘King of heaven dwelling in the midst of her; her streets ‘were honoured with the footsteps of the Redeemer of ‘men; there he preached,...and died, and rose again; ‘thither he sent down the Spirit, and there he first laid ‘the foundations of his church.’ Bp. Horne.—The glorious things spoken by the Spirit of prophecy concerning Zion, certainly related to future ages, to the coming of Christ, the gospel sent forth from Jerusalem to all the nations, the establishment of the church, and to that church itself, both as militant on earth, and triumphant in heaven. “For even that which was made glorious,” (in Zion the type and feeble shadow,) “had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth.”—‘Though ‘thy glorious estate do not yet appear, yet wait with patience, and God will accomplish his promise.’ (Marg. Ref.)

V. 4. This is generally understood as a prediction of the calling of men, from all these nations into the church

by the gospel: but it seems rather to be a comparison between the most eminent characters, which other nations had produced, and in whom they gloried; and the worthies of Zion, or the church.—“I am wont to make honourable mention among my acquaintance...of Egypt and ‘Babylon;...bidding them observe that such a notable ‘person was born there.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 5. ‘But what is this to Zion? of whom it shall be ‘said in future times, that...“this and that man,” a great ‘many worthies and far more eminent...were born in her: ‘for she hath no meaner instructor than the Most High, ‘who shall settle her in a flourishing estate, by educating ‘and forming her inhabitants to the most excellent qualities.’ Bp. Patrick.—The word rendered “Man” is generally used for a person of eminence; and the clause “this and that man,” is simply, “a Man and a Man,” which some think is used as a peculiar superlative, and means, *the most eminent of men*, even the Lord Jesus Christ, and they suppose, that He, in his divine nature, is “the ‘Highest” who “shall establish the church.” No doubt, He is the glory of the church, and of his people Israel: (Notes, Luke ii. 25—32. Rom. ix. 4, 5:) but his crucifixion was the deepest disgrace imaginable to Jerusalem itself.—It should here especially be remembered, that almost all the sacred writers belonged to Zion, or to that despised nation, which met to worship at Zion: and no nation on earth, or part of a nation, has been preserved or delivered from idolatry, except through the revelation which God made by the prophets and apostles of Israel. (Notes, Gen. xii. 1—3. Zech. viii. 20—23. Preface to Luke.)

V. 6. [Writeth up the people.] ‘When he calleth by his ‘word them into his church, whom he had elected and ‘written in his book.’—Rather, the Lord will number up, at the last day, all the true children of the church; shew the eminence and excellence of their characters; and contrast them as “one in Christ Jesus,” with all that which the world has admired and celebrated in ungodly men. ‘In ‘the book of life, that register of heaven, kept by God ‘himself, our names are entered, not as born of flesh and ‘blood by the will of man; but as born of water and the ‘Spirit by the will of God: of each person it is written ‘“that he was born there,” in the church and city of ‘God.’ Bp. Horne.

V. 7. ‘The literal version...seems to be, “They shall

PSALM LXXXVIII.

The Psalmist bewails before God his complicated sufferings, with great energy and variety of expression; and pleads earnestly for deliverance, 1—18.

* Or, of.
a liii. title.
† Or, A Psalm of Heman the Ezrahite, giving instruction.
b 1 Kings iv. 31.
1 Chr. ii. 6.

A Song *or* Psalm * for the sons of Korah, to the chief Musician upon ^a Mahalath Leannoth, [†] Maschil of ^b Heman the Ezrahite.

“sing, as those that lead up the dance,” that is, most joyfully: ...and the burden of the song...was to be this, “All my springs...are in thee.” *Bp. Horne.* “The prophet setteth his whole affections and comfort in the church.”—The Psalmist himself evidently decides for the church, and against the world; because all the springs of life and salvation are in the church, and none elsewhere. For “the LORD dwelleth in Zion,” as “God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself;” and “from his fulness” all believers in every age, have received;” as “drawing water with joy from the wells of salvation.”—Perhaps the singing and musick at the sanctuary were mentioned, as external expressions of that joy and praise, which would most abound in the church after the coming of the Messiah. To close the contrast; “All the fountains of life, “the wells of salvation,” whence I “draw water with joy,” day by day, are in Zion, and none elsewhere.” (*Notes, Is. xii. 3—6.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

It is not merely our duty; but our privilege, interest, and whole salvation, to build all our hopes on that foundation, on which God has built his church, and his whole plan of manifesting the glory of all his perfections in complete harmony: and “other foundation can no man lay, than that “is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” Those who build on this holy Foundation, thence derive sanctifying grace, and become a holy temple and priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through him. (*Note, 1 Pet. ii. 4—6.*)—Publick worship, properly conducted, is most honourable, and therefore most acceptable, to the Lord; and ought not by any means to be neglected by those, who would be accounted denizens of the city of our God. When we duly consider the glorious things, which are spoken of her pleasant situation, her holy temple, her royal palaces, her fortifications; her righteous King, and his wise, just, and merciful government; the character of her inhabitants; and all their privileges, immunities, and durable advantages; we can do no other than desire to be enrolled among her citizens.—After all the encomiums, which have been lavished on the heroes, statesmen, orators, poets, and philosophers, of whom Egypt, China, Greece, and Rome, and all other nations have boasted; impartiality must allow, that the despised church of God has produced an illustrious and numerous catalogue of worthies, who have done immensely more to render mankind wise, holy, and happy, than all who have appeared on earth besides. Though Emmanuel, the divine Saviour, born of Israel’s race, as Zion’s most glorious Son, her honour and felicity, infinitely outshines all the rest; yet his followers are justly deserving of esteem, applause, and

O * LORD God of my salvation, ^d I have cried day *and* night before thee:

2 * Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry;

3 For ^f my soul is full of troubles, and ^e my life draweth nigh unto the grave.

2 Tim. i. 2. e lxxix. 11. cxli. 1, 2. 1 Kings viii. 31. Lam. iii. 8. f 14, 15. xxii. 11—21. lxxix. 17—21. lxxvii. 2. cxliii. 3, 4. Job vi. 2—4. Is. liii. 3. 10, 11. Lam. iii. 15—19. Matt. xxvi. 27—39. Mark xiv. 33, 34. g cvii. 18. Job xxxiii. 22.

c xxvii. 1. li. 14. lxii. 7. lxxv. 5. lxxviii. 19, 20. lxxix. 9. cxl. 7. Gen. xlix. 18. Is. xii. 2. Luke i. 47. ii. 30. Tit. ii. 10, 13. iii. 4—7. d xxii. 2. lxxxvi. 3. Neh. i. 6. Is. lxii. 6. Luke ii. 37. xviii. 7. 1 Thes. iii. 10. f 14, 15. g cvii. 18. Job xxxiii. 22.

gratitude, above all other men. But no one expects that they will receive due honour, who reflects how the Son of God himself, and his prophets and apostles were treated, as they severally appeared on earth, and performed their respective services to mankind. But in the records of heaven the meanest of those who are “born again” stands registered: “the Lord himself, when he writeth up the “people,” will allow them all the privileges of citizens of Zion, and honour them before the assembled world; and this honour and happiness alone are worthy of the ardent desires of all men, in every age and every clime. For “the Highest himself shall establish Zion:” a vast and eternal revenue of praise will redound to him, from his church of redeemed sinners, and their joy to eternity shall equal their largest capacities. All the springs of life and consolation are in the church alone: and those who draw not from these wells of salvation, will most certainly be forever put off with broken cisterns which can hold no water.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXVIII. *Title.* Heman the Ezrahite, so distinguished, according to the general opinion of learned men, as a descendant of Zerah, the son of Judah, was a different person from Heman the chief singer, in the days of David, who was a Levite. (*Notes, 1 Kings iv. 30—34. 1 Chr. ii. 5, 6. xxv. 1—6.*) But it is not at all certain, at what time, or on what occasion, the psalm was composed.—Some think the word *Leannoth* signifies, “for dejection,” as almost the whole psalm is the emphatic language of the deepest despondency: but others suppose the word to mean no more, than that the psalm was to be sung responsively, and that it is merely a musical term.

V. 1, 2. Probably the Psalmist wrote this psalm under heavy afflictions and great distress of soul, and meant to describe his own case: yet the language unavoidably leads the thoughts of the attentive reader to the Redeemer, who was doubtless intended by the Holy Spirit; and the history of his closing scene forms the best comment upon it.—It is called by many ‘a penitential psalm:’ but there is not one confession of sin, or prayer for pardon, contained in it; nor one comfortable word, except the address, “O “LORD God of my salvation,” which may be applied to Christ with reference to his deliverance from his sufferings and enemies. (*Marg. Ref.*)—‘The lxxxviii Psalm agree; ‘in all things with the xxii and the lxix Psalms, which is ‘an argument, that it ought to be explained by us in the ‘same manner. It contains therefore equally a prayer of ‘Christ to the Father, poured out from the cross.’ *Vitringa in Bp. Horne.* It is with this view of it, that it is appointed by our church, as one of the proper Psalms on Good Friday.

V. 3. (*Notes, xxii. 1—21. lxix. 1—21. Matt. xxvi. 36*

4 ^h I am counted with them that go down into the pit: I am ⁱ as a man *that hath* no strength:
5 ^k Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, ^l whom thou rememberest no more: and they are ^m cut off ^{*} from thy hand.
6 Thou hast laid me ⁿ in the lowest pit, ^o in darkness, ^p in the deeps.
7 ^q Thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted *me* ^r with all thy waves. Selah.
8 ^s Thou hast put away mine acquaintance far from me; ^t thou hast made me an abomination unto them:

b xxviii. 1. xxx. 9. cxliii. 7. Job xvii. 1. Is. xxxviii. 17, 18. Ez. xxvi. 20. Jon. ii. 6. 2 Cor. i. 9.
i xxxi. 12. cix. 22—24. Rom. v. 6. 2 Cor. xiii. 4.
k Is. xiv. 9—12. xxxviii. 10—12. Ez. xxxii. 18—32.
l cxxxvi. 23. Gen. viii. 1. xix. 29. m 16. xxxi. 22. Job vi. 9. xi. 10. * Or, by thy hand. n xl. 2. lxxxvii. 13. Deut. xxxii. 22. o cxliii. 3. Prov. iv. 19. Lam. iii. 2. John xii. 46. Jude 6. 13.
p lxix. 15. cxxx. 1.
q xxxviii. 1—6. xc. 7—11. cii. 10. Job vi. 4. x. 16. John iii. 36. Rom. ii. 5—9. Rev. vi. 16, 17. r xlii. 7. Jon. ii. 3. s 18. xxxi. 11. cxlii. 4. 1 Sam. xxiii. 18—20. Job xix. 13—19. John xi. 57. t Is. xlix. 7. liii. 3. Zech. xi. 8. Matt. xxvii. 21—25. John xv. 23, 24.

I am shut up, and I cannot come forth.
9 ^x Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: LORD, ^y I have called daily upon thee, ^z I have stretched out my hands unto thee.
10 ^a Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? ^b shall the dead arise *and* praise thee? Selah.
11 Shall thy loving-kindness be declared in the grave? *or* thy faithfulness ^c in destruction?
12 Shall thy wonders be known ^d in the dark? and thy righteousness ^e in the land of forgetfulness?
13 But unto thee have I cried, O

u Job xix. 8. Lam. iii. 7—9.
x xxxviii. 10. xlii. 3. cii. 9. Job xvi. 20. xvii. 7. Lam. iii. 48, 49. John xi. 35. y See on l.—iv. 17. lxxxvi. 3. z xli. 20. lxxviii. 31. cxliii. 6. Ez. xvii. 11. Job xi. 13.
a vi. 5. xxx. 9. cxv. 17. cxviii. 17. Is. xxxviii. 18, 19. Mark v. 35, 36.
b Job xiv. 7—12. Is. xxvi. 19. Ez. xxxvii. 1—14. Luke vii. 12—16. 1 Cor. xv. 52—57.
c lv. 23. lxxxiii. 18. Job xxi. 30. xxvi. 6. Prov. xv. 11. Matt. vii. 13. Rom. ix. 22. 2 Pet. ii. 1.
d cxliii. 3. Job x. 21, 22. Is. viii. 22. Matt. viii. 12. Jude 13.
e 5 xxxi. 12. Ec. ii. 16. viii. 10. ix. b.

—39.) “Full” indeed “of troubles,” was thy soul, ‘blessed Jesus, in that dreadful hour, when, under the ‘united weight of our sins and sorrows, thou wert sinking ‘into the grave. ... Let us judge of thy love by thy suffer- ‘ings, and of both by the impossibility of our fully com- ‘prehending them.’ *Bp. Horne. (Marg. Ref.—Note, Eph. iii. 14—19.)*
V. 4. Christ ‘died to all appearance, like the rest of ‘mankind; nay, he was forcibly put to death as a male- ‘factor, and seemed in the hands of his executioners “as ‘“a man that had no strength.” ... The people shook ‘their heads at him, saying, “He saved others, himself ‘“he cannot save.”’ *Bp. Horne. (Notes, Matt. xxvii. 39—44. 2 Cor. xiii. 1—4.)*
V. 5. A dead man has done with, and is *free* from, the concerns of this world. (*Note, Job iii. 11—19.*) So long as he lived, he was the object of God’s providential care: but when he is laid in the grave, he seems forgotten and cut off from his hand; that is, until the resurrection. (*Notes, Job xiv. 7—15.*) Thus the Psalmist thought, that he had done with life, and all its interests, employments, comforts, and cares; (*Notes, Is. xxxviii. 9—13. 17—20;*) and should be no more regarded by Providence, than the dead corpses of men slain in battle, and thrown into one common grave, appear to be. Thus Christ, when expiring on the cross, seemed to be deserted and forgotten by God; and when he was laid in the sepulchre, the Jewish rulers concluded that by sealing and guarding his body, they should cause his name and doctrine to be speedily forgotten. (*Notes, Matt. xxvii. 62—66.*)
V. 6—9. (*Marg. Ref.*) Many of the emphatical expressions, here employed, are nearly similar to those, which more evidently relate to the sufferings of Christ, (especially in the Psalms above referred to,) at the awful season in which his enemies, urged on by the powers of darkness, nailed him to the cross, insulted him when expiring, and rejoiced when they had shut his body up in the dark and gloomy sepulchre: but, in accession to all that they could do, “it pleased the Lord to bruise him,” and “to make his soul an offering for sin:” yea, he “was ‘made a curse for us.” (*Notes, Is. liii. 9, 10. Gal. iii. 10—14.*) Thus he was laid, by the Lord himself, “in the

‘lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps:” because “the ‘wrath of God lay hard on him, and he was afflicted with “all his waves.”—In the mean while, his disciples forsook him, Judas betrayed him, Peter denied him, all were afraid or ashamed to own him; and he was left bound and in confinement without redress; though he just before “had ‘offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying “and tears, unto him that was able to save him from “death; and was heard, in that he feared.” (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 18. xxxi. 10—13. Job xix. 5—22. John xvi. 31—33.*)
V. 10—12. It was not to be expected, that the dead should arise from the grave, or the soul return from the place of departed spirits, to praise God in his congregations on earth, and celebrate among them his power, truth, and mercy: and therefore the Psalmist may seem to plead for present deliverance, as Hezekiah and others did. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, vi. 5. xxx. 9, 10. Is. xxxviii. 17—20.*) But, considering the psalm as the language of our suffering Redeemer, these verses may be explained as his earnest prayer to be carried through his arduous work; that “his soul “might not be left in hell, nor his flesh see corruption:” but that he might make known to men the way of salvation, to the praise of the Lord’s power, mercy, and truth; and, as the first-fruits of the resurrection, not only preserve their souls from destruction, but also raise their bodies from the grave, that land of darkness and forgetfulness. (*Notes, xxii. 22—31. lxix. 29—36.*)—The word rendered “de- ‘struction” is *Abaddon*, which St. John gives as a name of the devil, that great *destroyer*, or of one of his principal ministers in the work of destruction. It seems therefore to denote the pit of destruction, as the other words do the grave. (*Note, Rev. ix. 11.*)—Without the mercy of God in Christ, the bodies of all sinners must have finally been left in the grave, and their souls in hell: for “he “is the Resurrection and the Life.” (*Note, John xi. 20—27.*)
V. 13. ‘Thus I cry in the anguish of my soul, which ‘keeps me awake, to present my prayers unto thee before ‘the morning light.’ *Bp. Patrick. Prevent thee.] ‘Come more early before thee, than is usual with men.’ (Mark i. 35.)*

^f See on v. 3. LORD; 'and in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee.

^g xliii. 2. lxxvii. 7. —9. Matt. xxvii. 46. 14 LORD, 'why castest thou off my soul? ^h why hidest thou thy face from me?

^h xliii. 1. xlii. 24. lxix. 17. Job xlii. 24. lxxiii. 14. Job xvii. 1. 11—16. Is liii. 3. 15 'I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up: ^k while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted.

^k xxii. 14, 15. Job vi. 4. vii. 11—16. Is. liii. 10. Zech. xlii. 7. Luke xxii. 44.

16 'Thy fierce wrath goeth over^l me; thy terrors have^m cut me off.

17 'They came round about meⁿ daily like water; they compassed me about together.

18 ° Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness.

l xxxviii. 1, 2. lxxxix. 46. xc. 7. li. cii. 10. Is. liii. 4—6. Rom. viii. 32. Gal. iii. 13. m Is. liii. 8. Dan. ix. 26. n xxii. 16. xlii. 7. lxix. 1, 2. cxvi. 3. Job xvi. 12, 13. xxx. 14, 15. Lam. iii. 5—7. Matt. xxvii. 35 —44. * Or, all the day. o 8. xxxi. 11. Job xix. 12—15.

V. 14. *Castest off.*] "About the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, ... saying, ... My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Matt. xxvii. 46.*)

V. 15. By a trivial change in the pointing, this verse may be rendered, "I am afflicted and expiring: from my youth I suffer thy terrors; I am distracted."—"I am now in the greatest anguish, and about to expire." From my youth, I looked forward to this dreadful season; knowing what I had to endure from thy wrath against the sins of men. Thus I have been "a man of sorrows" all my life. And I am now so distressed, that I am at a loss what to do.—The original words in the Gospel of St. Mark, respecting our Lord's agony in the garden, (*ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι, καὶ ἀδημονεῖν*), seem exactly to convey the meaning of the word (*דַּחְסָה*) here rendered *distracted*. (*Note, Mark xiv. 32—36.*) He was filled with amazement, horror, anguish, and dejection, beyond all utterance and conception.

Distracted.] *דַּחְסָה*; *animi dubii sum, vel animi pendeo*. ... *Qui metuit et sollicitus est, cogitat, ne forte hoc, aut ne forte illud eveniat.* Robertson.

V. 16, 17. "He was cut off from the land of the living." "It pleased the LORD to bruise him." "He spared not his own Son." (*Note, Rom. viii. 28—32.*)—The terrors that pursued, and environed, and overwhelmed the suffering Redeemer, in that "hour and power of darkness," cannot be known, even by those who know most of "the terrors of the Lord."—The original is peculiarly emphatical.

Terrors. (16) *φοβερισμοί*. Sept.—*Have cut me off.*] *צָרָהּ*. *Quidam ob geminationem exponunt, pro, ita arc-tare et constringere, ut respirare, aut evadere nequeat.* Robertson.

V. 18. 'It is mentioned again, as a most affecting instance of Christ's passion, that he was entirely forsaken, and left all alone, in that dreadful day. ... His "lovers" and "friends," his disciples and acquaintance "were put far from him;" they all "forsook him and fled," to hide themselves from the fury of the Jews, "in darkness," "in dark, that is, in secret places." *Bp. Horne.*—But the darkness and distress of the minds of our Lord's disciples, at this doleful crisis, seem likewise to have been predicted. (*Note, 6—9.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The sacred Scriptures, if carefully investigated, will continually remind us of the apostle's words; "Let us lay aside every weight, ... and let us run with patience the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus, ... who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame." *Heb. xii. 1, 2.* When his life drew nigh unto the grave, his soul was full of trouble; and

his gloom was as deep, as could possibly consist with the perfect exercise of faith, and hope, and love. The enmity and insult of those, who "counted him with them" "that go down into the pit" of destruction, and despised him as one deprived of strength and help; his confinement, bonds, and stripes, and dying pains; the treachery, cowardice, and neglect of his disciples, professed friends, and acquaintance; who either stood aloof from his sufferings, or turned away from him as an abomination, while his enemies compassed him about like floods of water, and all the hosts of hell assaulted his soul;—all these things formed a vast aggregate of sufferings beyond what human language can express. But the wrath of God infused the greatest bitterness into his cup: this lay hard upon him, and weighed him down into "the lowest pit, in darkness, "in the deeps." The very prospect of this indignation afflicted him, and made him "ready to die," from his youth up: and when he actually suffered these terrors, he was as one distracted. Still, however, the Redeemer cried day and night unto his heavenly Father, and stretched out his hands unto him, as in the utmost extremity of distress "in his agony he prayed more earnestly," and his prayer was indeed heard and accepted; (*Note, Heb. v. 7—10;*) though he seemed to be cast off, and no more remembered, than a dead man who is laid in the grave. But there was no reason for the Saviour's unequalled sorrows, in any part of his own conduct: perfectly free from sin himself, and infinitely dear to his heavenly Father, "he was wounded for our transgressions," and bare the heavy wrath of God due to our sins. While therefore we hear him plead to be delivered and exalted, that he might shew forth the loving-kindness, righteousness, faithfulness, and wonderful works of God, in the salvation of his people; let us consider what our case would have been, if we had been left to bear this wrath of God for ourselves; and what they will endure who "neglect so great salvation;" that we may know the value of his love, and feel the immensity of our obligations.—And should any of us, wretched sinners, be left to experience anguish of spirit, terrors of conscience, and horrible temptations; should we suffer tribulation from the world, in such various forms, and with so many embittering circumstances, as to be constrained to appropriate some of the expressions of this most doleful psalm; still let us remember, that we are not in "the depths of hell," and may therefore yet hope in the Lord God of salvation. Let us persevere in earnest prayer, and plead the glory which will arise to him from saving us rather than from destroying us; while we desire to be monuments of his mercy, that we may be employed in celebrating his praises. Let us remember, that every affliction comes from his hand, from whom alone we expect relief; and that all creatures are his instruments. Let us also recollect the

PSALM LXXXIX.

The Psalmist praises God for his covenanted mercies to David: celebrating his greatness, excelsiency, and wonderful works; and shewing the felicity of his people, 1—18. He enlarges on the promises of the covenant made with David and his Seed, 19—37. He complains of the afflicted state of David's kingdom, with earnest prayers and expostulations, 38—51.

He concludes with blessing the Lord, 52.

* Maschil of ^a Ethan the Ezrahite.

I WILL sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: ^c with my mouth will

* Or, A Psalm for Ethan the Ezrahite, to give instruction.

^a 1 Kings iv. 31

^b 1 Chr. ii. 6.

^c lxxxvi. 12, 13.

^d ci. 1. cvi. 1.

^e cxxxvi. 1, &c.

^f xl. 9, 10. lxxi.

^g 8. 15—19.

glory that followed our Redeemer's extreme suffering. Let us not then yield to impatience, or to despair; but still expect a day of comfort, after the darkest and most tedious nights of temptation. And even if we should be forced to conclude one prayer after another, without a glimpse of encouragement; let us begin again and again, and still hope against hope, and we shall at length prevail. But, if we are exempted from such dreadful trials, let us bless the Lord for it, and sympathize with, and pray for, our afflicted and tempted brethren.

NOTES.

PSALM LXXXIX. *Title.* Many learned men are of opinion, that this psalm was written during the Babylonish captivity, when, the family of David being entirely dethroned, the promises of God seemed to be made void: but if it were composed at so late a period; no account can possibly be given why it was ascribed to Ethan the Ezrahite. (*Marg. Ref. a.*) Indeed, it seems to contain internal evidence, that it belongs to earlier times: for none of the deliverances vouchsafed to the kings or people of Judah, after the days of David, are mentioned in it: and the Psalmist, in complaining of the degraded and deplorable condition of David's family, is silent as to any desolations of Jerusalem and the temple, and the captivity and dispersion of the people; which the psalms evidently relating to Nebuchadnezzar's devastations particularly insist upon. It seems therefore to have been written on occasion of some events, in which the honour and power of the kings of David's race were fallen, and apparently ruined; but, without either the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, or the captivity of the people: and what period so exactly suits this view of the subject, as the reign of Rehoboam? Ten of the tribes of Israel had revolted from him; Jeroboam, the king placed over them, was his powerful adversary; and Shishak, king of Egypt, so entirely reduced and impoverished him, that he only seems to have retained the kingdom, by the clemency, and perhaps contempt, of his haughty conqueror. (*Notes, 1 Kings xii. 16—24. xiv. 22—30. 2 Chr. xii. 1—11.*)—It is probable, that "Ethan the Ezrahite" lived in the reign of Solomon: and if he survived him, and witnessed these events, after having seen the glory and power of Solomon's kingdom; it would be very natural for him to lament the change, in the language made use of towards the close of

I make known ^d thy faithfulness to ^f all generations.

2 For I have said, ^e Mercy shall be built up for ever: ^f thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens.

3 ^g I have made a covenant with ^h my chosen, ⁱ I have sworn unto David ^f my servant;

4 ^k Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah.

Notes. Ez. xxxiv. 23, 24. Hos. iii. 5. Luke i. 32, 33. h 19. lxxviii. 70. i 35. cxxxii. 11. 2 Sam. iii. 9. Acts ii. 30. Heb. vii. 21. k 29. 36. lxxii. 17. cxxxii. 12. 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. 29. 1 Kings ix. 5. 1 Chr. xvii. 11—14. xxii. 10. Is. ix. 6, 7. Zech. xii. 8. Luke i. 32, 33. xx. 41—44. Acts xiii. 32—37. Rom. i. 3, 4. xv. 12. Phil. ii. 9—11. Rev. xxii. 16.

the psalm.—As the preceding psalm, ascribed to Heman, seems to have been occasioned by his private trials and distresses, and yet was an evident prophecy of the sufferings of Christ; perhaps this psalm, occasioned by the calamities which had befallen David's race, may likewise be considered as a prophecy of the afflictions and persecutions, to which the Christian church has been exposed; and especially of the triumphs of the Roman Antichrist.

V. 1—4. The Psalmist, being about to deplore the *apparent* failure of the covenant made with David, begins with declaring his determined purpose of praising for ever the mercies and faithfulness of God, which he desired to make known to all future generations. (*Notes, cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2.*) Indeed he was assured that his words, being dictated by the Holy Spirit, would continue through all generations, as a testimony to this effect. For he had said, and he would not retract it, however appearances might then be; that the mercy, of which the foundation had been laid in the covenant with David, would be "built up for ever;" and that the faithfulness of God to his promises would be "established in the heavens;" or like them, that is, above the reach of the changes which take place in this lower world. These emphatical expressions are literally verified in the kingdom of Christ, the promised Seed of David, whose throne is established in heaven, and whose true subjects will all be exalted thither.—The Psalmist then introduces JEHOVAH himself declaring the purport of this covenant made with his chosen servant David and his posterity.—"The covenant relates to David's "seed;" and to the "establishment of his throne in that seed," literally "in Solomon for a time; spiritually in Christ, for ever—" "When thy days shall be fulfilled, ... I will set up thy "seed after thee. ... He shall build an house for my "name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for "ever. I will be his Father, and he shall be my son." These last words are cited by the apostle, *Heb. i. 5*, as "spoken of Christ, to evince his superiority over the angels. Yet that the whole passage does, in the letter, relate to Solomon, can admit of no doubt; he being the "seed" and immediate "successor" of David, and appointed to "build an house for God's name." Here then we have an incontestable proof that the covenant with David had Messiah for its object; that Solomon was a figure of him; and that the Scripture hath sometimes a "double sense." *Bp. Horne. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 19—37. 2 Sam. vii. 8—16.)*

1 xix. 1. 1. 6. xcvi. 6. Is. xlv. 23. Luke ii. 10—15. Eph. iii. 10. 1 Pet. i. 12. Rev. v. 11—14. vii. 10—12.

5 And ¹ the heavens shall praise thy wonders, O LORD; thy faithfulness also ^m in the congregation of the saints.

2. Dan. vii. 10. 2 Thes. i. 7. Heb. xii. 22, 23. Jude 14, 15. Rev. xix. 1—6.

6 For ⁿ who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? *who* among ^o the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?

3. Jer. x. 6. o xxiv. 1. Marg. iii. 1. p lxxvi. 7—11. Lev. x. 3. Is. vi. 2—7. lxxvi. 2. Jer. x. 7. 10. Matt. x. 28. Luke xii. 4, 5. Acts v. 11. Heb. xii. 28, 29. Rev. xv. 3, 4.

7 ^p God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all *them that are* about him.

q lxxiv. 12. Josh. xxii. 22. Is. xxviii. 22. r 13. xxiv. 8. cxlvii. 5. 1 Sam. xv. 29. Job ix. 19. Is. xl. 25, 26. Jer. xxxii. 17. Matt. vi. 13.

8 O ^q LORD God of hosts, who is ^r a strong LORD ^s like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

s lxxi. 19. Deut. xxxii. 31. 1 Sam. ii. 2. t xxix. 10. lxxv. 7. lxxvi. 5, 6. xciii. 3, 4. cvii. 25—29. Job xxxviii. 9—11. Nah. i. 4. Matt. viii. 24—27. xiv. 32.

9 Thou ^t rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

u lxxviii. 43, &c. cv. 27, &c. Ex. vii.—xv. * Or, Egypt. lxxvii. 4. Is. li. 9. x lix. 11. lxxviii. 30. cxliv. 6. Is. xxiv. 1. † Heb. the arm of thy strength. Ex. iii. 19, 20. Deut. iv. 34. y xxiv. 1, 2. 1. 12. cxv. 16. Gen. i. 1. ii. 1. 1 Chr. xxix. 11. Job xli. 11. 1 Cor. x. 26. 28.

10 ^u Thou hast broken ^{*} Rahab in pieces, as one that is slain; ^x thou hast scattered thine enemies with [†] thy strong arm.

11 ^y The heavens *are* thine, the earth also is thine: *as for* the world, and the

fulness thereof, thou hast founded them.

12 ^z The north and the south thou hast created them: ^a Tabor and ^b Hermon shall ^c rejoice in thy name.

13 Thou hast ^a a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, *and* high is thy right hand.

14 ^d Justice and judgment *are* the ^e habitation of thy throne: ^e mercy and truth shall go before thy face.

15 Blessed is the people that ^f know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O LORD, ^g in the light of thy countenance.

16 ^h In thy name shall they rejoice all the day: and ⁱ in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.

17 For ^k thou *art* the glory of their strength: and in thy favour ^l our horn shall be exalted.

18 ^m For ⁿ the LORD *is* our Defence; and ⁿ the Holy One of Israel *is* ^o our King.

k xxviii. 7. 1 Cor. i. 30, 31. 2 Cor. xii. 9, 10. Phil. iv. 13. 124. lxxv. 10. cxii. 9. cxxxii. 17. cxlviii. 14. 1 Sam. ii. 1, 10. m lxii. 1, 2. 6. xci. 1, 2. Deut. xxxiii. 27—29. n Or, our Shield is of the LORD, and our King is of the Holy One of Israel. xlvii. 9. lxxxiv. 11. Gen. xv. 1. n lxxi. 22. Is. i. 4. xii. 6. xxix. 19. xxx. 11. xliii. 3. 14. o xlv. 4. Is. xxxiii. 22.

z Job xxvi. 7. a Josh. xix. 22. Judg. iv. 6. b cxxxiii. 3. Deut. iii. 8, 9. Josh. xii. 1. c lxxv. 12, 13. Is. xxxv. 1, 2. xlix. 13. lv. 12, 13. † Heb. an arm with might. 10. lxii. 11. Dan. iv. 34, 35. Matt. vi. 13. d xlv. 6, 7. xcvi. 2. xcix. 4. cxlv. 17. Deut. xxxii. 4. Rev. xv. 3. § Or, establishment. Prov. xvi. 12. e 2. lxxxv. 13. John i. 17. f xcvi. 4—6. c. 1. Lev. xxv. 9. Num. x. 10. xxiii. 21. Is. lii. 7, 8. Nah. i. 15. Luke ii. 10—14. Rom. x. 15. g Num. vi. 26. Job xxix. 3. Prov. xvi. 15. Is. ii. 5. John xiv. 21—23. Acts ii. 28. Rev. xxi. 23. h 12. xx. 5. 7. xxxii. 21. xlv. 8. Luke i. 47. Phil. iv. 4. i xl. 10. lxxi. 15, 16. Is. xlv. 24, 25. xvi. 13. Jer. xxxiii. 6. Rom. i. 17. iii. 21—26. 2 Cor. v. 21. Phil. iii. 9.

V. 5. Notwithstanding present difficulties, the Psalmist was confident that God would perform such wonders in fulfilling his covenant, as would excite the praises of all the inhabitants of heaven; as well as cause his saints on earth in their assemblies to celebrate his faithfulness. (Notes, 6—12. 1. 4—6. xcvi. 3—7. Is. xlv. 23—28. Luke ii. 8—14. Eph. iii. 9—12. 1 Pet. i. 10—12. Rev. v. 8—14. xix. 1—6.)—*Congregation of the saints.* 7. Notes, Deut. xxxiii. 2. Jude 14—16.

V. 6—12. The majesty, holiness, wisdom, and power of God, infinitely excelling all the endowments of the noblest creatures, demand the reverential fear of all the assembled saints on earth, and of the angels who surround his throne in heaven; and accordingly “the assembly of his “holy ones,” all the holy worshippers in heaven stand in awe of him, abhor whatever would offend him, and worship him with the most profound veneration of his manifested glory: and his saints on earth ought, in the same spirit, to wait the event of their difficulties and trials. The word rendered “to be feared,” is translated *reverend* cxi. 9.—The Lord, by his “power” would certainly manifest his *faithfulness*: as he rules and bounds the raging ocean, which none else can govern; so would he restrain the progress of those enemies, who seemed about to swallow up his church with irresistible force and fury. “The extent of the ocean, the “multitude of its waves, and their fury, when excited by “a storm, render it in that state, the most tremendous “object in nature: nor doth any thing, which man beholds, “give him so just an idea, of human impotence, and of “that divine power, which can excite and calm so boisterous an element, at pleasure.” Bp. Horne. (Notes, lxxv. 6, 7. xciii. 3, 4. Job xxxviii. 8—11. Matt. viii. 23—27.)—

The God of Israel had formerly broken Rahab, (or Egypt,) and delivered his people, and afterwards crushed the nations of Canaan; and with his strong arm he was able to scatter their present enemies. (Note, Is. li. 9—11.) Being the Creator and Proprietor of heaven and earth, and having chosen Israel as his people; he would certainly make the land in all its parts, from north to south, from east to west, (which Tabor and Hermon, two distant mountains, represented,) to rejoice in his name, and resound with his praise.—*Strong LORD.* (8) JAH. Note, lxxviii. 4.

V. 13, 14. (Marg. Ref.) JEHOVAH's throne is *established* in justice and judgment: his almighty power and sovereign authority are always exercised in perfect justice and wisdom, and in entire consistency with his mercy and truth; and these mark out the path in which he walks with his people. “Thou dost not rule the world merely by thy “absolute power; but hast placed thy principal glory in “justice and equity, mercy and fidelity, from which thou “never swervest.” Bp. Patrick. “After this model should “the thrones of princes, and the tribunals of earthly magistrates be constituted in justice and judgment, adorned “with mercy and truth.” Bp. Horne. (Notes, xxv. 10. xlv. 6, 7. lxxxv. 10—13. lxxxvi. 14, 15. xciii. 1, 2. xcix. 4. John i. 17.)

Habitation. (14) מִקְוֶה: *Basis, sedes.* The *foundation, support, establishment, or prepared place*, of thy throne.

V. 15—18. (Notes, Lev. xxv. 8—13.—P. O. Num. x. 1—10.) The sound of the sacred trumpets, calling the people to their solemn feasts, and announcing the year of jubilee, seems here alluded to. If the difference between that typical dispensation and the clear light of Christianity be duly considered; it will be allowed, that those who at-

19 ¶ Then ^pthou spakest in vision to ^athy Holy One, and saidst, ^rI have laid help upon *one that is* mighty, ^sI have exalted *one* chosen out of the people.

20 ^tI have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him;

21 ^uWith whom my hand shall be established: ^xmine arm also shall strengthen him.

22 ^yThe enemy shall not exact upon him; nor ^zthe son of wickedness afflict him.

23 And ^aI will beat down his foes before his face, and ^bplague them that hate him.

24 But ^cmy faithfulness and my mercy *shall be* with him: and ^din my name shall his horn be exalted.

25 ^eI will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.

26 He shall cry unto me, ^f'Thou art my Father, ^gmy God, and ^hthe Rock of my salvation.

27 Also ⁱI will make him *my* first-born, ^khigher than the kings of the earth.

^k ii. 10—12. lxxii. 11. Num. xxiv. 7. 2 Chr. i. 12. ix. 23, 24. Is. xlix. 7. Rev. xxi. 24.

28 ^lMy mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and ^mmy covenant shall stand fast with him.

29 ⁿHis seed also will I make *to endure* for ever, and ^ohis throne as ^pthe days of heaven.

30 ^qIf his children ^rforsake my law, and ^swalk not in my judgments;

31 If they ^tbreak my statutes, and keep not my commandments;

32 ^uThen will I visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes.

33 ^vNevertheless my loving-kindness will I ^wnot utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to ^xfail.

34 ^yMy covenant will I not break, ^znor alter the thing *that is* gone out of my lips.

35 ^aOnce have I sworn by my holiness, ^bthat I will not lie unto David.

36 ^cHis Seed shall endure for ever, ^dand his throne as the sun before me.

37 It shall be established for ^eever as the moon, and ^fas ^ga faithful witness in heaven. Selah.

Mal. iii. 6. Matt. xxiv. 35. Rom. xi. 29. Jam. i. 17. z Ps. cx. 4. cxxxii. 11. Am. iv. 2. viii. 7. Heb. vi. 13. 17. § Heb. *If I lie*. 2 Tim. ii. 13. Tit. i. 2. a 4. 29. 2 Sam. vii. 16. Is. liii. 10. lix. 21. John xii. 34. b lxxii. 5. 17. Is. ix. 7. Jer. xxxiii. 20. Luke i. 33. c lxxii. 7. civ. 19. Gen. i. 14—18. Jer. xxxi. 35, 36. d Gen. ix. 13—16. Is. liv. 9, 10.

tentively hear, who understand, believe, and obey the gospel, who experience its efficacy upon their hearts, and bring forth the fruits of it in their lives, are "the people that know the joyful sound." Such persons are happy: they walk in the comfort of God's manifested presence and favour; they rejoice in his *name*, or perfections, as their security and felicity; they are "made the righteousness of God in Christ," and even the justice of God ensures their exaltation; they glory in him as their Strength, and give him the glory of all that they are enabled to do; and his favour will exalt them above all their enemies, as it is their ornament and honour: for they are now the subjects of the Holy One of Israel, their King, and entitled to his omnipotent protection. (Notes, i. 1—3. xxxii. 1, 2. lxx. 4. Matt. v. 3—12.)—The old translation renders the eighteenth verse more literally, "For our shield *appertaineth* to the LORD, and our king to the Holy One of Israel." (Marg.) 'Though the kings of David's race be at present enfeebled and unable to defend us: yet their cause, as placed over the people of God, and as types of the Messiah, Israel's King, is his cause, and he will not suffer it to be permanently run down. (Note, Is. vii. 2.) The LORD, the Holy One of Israel, will take care of our king, that he may be the shield of his true worshippers.' (Marg. Ref.—Note, 2 Chr. xiii. 4—12.)

V. 19—37. Samuel may be meant, as "the holy one," or the saint and prophet of God, to whom He spake in vision respecting David; for "holy men of God spake as

"they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (Notes, 1 Sam. xiii. 13—15. xv. 26—28. xvi. 1, 2. 6—13. 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.) The Lord had made trial of several others to govern his people, but had laid them aside again. After Saul's rejection, he found David, and chose him from among the people, and endued him with courage and capacity, that he might exalt him to the throne, and lay help upon him for the deliverance and prosperity of Israel: but especially, that he might be a type of Christ, that Mighty One, who in human nature is chosen and qualified to fill the mediatorial throne, for the salvation of his people. The Lord, by the hands of Samuel, anointed David with the holy oil: not only as an emblem of the graces and gifts conferred upon him; but as a type of Christ, the King, Priest, and Prophet, whom the Father provided, and anointed with the Holy Spirit without measure.—After David had been anointed, he was exposed to severe trials and persecutions, especially from Saul, that "son of wickedness:" but none could obtain any advantage against him, either by policy or power; for the Lord powerfully established and strengthened him, and finally made him victorious over every enemy, and brought terrible plagues on those who hated him. He also established his authority over all Israel, and extended his dominion from the Mediterranean sea to the Euphrates: and while David adhered to the worship of the Lord, as "his Father, his God, and the Rock of his salvation;" he was treated as his first-born or favourite son, and made higher and more honourable than the kings of the

e xlv. 9, &c. lx.
1. 13. xxvii. 7.
Jer. xii. 1.
lxxviii. 59. cvi.
40. Deut. xxxii.
19. Lam. ii. 7.
Zech. xi. 8.
g 51. lxxxiv. 9.
2 Sam. i. 21. xv.
26. 2 Chr. xii. 1
—12. Lam. iv.
20. Zech. xiii. 7.
h 34—36. lxxvii.
10. cxvi. 1.
John xiii. 7.
i 44. lxxiv. 7.
cxliii. 3. Is. xxv.
12. xliii. 28.
Lam. v. 16.
k lxxx. 12. Job i.
10. Is. v. 5.
2 Chr. xii. 2—5.
xv. 5. Lam. ii. 2.
5. Rev. xiii. 1—7.

38 ¶ But thou hast cast off ^f and
abhorred, thou hast been ^g wroth with
thine anointed.

39 Thou hast ^h made void the co-
venant of thy servant: ⁱ thou hast pro-
faned his crown by casting it to the
ground.

40 Thou hast ^k broken down all his
hedges; thou hast ^l brought his strong
holds to ruin.

41 ^m All that pass by the way spoil

m xlv 10—14. lxxx. 13. Is. x. 6. Jer. i. 17.

him: ⁿ he is a reproach to his neigh-
bours.

42 Thou hast ^o set up the right hand
of his adversaries; thou hast made all
his enemies to rejoice.

43 Thou hast also ^p turned the edge
of his sword, and ^q hast not made him
to stand in the battle.

44 Thou ^r hast made his ^s glory to
cease, and ^t cast his throne down to the
ground.

2. 2 Thes. ii. 3—10.

* Heb. brightness.

s 39. Dan. vii. 20—25.

n lxxiv. 10. lxxxix.
4. Deut. xxviii.
37. Neh. v. 9.
Jer. i. 17.
xlix. 13. xlii. 18.
xlv. 2. 12. Lam.
v. 1. Ez. v. 14.
15. Dan. ix. 16.
o Lev. xxvi. 17.
25. Deut. xxviii.
25. 43. Lam. ii.
17. John xvi. 20.
Rev. xi. 10.
p Ez. xxx. 21—25.
q Lev. xxvi. 36.
37. Num. xiv.
42. 45. Josh. vii.
4. 5. 8—12.
2 Chr. xxv. 8.
r 1 Sam. iv. 21.
22. 1 Kings xii.
16—20. xiv. 25—
28. Lam. iv. 1.
s 39. Dan. vii. 20—25.

earth. (*Marg. Ref.* on 27. *Note*, Heb. xii. 22—25, v. 23.) All this, however, but feebly represented the sufferings, deliverance, and consequent glory and authority of the chosen and anointed Redeemer, in whom alone all these predictions and promises are fully accomplished. The promises of the covenant to the posterity of David were in some measure performed to Solomon, and to the long succession of kings which reigned over Judah till the captivity: (*Notes*, 2 Sam. vii:) yet in Christ, and in his spiritual seed, they have their only full accomplishment. From the Redeemer, and his church which is one with him, the loving-kindness of the Father will never be utterly removed. God has pledged the honour of his own holiness, that he will exactly perform the covenant made with Christ, whom David typified. So that his kingdom shall remain illustrious and enduring, as the sun and moon, to the end of time; and continue, (like the rainbow, “that faithful witness in the heavens” to the truth of God in his covenant with Noah,) a constant witness that God has fulfilled his covenant with the Redeemer. (*Notes*, Gen. ix. 9—17. Is. liv. 6—10.) And as the Lord by various corrections visited upon the posterity of David their transgressions of his law, but did not utterly cut them off; continuing them in regal authority over Judah till the captivity, and afterwards preserving the family till Christ descended from it, and received the kingdom; so he will correct his people, but never finally cast them off. (*Notes*, lxxii. 1 Kings ix. 3—9. xi. 9—13. Is. ix. 6, 7. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. xxxiii. 14—26. Ez. xxxiv. 23—31. xxxvii. 24, 25. Hos. iii. 4, 5. Am. ix. 11, 12. Luke i. 26—33. 67—75. Acts xv. 13—18.)—No doubt the emphatical language used in the covenant of God with his servant David, as it is here brought together and enlarged on, must have excited in believers at that time very high expectations, which Solomon’s unprecedented prosperity was calculated to confirm. But it is probable, that most of them, (like the apostles, in respect of the Redeemer’s kingdom, before his crucifixion,) interpreted the promises in a manner rather different from their real meaning; and so entertained unwarranted hopes of temporal prosperity under the kings of David’s line: without duly considering, what had also been repeatedly declared concerning them, in case they forsook the worship of God; and without properly looking forward to Christ, the Son of David, in whom all the promises were to have their full accomplishment. When, therefore, they saw a king of David’s race deprived of a very large part of his dominions; opposed by Jeroboam; vanquished, plundered, and put under tribute by Shishak,

in a very short time after Solomon’s death; and perceived little hope of his emerging from his difficulties: it is not at all wonderful, if they were tempted to conclude, that the promises and covenant of God (though confirmed with an oath by his own holiness, or all his moral perfections,) had failed and would come to nothing.—This was the temptation; yet the Psalmist evidently resisted it strenuously and successfully, and taught others to do the same.

Higher than, &c. (27) ‘Till I raise him to the prime dignity, among all those whom I call my sons, and set him so high above all other kings in the world, that he shall be a most eminent type of my Son Christ, the “King of kings, and the Lord of lords.”’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, Eph. i. 15—23. Phil. ii. 9—11. Col. i. 15—20. Rev. xix. 11—16, v. 16.)

V. 38—45. ‘Because of the horrible confusion of things, the prophet complaineth unto God, as though he saw not the performance of his promise; and thus discharging his cares on God, he resisteth doubt and impatience.’—‘He meaneth the horrible dissipation, and renting of the kingdom, which was under Jeroboam.’—‘He sheweth that the kingdom fell before it came to perfection or was ripe.’—‘In joining prayer with his complaints, he sheweth that his faith never failed.’—When the calamities above-mentioned (*Note*, *title*), befell Rehoboam, it seemed as if the Lord had been provoked to abhor and cast off his anointed king: the covenant with David appeared to be made void, his crown trampled upon in disgrace, and the divine protection withdrawn. The Israelites spoiled and reproached the house of David; the Egyptians were victorious and triumphant; and in the early days of that royal race, it was put to shame and reduced to the brink of ruin: and how could this consist with the faithfulness of God to his covenant? Doubtless the Psalmist meant to urge this as a plea with him, to return in mercy, and restore the family of David to prosperity; and likewise to propose it to the distressed prince and people of Judah, for their instruction; that they might consider the dispensation as a chastisement for their sins, and so be led by it to repentance. Probably he also meant to lead their thoughts to the promised Seed of David, whom the covenant principally respected. (*Marg. Ref.*) ‘When the faithful few beheld the true Son of David, and Anointed of JEHOVAH, in the days of his sufferings...delivered over to a shameful as well as painful death; they then began to think “the covenant made void,” and the promises at an end. “We trusted,” said they, “that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel.”’ *Bp. Horne.*—

45 'The days of his youth hast thou shortened; ^u thou hast covered him with shame. Selah.

46 ^x How long, LORD? ^y wilt thou hide thyself, for ever? shall ^z thy wrath burn like fire?

47 ^a Remember how short my time is: ^b wherefore hast thou made all men in vain?

48 ^c What man *is he that* liveth, and shall not ^d see death? ^e shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave? Selah.

t 28, 29. 2 Chr. x. 19. Is. lxiii. 18.
u xlv. 15. cix. 29.
Mic. vii. 10.
x xlii. 1, 2. lxxix. 5. lxxxv. 5. xc. 13.
y x. 1. lxxxviii. 14. Job xxiii. 9. Is. viii. 17. xlv. 15.
z Jer. iv. 4. xxi. 12. 2 Thes. i. 8. Heb. xii. 29.
a xxxix. 5, 6. Job vii. 7. ix. 25, 26. x. 9.
b cxliv. 4. Job xiv. 1. Jam. iv. 14.
c xlix. 7-9. Job xxx. 23. Ec. iii. 19, 20. viii. 8. ix. 5. xii. 7. Heb. ix. 27.
d John viii. 51. Heb. xi. 5.
e xlix. 15. Acts ii. 27. 2 Cor. iv. 14.

49 Lord, 'where *are* thy former loving-kindnesses, *which* ^s thou swarest unto David in thy truth?

50 ^h Remember, Lord, the reproach of thy servants; *how* I do bear in my bosom *the reproach of* all the mighty people;

51 Wherewith thine enemies have reproached, O LORD; wherewith ⁱ they have reproached ^k the foot-steps of thine anointed.

52 ^l Blessed *be* the LORD for evermore. Amen, and Amen.

f lxxvii. 9, 10. Is. lxiii. 7-15.
g 3, 4. 35. cxxxli. 11, 12. 2 Sam. iii. 9. vii. 15. Is. lv. 3. Heb. vii. 21.
h xlv. 13-16. lxix. 9. 19, 20. lxxiv. 18. 22. lxxix. 10-12. Rom. xv. 3.
i Matt. v. 10-12. Acts v. 41. 1 Cor. iv. 12, 13. Heb. x. 33. xi. 36.
k lvi. 5, 6. lvii. 3. 2 Sam. xvi. 7. 8. Matt. xii. 24. xxvi. 61. John viii. 48. 1 Pet. ii. 20, 21. iii. 16. iv. 14-16.
l xli. 13. lxxii. 18. 19. cvi. 48. Neh. ix. 5. Matt. vi. 13. 1 Tim. i. 17.

The early corruption of Christianity by "damnable heresies," the lamentable schisms which have rent it, and the oppressive persecutions and multiplied corruptions, to which it has so long been exposed, have precisely the same effect on Christians in general, in respect of the promises and predictions, contained in the scriptures, concerning a universal propagation and triumph of the gospel. (Note, Rev. xx. 4-6.)

V. 46-48. (Marg. Ref.) The Psalmist here seems to have personated the family of David, or one of the kings of that race, or to have formed the psalm for the use of his afflicted prince. The reigns of David and Solomon were soon over; the glory of their kingdom had been very transient, if it were thus to terminate; and they seemed almost to be made in vain: for the short glimpse of Israel's prosperity was now extinguished; and indeed as every one must die, if the prosperity of the church depended upon the life of any man, it would soon be buried in his grave. "Wherefore hast thou made in vain all the sons of Adam?" Probably the prophet looked forward to "the second Adam," "the Lord from heaven," who indeed saw death, and went down into the grave, and the unseen state; (Note, xvi. 8-11;) yet was able to deliver his life from the power of it; and who rose again, and lives from age to age, to perpetuate the safety and provide for the happiness of his people. (Note, 1 Cor. xv. 45-49.) With this he might also endeavour to comfort himself, under the prospect of his own death; though he had survived the external glory of David's kingdom, and expected soon to die, and leave it in disgrace and distress. (Notes, xc. 3-17.)

V. 49. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 19-37. lxxvii. 5-12. Is. lxiii. 15-19.) "These "loving kindnesses" are called in "Is. lv. 3; "the sure mercies of David," which "sure "mercies of David," are affirmed by St. Paul, Acts xiii. 34, to have been then conferred on Israel, when in the person of Jesus, God raised our nature from the grave." Bp. Horne. (Notes, Is. lv. 1-3. Acts xiii. 24-37, v. 34.)

V. 50, 51. (Marg. Ref.) "They laugh at us who wait patiently for the coming of thy Christ."—The enemies of the family of David invidiously traced the footsteps of those princes; that is, they examined every part of their conduct, in order to find matter of accusation against them; they overlooked all their eminent services, and aggravated every slip which they made, and even reproached them with such things as they had never done: and thus they slandered the anointed of God. (Notes, 1 Kings xii. 4. 16.)

Perhaps they also ridiculed the expectations, which were formed, of returning prosperity to the family of David, and of the Messiah as descending from him.—The rulers and scribes and chief priests of the Jews, in like manner, watched our Lord's footsteps; they sought for false witness to put him to death; Herod and Pontius Pilate agreed in setting him at nought; and Romans combined with Jews in insulting and reviling him, as he hung upon the cross. Thus did he "bear the reproach of all the "mighty people," who "reproached the footsteps of the "Lord's Anointed." And men of the same character always have reviled, and always will revile, those who tread in the Saviour's footsteps. (Notes, Matt. xxvi. 57-68. xxvii. 39-44. Luke xxiii. 6-12. John xv. 17-21. xix. 1-7.)

V. 52. "But let them laugh on; neither their scoffs nor our calamity shall hinder us from praising the Lord, and speaking good of him continually, in assured hope that he will at last deliver us. Let it be so, we beseech thee, let it be so as we desire and hope, that we may ever praise thee for our happy restoration." Bp. Patrick. (Notes, xxxiv. 1-6. xli. 11-13. lxxii. 17-19. cvi. 47, 48. Phil. iv. 4-7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-18.

When the dispensations of Providence seem contrary to the promises of God, and we venture to state our difficulties and discouragements before him; we should always recur to first principles, and take it for granted that he is doing right, though we are not able to discern it. (P. O. John xiii. 1-7.)—Faith, resting on the boundless and everlasting mercy and truth of God, brings comfort into the heart, and fills the mouth with praise, even in the deepest scenes of adversity: and while we are assured, that "mercy "shall be built up for ever," and "faithfulness established "in the heavens;" we should seek and pray that all men, through successive generations, may be acquainted with these perfections of our God, and praise him for them. His covenant with the seed of David his servant, is immutably ratified; for the throne of David "is builded to all "generations," yea, for ever and ever: and all the inhabitants of Heaven, as well as the congregations of saints on earth, will continually praise the wonders of his power, displayed in performing the engagements of his word.—We should be careful never to speak or act, as if we

PSALM XC.

The Psalmist comforts himself, by considering the favour of the eternal God to his people, 1, 2. He laments the frailty, sufferings, and shortness of human

thought any of the angels in heaven, or "any of the sons of the mighty" on earth, fit to be compared unto the Lord. He is not limited to such methods as we can conceive, or to such operations as creatures can perform. His thoughts and ways are infinitely above our comprehension; and it is our part to adore the depths which we cannot fathom, and to expect covenanted blessings, when we can see no way in which they can be communicated.—Our "God is greatly to be feared, even in the assembly of his saints, and to be had in reverence of all them, that are about him." Nor should our filial confidence in his love abate our awful veneration of his Majesty; for then, our worship on earth would bear no resemblance to that of angels in heaven. (*Notes Is. vi. 1—5.*) Surely then our external posture, and our serious attention, should indicate the reverence of our hearts, when we assemble to worship this glorious God! (*Note, Acts xxi. 1—6, v. 5.*) But alas! how little of this appears in general in our congregations! and how much cause of humiliation, have we all on this account!—It is a joyful consideration, that the power which created and upholds the earth, and which rules the impetuous waves of the sea, is engaged to perform the promises; and that the Proprietor of the universe is "the Portion" of his people. That high and strong right hand and mighty arm, which smote Egypt, will to the end scatter the enemies of his church; and all who trust in the mercy of God shall rejoice in his name: for as justice and judgment are the stability of his throne, so mercy and truth direct all his dealings towards his believing servants. Happy then are those, who know, believe, and obey the joyful sound of his gospel! for their present safety and their eternal felicity are secured in the favour of him, whom they trust as a Saviour, love and revere as a Father, and obey as a King.

V. 19—37.

The Lord has spoken to his prophets and apostles, in diverse times and various ways, with an especial purpose of making known to sinful men, that he "hath laid help upon one that is mighty, and exalted one chosen out of the people:" who, being infinite in power and love, as the eternal Son of God, and having become one of us by assuming our nature, "is not ashamed to call us brethren." This is the Redeemer, whom JEHOVAH himself has appointed for us, and who alone is adequate to the arduous work of our salvation. Having been anointed immeasurably with the Holy Spirit, and strengthened by the power of God, he, in our nature, withstood and repelled the combined assaults of earth and hell; and "is now exalted by the right hand" of the Father "to be a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance, and forgiveness of sins," and to beat down and destroy all who hate his disciples. In the name of JEHOVAH his horn is exalted, and mercy and truth come, through and by him, to the ruined sons of men; and his kingdom shall extend throughout the whole earth. He, in a peculiar sense,

life, as the effects of the wrath of God against the sins of men, 3—11. He prays that these considerations may be wisely improved by him and his people; and intreats for the comforts of God's mercy, and for a sensible experience of his power, glory, and favour, with them and their children, 12—17.

could cry unto the Lord, "Thou art my Father, my God, and my strong Salvation:" being indeed his first-begotten, his only begotten Son, and made, even in our nature, far higher than the kings of the earth. With him the everlasting covenant is ratified for evermore, and through him alone is mercy exercised towards the guilty. "His dominion shall be for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." While he invites sinners to incline their ear and come to him, that he may make with them this everlasting covenant; (*Note, Is. lv. 1—3;*) he treats all his willing subjects as his friends and children: the oath, with which that covenant is ratified to him, as the Son of Abraham, and the Son of David, is recorded, in order "that we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:" and the name of God would be dishonoured, if this security could possibly fail, or the thing be once altered which he has spoken. (*Notes, Heb. vi. 13—20.*) So that the whole church of Christ, as his spiritual seed, is secured in its immunities and privileges, by the covenant made and ratified with its glorious Head. Let us then seek an interest in these blessings; and an assurance that we belong to this happy company, by the witness of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, as the counterpart of "the faithful record in heaven," of our names written in the book of life; that so we may habitually "rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

V. 38—52.

Notwithstanding the security of the covenant of grace, it is also very plainly foretold, that damnable heresies, and grievous scandals and corruptions, would take place among professed Christians; and when these predictions are compared with what we read and witness, they may serve to confirm our faith, though they must deeply grieve our hearts.—Indeed even true Christians offend in many things. Hence it is, that corrections become necessary, in order to the performance of the covenant to the honour of God. When this is the case, the Lord "will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with scourges: nevertheless he will not utterly take away his loving-kindness from them, nor suffer his truth to fail." The records of the Lord's dealings with the family of David, are set before us as an emblem of his dealings with his church, and with believers. Grievous may be the afflictions which they endure; great the disgrace and distress of soul which come upon them: but the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church, neither will God finally forsake or abhor the true believer. We should then rejoice in this security; but we should "rejoice with trembling:" many self-deceivers pervert the doctrine; and even those who are interested in the blessing may notwithstanding, by their misconduct, bring themselves into such darkness and distress as can scarcely be conceived. We ought, therefore, to rely on it for our encouragement in the path of duty, and in bearing the cross; and not when yielding to sloth and self-indulgence.

* Or, *A prayer,*
being a Psalm
of Moses.

A Prayer of Moses * the man of God.

† Ex. xxxiii. 14—
19. Deut. xxxiii.
1. 1 Kings xiii.
1. 1 Tim. vi. 11
b lxxi. 3. xci. 1
9. Deut. xxxiii.
27. Is. viii. 14
Ez. xi. 16. John
vi. 56. 1 John
iv. 16.

† Heb. *generation*
and *generation.*
lxxxix. 1. marg.
c Job xxxviii. 4—
6. 28, 29. Prov.
viii. 25, 26.

d xxxiii. 9. cxlvi.
6. Gen. i. 1.

e xxxiii. 2. cii. 24—27. ciii. 17. Is. xlv. 6. lvii. 15. Mic. v. 2. Hab. i. 12. 1 Tim. vi. 15,
16. Heb. i. 10—12. xiii. 8. Rev. i. 8. f Is. xlv. 22. g civ. 29. cxlvi.
4. Gen. iii. 19. vi. 6, 7. Num. xiv. 35. Job xii. 10. xxxiv. 14, 15.

LORD, ^b thou hast been our dwelling-
place in [†] all generations.

2 ^c Before the mountains were
brought forth, ^d or ever thou hadst
formed the earth and the world, even
^e from everlasting to everlasting, ^f thou
art God.

3 ^g Thou turnest man to destruc-

tion; and sayest, Return ye children
of men.

4 For ^h a thousand years in thy sight ^h 2 Pet. iii. 8.
are but as yesterday, when it ⁱ is past, ⁺
and ⁱ as a watch in the night.

5 ^k Thou carriest them away as with
a flood; ^l they are *as* a sleep: ^m in the
morning *they are* like grass *which*
ⁿ groweth up.

6 ^a In the morning it flourisheth,
and groweth up; in the evening it is
cut down, and withereth.

† Or, *when he hath*
passed them.
i Matt. xiv. 25
xxiv. 43. Luke
xii. 38.
k Job ix. 26. xxii.
16. xxvii. 20, 21.
Is. viii. 7, 8. Jer.
xlv. 7, 8.
l lxxiii. 20. Is.
xxix. 7, 8.
m ciii. 15, 16. Is.
xl. 6. Jam. i. 10,
11. 1 Pet. i. 24.
† Or, *is changed.*
n xcii. 7. Job xiv.
2. Matt. vi. 30.

Neither should we give way to despondency, while we witness the success of idolatry, superstition, heresy, or infidelity, against the religion of Christ. These early began to corrupt or to oppose the church: and their success seems often to make void the covenant, and profane the Redeemer's crown, to break down the strong holds of his royal city, and to expose his religion to reproach. But though his cause may appear to suffer loss, and his glory to be eclipsed, and his enemies to conquer and triumph; yet this will be only for a time. The Lord will not "hide himself for ever," nor suffer "his wrath to burn like fire;" whatever his people fear, or his enemies expect. But when his purposes are effected, he will return, cause his servants to rejoice, and put his enemies to silence and shame. For the Saviour ever liveth to effect his grand designs, and a thousand years are in his sight but as one day: and, though one instrument after another die, and effect very little; though we all must shortly drop into the grave, and may perhaps leave the church under a thick cloud; and though all the sons of Adam seem made in vain; yet the Lord himself will surely arise and plead his own cause, and fulfil his largest promises in their fullest meaning. If then, we can do little else, during our few remaining days on earth, let us give ourselves unto prayer: let us plead with the Lord his former mercies to his people, and the promises of his word: let us humbly represent before him, the reproach cast upon his servants by his enemies, through the prevalence of impiety in the visible church, and through the *apparent* delay of his making his truth universally triumphant. And though our hearts must needs be grieved by the blasphemies and slanders of the proud and mighty, who revile or ridicule those who expect the coming of the Lord's anointed King, and who walk in his foot-steps; yet let us still hope for the commencement of a more glorious scene on earth, as well as for eternal felicity in heaven; and, in the prospect of these approaching seasons of joy and praise, let us now mix our tears and prayers with hallelujahs, and still say from our hearts, "Blessed be the LORD for evermore, Amen, and Amen."

NOTES.

PSALM XC. *Title.* "Moses, the man of God," (*Marg. Ref.*) the prophet Moses, and not one of the same name in after ages, as some have imagined, may very reasonably be supposed to have composed this most instructive and affecting psalm, when the generation of Israel, which God had by him brought out of Egypt, was sentenced to fall

in the wilderness; or when he had witnessed in a great degree the execution of that sentence. (*Notes, Num. xiii. xiv.*) It is not indeed improbable that it was used at the tabernacle, as well as published among the people, during that solemn season, when death marched his rounds among them in so remarkable a manner. It seems to have been preserved along with the books of Moses, and afterwards to have been inserted in the book of psalms.—To obtain the most interesting view of this picture, so to speak, we must consider Moses as the principal figure; and carefully advert to his peculiar circumstances at that season. The sentiments indeed of the psalm are never unsuitable to our situation in this world; but they would be peculiarly adapted to the case of a pious man, in a time of pestilence, when tens of thousands were swept away on every side of him. (*Note, xci. 3—8.*)

V. 1, 2. The Israelites were shut up in the desert, and not allowed to find habitations in the promised land, or in any cultivated region; but the Psalmist recollected, that even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were strangers and pilgrims in Canaan. Indeed God himself had, in all ages, been the *Home, Rest, Safety, and Comfort* of his people: and into that "Dwelling-place" they might enter by faith and prayer, even in the wilderness; (*Notes, John vi. 52—58. 1 John iv. 13—17;*) seeing he was the same self-existent, all sufficient, and almighty God; the same holy, just, merciful, and faithful God, even before he had "created the heavens and the earth;" yea, from eternity to eternity. (*Notes, ciii. 15—18. Gen. i. 1. Ex. iii. 14. Deut. xxxiii. 27, 28. Is. lvii. 15, 16. Heb. xiii. 7, 8.*)

V. 3—6. When man sinned, his Creator sentenced him "to return to the dust from whence he was taken." Adam, however, and several of his descendants lived almost a thousand years: but in the sight of the eternal God this was but as *yesterday*; and it was soon past like a watch, or three hours of the night, which glides away while men sleep. (*Notes, Gen. iii. 17—19. P. O. v. 1—20. Note, 2 Pet. iii. 8.*) Thus the Lord turned them to destruction as well as their more short-lived posterity; and the human race had all along been swept away by death as by an impetuous torrent: life appeared but a sleep; and all earthly prosperity only resembled the verdure and variegated hues of the meadow in a summer's morning; which before night was cut down by the scythe, and withered by the sun. (*Notes, xxxix. 5, 6. ciii. 11—18. Is. xl. 6—8. Jam. i. 9—11. iv. 13—17. 1 Pet. i. 23—25.*)—The word translated, "Thou carriest them away as with a flood," may be ren-

o 9. 11. xxxix. 11. 7 For ° we are consumed by thine
 lix. 13. Num. xvii. 12, 13. anger, and by thy wrath ° are we trou-
 Deut. ii. 14-16. Heb. iii. 10, 11. bled.
 17-19. iv. 1, 2.

p Ex xiv. 24. 8 ° Thou hast set our iniquities be-
 Rom. ii. 8, 9. fore thee, ° our secret sins ° in the light
 q x. 11. 1. 21. of thy countenance.
 cxxxix. 1-4. Job xxxiv. 21.
 Jer. xvi. 17.

r xix. 12. Prov. v. 9 For ° all our days are ° passed
 21. Ec. xii. 14. away in thy wrath: we spend our years
 Luke xii. 1, 2. as ° a tale that is told.
 Rom. ii. 16. 1 Cor. iv. 5.

s xxiii. 24. Ez. 10 ° The days of our years are three-
 viii. 12. Rev. xx. score years and ten; and if by reason
 12. of strength they be fourscore years,
 t lxxx. 16. "yet is their strength labour and sor-
 u lxxxviii. 33. row; for ° it is soon cut off, and we fly
 * Heb. turned away.

† Heb. a medita- 11 ° Who knoweth the power of
 tion. 4. xxxix. 5. thine anger? even according to thy
 ‡ Heb. As for the fear, so is thy wrath.
 days of our years, in them are seventy years. Gen. xlvii. 9. Deut. xxxiv. 7.

u 2 Sam. xix. 35. 12 ° So teach us to number our
 1 Kings i. 1. Ec. xxiv. 24. Is. xxxviii. 12. Luke xii. 20. Jam. iv. 14 y Lev. xxvi. 18. 21. 24. 28. Deut.
 xii. 2-7. xxxviii. 59. xxix. 20, &c. Is. xxxiii. 14. Nah. i. 6. Luke xii. 5. 2 Cor. v. 11. Rev. vi. 17.
 z xxxix. 4. Deut. xxxii. 29. Ec. ix. 10. Luke xii. 35-40. John ix. 4. Eph. v. 16, 17.

x lxxxviii. 39. Job xiv. 10. marg. xxiv. 24. Is. xxxviii. 12. Luke xii. 20. Jam. iv. 14 y Lev. xxvi. 18. 21. 24. 28. Deut. xxxviii. 59. xxix. 20, &c. Is. xxxiii. 14. Nah. i. 6. Luke xii. 5. 2 Cor. v. 11. Rev. vi. 17. z xxxix. 4. Deut. xxxii. 29. Ec. ix. 10. Luke xii. 35-40. John ix. 4. Eph. v. 16, 17.

dered, "Thou over-flowedst them;" and may be considered as a reference to the desolations of the general deluge.

V. 7-10. The Israelites had provoked the Lord, by their unbelief and rebellion, to "swear in his wrath that "they should not enter" Canaan: and this passage may refer to those events. Accordingly they were swept away by the anger of God, in so extraordinary a manner, that they were kept in constant trouble of mind by the dread of his judgments. Not only were their open transgressions punished with awful judgments destroying thousands at once; but their "secret sins," or the iniquities of their youth, (as some render the word,) were called to remembrance by their righteous Judge. Thus their days and years were turned away from hope and comfort by the wrath of God: they were spent to little purpose; and soon came to an end, as a tale, a meditation, a waking dream. (Note, Num. xxvi. 62-65.) Perhaps the lives of men in general were at this æra reduced to about the present limits: for after the death of Moses and Joshua, few instances of a much longer life occur in the scripture. At least it was thus with that generation of Israel; very few of whom would exceed, and most would come short of eighty years.—The verses however are equally applicable to the general state of human nature. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 11. This verse is thus rendered by some learned men: "Who knoweth the power of thy anger? or of thy "wrath, according as thou art terrible?" That is, "Who is there, that fears the wrath of the Almighty, in proportion to the degree in which it ought, in all reason, to be dreaded? or in due proportion to his fear of mortal men, when possessed of power? Who does not fear the wrath of powerful men too much, and the wrath of almighty God too little? when in fact, the latter cannot be feared according to its terribleness. Who is sufficiently afraid of offending God, or earnest in seeking to be reconciled to him?" We know the worst which the most powerful men, when most enraged, can do; they can kill the body, and nothing more: but who knows or can conceive the worst, which

days, ° that we may ° apply our hearts unto wisdom.

13 ° Return, O LORD, ° how long? and ° let it repent thee concerning thy servants.

14 O ° satisfy us early with thy mercy; ° that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.

15 ° Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and ° the years wherein we have seen evil.

16 ° Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and ° thy glory unto their children.

17 And ° let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and ° establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

k Num. xiv. 22. 31. Deut. i. 39. Josh. iv. 22-24. xxxiii. 14. 1 xxvii. 4. 1. 2. lxxx. 3. 7. 2 Cor. iii. 18. 1 John iii. 2. m lxxviii. 28. cxviii. 25. Is. xxvi. 12. 1 Cor. iii. 7. 2 Thes. ii. 16, 17. iii. 1

the Almighty and everlasting God can do against the objects of his righteous indignation? (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Matt. x. 27, 28. Heb. x. 28-31, v. 31.)—"According as ° men do more or less tremble at thy judgments; so dost ° thou more or less execute them." Bp. Hall.

V. 12. The shortness, uncertainty, and sorrows of life, as the effects of the powerful wrath of God against the sins of men; when considered in connexion with the doctrine of an eternal state of future retribution, and that of salvation by the mercy and grace of God, through the promised Redeemer; are suited to teach men true wisdom: and Moses prayed, that he, and all his people, might be taught by the Lord himself duly to lay them to heart; that, by meditation, prayer, and a constant application of the whole soul and all its powers, to the pursuit of heavenly wisdom, as their one object, they might both be wise unto salvation, and glorify God, and do good to men, while they waited for the speedy approach of death. (Notes, xxxix. 1-4. v. 4. Deut. xxxii. 29.)

V. 13-17. The Israelites, notwithstanding their transgressions, were the Lord's people and avowed worshippers, and he had many faithful servants among them. These no doubt thought the time very long, during which they continued under the severe rebukes of God, without the accustomed tokens of his favour. They therefore prayed along with Moses, that for their sakes he would at length change his conduct towards the nation: (Notes, Gen. vi. 6, 7. Deut. xxxii. 36:) and, though the sentence respecting Canaan was irreversible; that he would yet without delay satisfy their souls with the comforts of his mercy and grace; which would enable them to spend their few remaining days in holy joy, and counterbalance their long continued afflictions. They further besought the Lord that he would cause them again to witness his works of power and mercy in behalf of the nation, as an earnest of those more glorious displays, which were to be afforded to their children; and that "the beauty of the Lord their God might be upon ° them." This implies a request, that he would appear to

PSALM XCI.

The believer's security under the divine protection,

them in his tabernacle, "the beautiful sanctuary:" that he would continue his ordinances among them, which were their glory and beauty; but especially that he would shine upon them with the beams of his holiness, which is *his beauty*; that, like the moon irradiated and beautified by the reflected beams of the sun, they might be made to shine in the beauty of holiness as derived from him. (Notes, 1. 1, 2. cxlix. 4. P. O.—Note, 2 Cor. iii. 17, 18.) Thus Moses, Aaron, and others, especially desired that the Lord would prosper and establish their work, though they must die, and leave it unfinished; that their pious and zealous endeavours might have their full effect, by rendering the Israelites a holy and a happy people; which would best prepare them for the conquest of Canaan, and for the blessings which God had engaged to bestow on the nation, and that this might continue and be established for generations long to come.—'Except thou guide us with thy Holy Spirit, our enterprises can have no good success. (Marg. Ref.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The favour and protection of God are the only suitable rest and comfort of the soul, in this evil world: and in Christ Jesus he is become the Refuge and Dwelling-place, to which we may repair, whenever pursued by the accusations of conscience, or the unkindness of men; when wearied with the cares and toils of life; or disquieted by sickness and the prospect of death. (Note, Prov. xviii. 10, 11.) His truth, love, and power are eternal and immutable; and this habitation can never fail those who resort to it for rest and peace: for "his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation." Compared with him, who "from everlasting to everlasting is God" alone, how do the most renowned of the human race shrink into insignificance! The longest life, which men have passed on earth, has been but as "a watch of the night;" and then the word of the Almighty has remanded their bodies to their original dust. What images in nature then can sufficiently illustrate the brevity of our present span of life? the impetuous current of time hurries mortals, as in a sleep, into eternity, where most of them first awake, and lift up their eyes: and all the external splendour and gaiety, which excite the envy, the desires, or the admiration of the thoughtless beholder, are destroyed and withered as in a moment. (Note, Luke xvi. 22, 23.) So that the supposed pleasure of a worldly life passes as a "tale that is told," and generally, taken altogether, it proves a doleful tale. Few in comparison reach the seventy years assigned as the date of man's present life; and if a small number linger out a longer space, their lives are but a continuation of labour and sorrow, and soon they are "cut off and fly away."—But wherefore has the Lord, as it were, made all men thus in vain? (Note, lxxxix. 46—48.) To this enquiry the scriptural, and the only rational answer is, that we are a company of condemned criminals, and are thus "troubled and consumed" by his anger; he has his eye upon our most secret sins, as well as our more open iniquities, on the past, as well as the present: and therefore we pass our days in his

amidst enemies and dangers, 1—10. Angels charged to take care of him, 11, 12. Promises to him who loves, knows, and trusts in God, 13—16.

deserved wrath. The sentence of temporal death is gone forth, and is irreversible, however the time and circumstances of it may vary. This indeed is very little, compared with "the wrath to come:" yet alas! how few seem to understand or regard the powerful wrath of that God, who is able to destroy body and soul in hell; though no apprehensions can possibly equal the terror of it! Instead then of wasting our precious fleeting days in pursuing the phantoms of the world, which elude our grasp, and will leave their possessors for ever poor; we should employ ourselves in seeking forgiveness of sins and an inheritance in heaven. Let us earnestly pray, that the Lord would so teach us to consider the shortness and uncertainty of life, and the proportion of it which is already past; perhaps thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, or more of our three-score years and ten; that we may apply our hearts to this true wisdom. A proper attention to this "one thing needful" will prove us wise to eternity, whatever else be renounced or neglected: but inattention to it will stigmatize us as fools for ever, though we should gain the whole world. (Note, Luke xii. 15—21.) If this grand interest be safe, the shortness of life may rather be matter of mutual congratulation than condolence: and as to the evils that we feel or witness, persevering prayer will prevail either for a mitigation of them, or comfort under them. Whatever else be withheld, the mercy and favour of our God will satisfy our souls: and in communion with him we may "rejoice and be glad all our days," even in this miserable world. 'These are the days wherein God afflicteth us, these the years wherein we see evil: but he will hereafter make us glad according to them. ...' 'These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' Then shall our joy be increased, and receive an additional relish, from the remembrance of our former sorrow; then shall we bless the days and the years, which exercised our faith, and perfected our patience; and then shall we bless God, who chastised us for a season, that he might save us for ever.' Bp. Horne.—In the mean while, we should lay ourselves out to do what good we can in this evil world, and especially to such as are likely to survive us; earnestly and constantly praying, that the work of redeeming love may be more and more made known, in its glory and efficacy, to our souls; that we may more fully experience the sanctification and consolation of the Holy Spirit; that the beauty of holiness, even the divine image, may be evidently visible in all our character and conduct; that the same blessings, in still larger proportion, may be extended to our children and more remote posterity; that the Lord would "establish the works of our hands upon us," when we are about to be taken from them, can no more do any thing respecting them, and perhaps are leaving them in an unfinished, unsettled, and unpromising situation. This especially should be our prayer, if employed in the sacred ministry, or other important services; and also that he would illuminate his church with the light and beauty of his truth and purity, and establish the Redeemer's kingdom and work throughout the whole earth.

^a 20. xxxii. 5. xxxi. 3, 4. xc. 1. Is viii. 14. Ez. xi. 16. 1 John iv. 15, 16. ^b Heb. lodge. xxv. 13. marg.

HE that ^a dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall ^b abide ^c under the shadow of the Almighty.

^d 2. I will say of the LORD, *He is my Refuge and my Fortress*; ^e my God, ^f in him will I trust.

^g 3 Surely he shall deliver thee from ^h the snare of the fowler, ⁱ and from the noisome pestilence.

^j 4 He shall ^k cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: ^l his truth *shall be thy shield and buckler*.

^m 5 ⁿ Thou shalt not be afraid for ^o the terror by night: *nor* ^p for the arrow *that flieth by day*;

^q 6 *Nor* for ^r the pestilence *that walk-*

^s eth in darkness; ^t *nor* for the destruction *that wasteth at noon-day*.

^u 7 ^v A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; ^w but it shall not come nigh thee.

^x 8 ^y Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold, and see ^z the reward of the wicked.

^{aa} 9 Because ^{ab} thou hast made the LORD *which is my Refuge, even* ^{ac} the most High, thy Habitation;

^{ad} 10 ^{ae} There shall no evil befall thee, ^{af} neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.

^{ag} 11 For ^{ah} he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee ^{ai} in all thy ways.

^{aj} 12 ^{ak} They shall bear thee up in *their* hands, ^{al} lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

NOTES.

PSALM XCI. V. 1, 2. It is probable that David wrote this psalm, though his name is not prefixed to it. 'The author of this Psalm is not known, but the occasion seems to have been some great pestilence, in which the Psalmist commends a humble confidence in God and an ardent love to him, as the best security, both in that and in all other dangers....The Talmudists call it, *A Song of evil spirits.*' Bp. Patrick. "The secret place of the most High," may be an allusion to the ark of the covenant, fixed in the most holy place, as in a secret pavilion; and may denote the security and tranquillity arising from confidence in God, and communion with him, at his mercy-seat. (Notes, xxvii. 4—6. xxxi. 19, 20.)—By faith and prayer, believers put themselves under the protection of God, relying on his power, wisdom, truth, and love; and thus they dwell in an invisible fortress, and are secured by an almighty Friend, in a way kept secret from the unbelieving world around them. (Note, Col. iii. 1—4.) While the Psalmist recommended this Refuge and Rest to others, he avows his purpose to avail himself of it, and to place his entire confidence in the Lord. (Notes, 14—16. lxxxiv. 11, 12. xc. 1, 2. Gen. xv. 1. xii. 1—3. 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3. Prov. xviii. 10, 11.)—The two verses, however, may be thus rendered, "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Almighty; saying of the LORD, My Refuge and my Fortress." In every dark season of affliction and danger, he shall have security and comfort, while with his heart he relies on the Almighty, and with his lips avows that his expectation is from him alone. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 3—8. Under a variety of expressions, in the most beautiful style of eastern poetry, the Psalmist represents the manifold dangers to which believers are exposed, from the wickedness of men, and from pestilences and diseases in all their multiplied forms; and the protection which they find under the mercy, faithfulness, and power of the

Almighty. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxxvi. 5—9. Ruth ii. 11, 12. Job v. 18—27. Matt. xxiii. 37—39.) Yet these are only a shadow of the perils by which their souls are threatened, from the subtlety and power of Satan, the plausible delusions of false teachers, the terrors of persecutors, the allurements of flattery and prosperity, the infectious wickedness of the world, and the depravity and deceitfulness of their own hearts. Yet from all these formidable perils and enemies, they "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." (Note, 1 Pet. i. 3—5.)—The Septuagint render the clause, "the destruction that wasteth at noon-day," (6) δαίμονος μεσημέριος 'the noon-day demon.'

'Avarice and ambition are abroad in the day; while concupiscence like a pestilence walketh in darkness. In adversity the soul is disturbed by terrors; in prosperity, still more endangered by pleasures. But Jesus Christ has overcome the world, to prevent us from being overcome by it.' Bp. Horne. (Note, John xvi. 31—33.) Yet, as thousands and ten thousands fall, during a fatal pestilence, while others witnessing the desolations are preserved; so immense multitudes are swept into destruction by delusions and temptations, while a few escape to mourn over them.—'The godly shall have some experience of God's judgments against the wicked even in this life; but fully they shall see it at that day when all things shall be revealed.' (Notes, xcii. 11. Matt. xxv. 31—46. Rom. ii. 4—6. 2 Thes. i. 5—10. Rev. xx. 11—15.)

V. 9, 10. These verses are thus rendered in the old version. "For thou hast said, the LORD is mine Hope, thou hast set the most High for thy Refuge. There shall none evil come unto thee, &c." 'Because this is thy avowed and real confidence, therefore thou art and shalt be safe and happy, and thy family shall for thy sake share the blessing.' (Notes, cxxi. 5—8. cxxv. 1.)

V. 11, 12. The Lord is pleased to employ the ministration of his holy angels, for the protection of his people from outward harm, "in all their ways" while in the path of duty: but if they desert their post and path, they are

^a Judg. xiv. 5, 6. ¹ Sam. xvii. 37. ^d Dan. vi. 22, 2 Tim. iv. 17. ^d Mark xvi. 18. Acts xxviii. 3—6. Rom. xvi. 20. ^{*} Or, *asp.* Rom. iii. 13. ^e Is. xxvii. 1. Rev. vii. 9, xx. 1, 2. ^f 1 Chr. xxix. 3. John xiv. 23. xvi. 27. Rom. viii. 28. Jam. i. 12. ii. 5. xxxiii. 16. Phil. ii. 9—11. ^g lix. 1. *Marg.* lxxxix. 16, 17. Is. h ix. 10. John xvii. 3. Gal. iv. 9.

13 Thou shalt ‘tread upon the lion and ‘add: the young lion and ‘the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. 14 ‘ Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, ‘ because he hath known my name.

15 ‘ He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: ‘ I will be with him in trouble; ‘ I will deliver him, ‘ and honour him. 16 ‘ With ‘ long life will I satisfy him, and ‘ shew him my salvation.

ⁱ x. 17. xviii. 8. 1. 15. Is. lviii. 9. Jer. xxix. 12, 13. xxxiii. 3. Rom. x. 12, 13. Heb. v. 7. ^k xxiii. 4. cxxxviii. 7. Is. xli. 10. xliii. 1, 2. Matt. xxxviii. 20. John xvi. 32. Acts xviii. 9, 10. 2 Tim. m 1 Sam. ii. 30. John v. 44. xii. n xxi 4. Gen. xxv. 8. Job v. 26. o xvi. 11. 1. 23. Is. 2 Cor. i. 9, 10. Rev. iii. 21. 1 Pet. i. 21. iii. 22. v. 4. Rev. iii. 21. Prov. iii. 16. Is. lxxv. 20—22. † Heb. *length of days.* xlv. 17. Luke ii. 30. iii. 6.

not warranted to depend on that protection: and not angels, but the Holy Spirit must inwardly guide them in his ways, or bring them back when they wander. (*Notes, Gen. xxiv. 2—9. Heb. i. 13, 14.*)—The mutilated and sophistical quotation which Satan made of this text, in tempting our Saviour, seems to imply, that the Messiah was supposed to be *principally*, though not *exclusively* meant. This might be, and probably was the case; but the subtle enemy that *misquoted*, could also *misapply* the sacred scripture: and his testimony contains no proof. (*Note, Matt. iv. 5—7.*)

V. 13. By these figurative expressions taken from the fiercest of beasts, and most poisonous of serpents, Satan and his progeny of wicked men are figuratively described, who persecute the people of God, or attempt to terrify or seduce them from their duty; but over whom they shall at length triumph as their Captain has already triumphed. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. iii. 14, 15. Mark xvi. 17, 18. Luke x. 17—20. Rom. viii. 32—39. xvi. 17—20. Rev. xii. 7—12. xx. 1—3.*)

V. 14—16. ‘To assure the faithful of God’s protection, he bringeth in God himself to confirm the same.’ So that JEHOVAH himself is here introduced as the Speaker; and the persons intended are characterized. They have known the name of the Lord, and set their love on him, delighting themselves in him, cleaving to him in reverent and holy love, expecting all their happiness from him, and seeking help from him, by the persevering prayer of faith, and fervently thirsting for him, and for his favour, and the light of his countenance. Persons of this character he will deliver, honour, exalt, and satisfy with long life; if not here, yet in heaven, where he will shew them his complete salvation. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, ix. 7—12. xxi. 1—7. xxxiv. 15—20. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Luke ii. 25—32. John xvii. 1—3. Rom. viii. 28—31. 2 Tim. i. 11, 12.*)—Even the most encouraging promises of Scripture imply, that “in this world” the best Christians “must have ‘tribulation;’” by engaging that the Lord will afford them his gracious presence under all their troubles and trials.

The following view of this beautiful Psalm, with an interchange of speakers, which has been transmitted to me, seems worthy of consideration. ‘Imagine the Psalmist ‘to have been addressing himself to some person hope- ‘fully disposed towards religion, in sentiments and lan- ‘guage of which the first verse affords a specimen: this ‘person being much affected and confirmed in his religious ‘purpose by the discourse, comes to the resolution of the ‘second verse, “I will say, &c.” Encouraged and ex- ‘cited by this success, the Psalmist resumes the conver- ‘sation, and in yet more animated strains sets forth the ‘security and blessedness of the man “whose hope the

“LORD is:” “Surely,” (if you do so), “he will de- ‘“liver, &c.” The Almighty himself at the fourteenth ‘verse, assumes the part of the Speaker, and confirms ‘all that his servant had urged, and thus the Psalm con- ‘cludes.’

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The divine protection and consolation, which believers enjoy, are deemed visionary by ungodly men: but they really do abide and repose under “the shadow of the Al- ‘mighty,” which the scorching sun of temptation and tribulation cannot penetrate, and in a fortress which no power of the enemy can force. (*Notes, Is. xxxii. 1, 2. xxxiii. 15, 16. Matt. xxiii. 37—39.*) Let then sinners come to him upon his mercy-seat, through the Redeemer’s name: and let those who have experienced his salvation, boldly avow their confidence in him, and encourage others also to trust in him.—Every man must perceive, that in this world we are exposed to innumerable evils and perils, from which no prudence, courage, or strength of our own can secure us: and it must be allowed desirable in the highest degree, to have an almighty, omnipresent, and omniscient Protector, who is likewise infinite in goodness, mercy, and truth: One, that can preserve our lives from famine, pestilence, and sudden death; from the desola- tions of war, the open assaults of robbers and murderers; from the dark designs of false accusers and perjurers; and from innumerable evils to which we are exposed by day and by night. But those, who violate the commands and neglect the salvation of the Lord, cannot possibly have any *well grounded* confidence in his protection: and should he bear with their provocations, and continue their lives for many years; yet except they repent they must at length perish in their sins. He therefore, who is aware of his real situation, discovers far more formidable evils to which he is exposed, than those which have been above mentioned. He wants a refuge from the deserved wrath of God, and from the miseries of the eternal world. He needs an effectual and permanent deliverance from Satan, who takes men captive at his will, as the fowler ensnares the unsuspecting bird; (*Note, 2 Tim. ii. 23—26:*) who appears as a roaring lion when he excites persecution against the church, or as a subtle serpent and a destructive dragon, when he opposes the faith with seducing lies, vain reasonings, fascinating flatteries, or proffered secular ad- vantages; or when he transforms himself into an angel of light to deceive men with false religion. (*Note, 2 Cor. xi. 1—6. 13—15. Rev. xii. 7—12.*) He wants also pro- tection against the pestilence of a wicked world; that he may not be infected with fashionable or epidemical vices, which form “a destruction that wasteth at the noon day;” or by any other more silent and unsuspected contagion of example, influence, or false principles, which constitute

PSALM XCII.

The Psalmist shews that it is good to be thankful, to praise God, and to celebrate his perfections and works, 1—5. He contrasts the judgments of God on the wicked, with the abiding felicity of the righteous, 6—15.

A Psalm or Song ^a for the Sabbath-Day.

IT is a ^b good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, ^c O most High:

2 To ^d shew forth thy loving-kind-

ness in the morning, and thy faithfulness ^e every night:

3 ^e Upon an instrument of ten strings, and upon the psaltery; upon ^f the harp with ^g a solemn sound.

4 For thou, LORD, ^h hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

5 O LORD, ⁱ how great are thy works! and ^j thy thoughts are very ^k deep.

10, 11. Jer. xxxi. 7. 11—13. Zeph. iii. 14—16. Luke i. 47. John xvi. 22. 2 Cor. ii. 14. Rev. xviii. 20. g xl. 5. lxvi. 3. civ. 24. cxi. 2. cxlv. 3, 4. Rev. xv. 3. h cxxxix. 17. Is. xxviii. 29. lv. 8, 9. Jer. xxiii. 20. Rom. xi. 33, 34. i lxiv. 6. Ec. vii. 24. 1 Cor. ii. 10.

a Is. lviii. 13, 14. Heb. iv. 9. Marg. Rev. iv. 8—11. b xxxiii. 1. l. 23. lii. 9. lii. 6. lxxxiii. 28. cvii. 1. 8. 15. 21, 22. cxxxv. 3. cxlviii. 1. Eph. v. 19. Heb. xiii. 15. c 8. lxxxii. 6. Is. lviii. 15. Dan. iv. 34—37. v. 18. Acts vii. 48, 49. d lxxi. 15. lxxxix. 1, 2. cxlv. 2. Is. lxxiii. 7. Lam. iii. 22, 23. John i. 17.

* Heb. in the nights. xlii. 8. lxxvii. 2. Job xxxv. 10. Acts xvi. 25. e xxxiii. 2. lvi. 8. lxxviii. 25. lxxxii. 2, 3. cxlix. 3. cl. 3—5. 1 Chr. xv. 16. xxv. 6. 2 Chr. xxix. 25. f Or, the solemn sound with the harp. g Heb. Higgsaion. ix. 16. h lxix. 10. civ. 31. 34. cvi. 47, 48. cxxvi. 3. cxlv. 6. 7. Is. lxi. 2—11. lxv. 13, 14. lxvi. 10, 11. Jer. xxxi. 7. 11—13. Zeph. iii. 14—16. Luke i. 47. John xvi. 22. 2 Cor. ii. 14. Rev. xviii. 20. g xl. 5. lxvi. 3. civ. 24. cxi. 2. cxlv. 3, 4. Rev. xv. 3. h cxxxix. 17. Is. xxviii. 29. lv. 8, 9. Jer. xxiii. 20. Rom. xi. 33, 34. i lxiv. 6. Ec. vii. 24. 1 Cor. ii. 10.

“a pestilence that walketh in darkness:” nay, he is sensible, that the remainder of corrupt nature often renders solitude as dangerous, as the world itself can be. He also longs to be delivered from the terror of these evils, and to be assured that he shall not at last perish with the multitudes, who are on every side thronging the road to destruction. This security and assurance the Christian seeks as his principal object: being persuaded, that if his eternal interests be safe, the Lord will manage all his inferior and temporal concerns wisely and well; and preserve his life on earth as long as is good for him, to whatever perils it may seem exposed. For his encouragement in this grand concern, he by faith daily looks unto Jesus: he contemplates the beloved Son of God, boldly and patiently marching forward on his perilous and rugged path; entirely preserved from the combined hosts of foes which beset his road, and made completely victorious over them; in no degree entangled by any of Satan’s snares, injured by any of his fiery darts, or terrified by his furious assaults; and not in the least infected by the pestilence of sin, the contagious love of the world, or the fear of man. He considers the Redeemer upheld by the arm of the Lord, ministered unto by angels, trampling upon the head of Satan, overcoming the world, and triumphing over the king of terrors. He hears the Father say of him, “Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high, because he hath known my name:” and while he recollects that the Redeemer’s conflicts, sufferings, and exaltation were all intended for the benefit of his true disciples; he finds himself animated with a holy courage, to deny himself and take up his cross, and follow him. Relying on the truth and mercy of God, through the Saviour’s great atonement, he has come to “put his trust under the shadow of his wings;” and to shelter his soul under his word, as his “shield and buckler.” He now knows the name of the Lord, and has seen some beams of his glory: he has set his affections on things above, and given his heart unto the Lord, and desires to love him more and more: he now lives by faith, and daily calls upon the Lord for all he wants. Dangers, temptations, fears, and troubles, make him more to prize his Refuge and Rest. In many a sharp conflict he comes off victorious; many a danger he narrowly escapes; thousands go on in sin, or fall away from their professed devotedness to God; yet, by a sort of miracle, he finds himself preserved: no real evil comes upon him, nor is any plague allowed to come nigh his dwelling-place. Often he experiences extraordinary protection in Providence: and he has

the comfort to know, that all the angels in heaven are “ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation.” His chief fear is, lest he should be drawn aside from the path of duty: but he prays to be led and upheld in it, and to be restored with rebukes and corrections if he wander. At length the conflict ends, and he is crowned conqueror, and has done for ever with trouble, sin, and temptation: he “is set on high,” and honoured in the presence of the angels of God; and “with his eyes shall he behold, and see the reward of the wicked.” O LORD, visit our souls with this salvation, and this “length of days even for ever and ever.” Amen.

NOTES.

PSALM XCII. *Title.* The writer of this psalm is not mentioned, and the Jews have many absurd traditions respecting it: but in all probability, David composed it, about the time that the ark was conveyed to mount Zion, to be used in the worship at the sanctuary on the sabbath-days. (Notes, 1 Chr. xv. 16. xvi. 7.) Indeed the sabbath was originally intended to give men leisure and opportunity for contemplating the works of God, and rendering him worship and praise. (Notes, Gen. ii. 2, 3. Ex. xx. 8—10. Is. lviii. 13, 14. Mark ii. 27, 28. Heb. iv. 3—11.)

V. 1, 2. “It is no less delightful, than it is profitable, to sing hymns in the praise of the divine perfections, which infinitely transcend all that can be said or thought of them. ... This is the sweetest employment in the morning; and no entertainment can equal it at night.” Bp. Patrick. The majesty and greatness of God, with his loving-kindness in promising a Saviour and salvation, and his faithfulness in performing his promises, are especially noticed. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxxiii. 1. lxxxix. 1—4. cxlv. 1, 2.)

V. 3. *Harp, &c.]* Or, “With a meditation,” or song, “on the harp.” Perhaps the tune is meant. (Marg.—Notes, ix. 15, 16. xxxiii. 2, 3. cl. 3—6. 1 Chr. xvi. 4—6.)

V. 4, 5. The wisdom, power, and goodness of God, displayed in the works of creation and providence, are worthy of all admiration and gratitude: and the Psalmist had experienced much of the tender care of the Lord towards him, and perceived many deep counsels and purposes of his wisdom, in all the events of his past life. Yet it is probable that he was led by the Holy Spirit to look forward to the great work of redemption, by the promised Messiah, as the ground of his hope, the source of his triumph and joy, and the chief subject of his praise.—“All are too little, O LORD, to express the joy I have in the

6 ^k A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth ^l a fool understand this.

7 When ^m the wicked spring as the grass, and when ⁿ all the workers of iniquity do flourish; ^o it is that they shall be destroyed for ever.

8 But thou, LORD, ^p art most high for evermore.

9 ^q For, lo, thine enemies, O LORD, for, lo, thine enemies shall perish; all the workers of iniquity shall be ^r scattered.

10 But ^s my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of ^t an unicorn: ^u I shall be anointed with fresh oil.

k xxxvii. 9. lxxiii. 22. xciv. 8. Prov. xxx. 2. Is. i. 3. Jer. x. 14. 1 Cor. ii. 14.
l xiv. 1. xlix. 10. lxxv. 4. Prov. i. 22. xxiv. 7. Luke xii. 20.
m xxxvii. 2. xc. 5, 6. ciii. 15, 16. Is. xxxvii. 27. xl. 6, 7. Jam. i. 10, 11. 1 Pet. i. 24.
n lxxiii. 12. Job xii. 6. xxi. 7—12. Jer. xii. 1. Mal. iii. 15.
o xxxvii. 35, 36. lxxiii. 18—20. 1 Sam. xxv. 36—38. Prov. i. 32. Luke xvi. 19—25.
p lxxiii. 18. cii. 26, 27. Ex. xviii. 11. Ec. v. 8. Dan. iv. 34, 35. Acts xii. 1. 22—24.
q xxi. 8, 9. xxxvii. 20. lxxiii. 1, 2. lxxiii. 27. Judg. v. 31. Luke xix. 27. 2 Thes. i. 7—9. r i. 4. lix. 11. lxxiii. 30. Lev. xxvi. 33. Num. x. 35. Deut. xxviii. 64. Is. xvii. 13. Ez. v. 12. Luke xxi. 24. s lxxxix. 17, 24. cxii. 9. cxxxii. 17. cxlviii. 14. 1 Sam. ii. 1. 10. Luke i. 69. t Num. xxiii. 22. xxiv. 8. u xxiii. 5. xlv. 7.

acts of thy providence, by whom as the world was made, so it is still governed. It ravishes my spirit, and makes me shout for joy, to think how excellently thou orderest and disposest all things. ... Whose administration, though I cannot fully comprehend, yet I admire ... the astonishing greatness of thy works, and reverence the unsearchable depths of thy counsels and designs.' Bp. Patrick.—'A prospect of creation, in the vernal season, fallen as it is, inspires the mind with a joy, which no words can express. But how doth the regenerate soul exult and triumph at beholding that "work" of God's "hands," whereby he hath created all things anew in Christ Jesus! If we can be pleased with such a world as this, where sin and death have fixed their habitation, shall we not much rather admire those other heavens and that other earth, wherein dwell righteousness and life?' Bp. Horne. (Notes, xix. 1—11. xl. 1—5. lxxi. 17—24. lxxxvi. 6—8. cxxxix. 14. Rom. xi. 33—36.)

V. 6, 7. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (Note, 1 Cor. ii. 14—16.) So that, while the sensualist, who, like the brutes, seeks his happiness in animal indulgence, takes no pleasure in contemplating the works of creation and providence, and is incapable of perceiving or admiring the glory of God displayed in them; all other unregenerate men (the persons denominated *fools* in scripture,) are incapable of discerning or delighting in the works of God, especially in the glorious and harmonious display of the divine perfections, in the work of man's redemption and salvation. And not only the sensualist, but all worldly men in general, not excepting the most renowned for wisdom, sagacity, and learning, being destitute of faith and spiritual discernment, are blind to the tendency and eternal consequences of ungodly prosperity and pleasure. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxxvii. 35—38. lxxiii. 18—22. 1 Sam. xxv. 36—38. Luke xii. 15—21. xvi. 19—25.)

V. 8, 9. Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxi. 8—12. lxxiii. 1—3. Is. xli. 10—16. 2 Thes. i. 5—10.

V. 10. Fresh oil.] Perhaps David might refer, by this expression, to his being re-anointed king upon his acces-

11 ^x Mine eye also shall see *my desire* on mine enemies; and mine ears shall hear *my desire* of the wicked that rise up against me.

12 ^y The righteous shall flourish like the palm-tree; he shall grow like ^z a cedar in Lebanon.

13 ^a Those that be planted in the house of the LORD, ^b shall flourish ^c in the courts of our God.

14 ^d They shall still bring forth fruit ^e in old age; they shall be fat and ^f flourishing;

15 ^g To shew that the LORD is upright: *he is* ^h my Rock, ⁱ and *there is* no unrighteousness in him.

x xxxvii. 34. liv. 7. lix. 10. xci. 8. cxii. 8.
y 7. lii. 8. Is. lv. 13. lxxv. 22. Hos. xiv. 5, 6.
z civ. 16. cxlviii. 9. Am. ii. 9.
a Is. lx. 21. Rom. vi. 5. xi. 17. Eph. iii. 17.
b Is. lxi. 3. 2 Pet. iii. 18.
c c. 4. cxxxv. 2. 2 Chr. iv. 9.
d i. 3. Matt. iii. 10. John xv. 2—5. Gal. v. 22, 23. Phil. i. 11. Jude 12.
e lxxi. 18. 1 Chr. xxix. 1, &c. Job xvii. 9. Prov. iv. 18. Is. xlv. 4. Jer. xvii. 8.
f Heb. green. Ez. xlvii. 12.
g John x. 27—29. xv. 1—3. 1 Cor. i. 8, 9. 1 Thes. v. 23, 24. Tit. i. 2. 1 Pet. i. 4, 5.
h cxlv. 17. Rom. ix. 14. 2 Thes. i. 6, 7.

sion to the throne. This, however, was only an emblem of the fresh accessions of wisdom, strength, and grace, which believers derive continually from the renewed unction of the Holy Spirit. (Notes, xxiii. 5, 6. xlv. 6, 7. Is. xl. 27—31. 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. 1 John ii. 20—29, vv. 20, 27.)

V. 11. There is nothing, for *my desire*, repeatedly inserted in this verse, in the Hebrew; nor is any thing inserted in several versions ancient and modern: and the passage might better be read without them;—"Mine eye shall look upon mine enemies, and mine ears shall hear of the wicked that rise up against me." (Notes, xxxvii. 34. liv. 7. lix. 10. xci. 3—8.) The Psalmist indeed foresaw their dreadful doom, but it does not follow that he desired it.

V. 12. The palm-tree spreads its branches very wide, and grows to a very large size; and affords a refreshing shade to travellers. It also bears dates, a most grateful fruit in those countries where it grows, and it is in every way a most beautiful tree, and an invaluable treasure to the inhabitants.—The cedar grows immensely large, and flourishes for ages, and, when cut down, its valuable timber is exceedingly durable. These trees, compared with the gaudy, withering grass, mark and illustrate, very forcibly indeed, the difference, in character and condition, between the prosperous wicked man and the righteous, between the unbeliever and the believer. (Notes, 6, 7. civ. 16. Hos. xiv. 4—8.)

V. 13—15. All holiness and spiritual consolation are derived from the fulness of Christ, through the ordinances of his appointment. The grace which teaches sinners to love and frequent those ordinances, in order to obtain these spiritual blessings, "plants" them, as "trees" of righteousness, in the courts of the Lord. (Note, Is. lxi. 1—3.) Others, who attend, are only withering branches: but these take root, and derive nourishment from Christ; they grow, and flourish, and bear fruit, and are often most eminent in grace and usefulness to others, even amidst the infirmities of old age. (Notes, i. 1—3. lxxi. 17, 18. Jer. xvii. 5—8. John xv. 1—8. Eph. iii. 14—19.) 'Happy the man, whose goodness is always progressive, and whose virtues increase with his years; who

PSALM XCIII.

a iix. 13. xcvi. 10.
xcvii. 1. xcix. 1.
ciii. 19. cxlv. 13.
1 Chr. xxix. 12.
Is. lii. 7. Dan.
iv. 32—34. Matt.
vi. 13. Heb. i. 8.
Rev. xi. 15—17.
xix. 6.
b civ. 1, 2. Job xl.
10. Is. lix. 17.
lxiii. 1.

The majesty, stability, power, and holiness of JEHOVAH's kingdom shewn; and how he triumphs over all opposition, 1—4. His testimonies are sure, and holiness becomes his house, 5.

THE ^a LORD reigneth; ^b he is clothed

‘loseth not, in the multiplicity of worldly cares or pleasures, the holy fervours of his first love, but goeth on ‘burning and shining more and more, to the end of his ‘days.’ *Bp. Horne.* This is ordered on purpose to shew that the Lord does indeed fulfil his covenant-engagements to all, who truly make him the Foundation of their hope, and the Rock of their salvation, as the Psalmist did: and it is an earnest, that he will also perform to them his promise of giving them eternal life. For “there is no *unrighteousness*,” or *fraud*, in him: and though his promises were all made of mere grace and mercy; yet being made, it would not consist with the perfection of his righteousness, in any measure to fail in the performance of them. (*Marg. Ref. f. h.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

To praise the Lord most High, and give thanks unto his name, is not only our bounden duty and reasonable service; but it is a most profitable, delightful, and honourable employment, by which we emulate the work of angels, and anticipate the joys of heaven. Yet, while we live upon his bounty, and daily experience his loving-kindness and faithfulness, how backward are we in rendering this reasonable and pleasant tribute! We should then stir up ourselves, and all around us, to join in his praises: and as his truth and mercies are renewed to us by day and by night, we should at least every morning and evening adore his condescension and goodness, and give him thanks for all his benefits; employing every means of rendering the service as solemn and affecting as we can. But on his own day, which we should “remember to keep holy,” how ought we to abound in praise, in secret, in our families, with our friends, and in the great congregation! For, however glorious the works of God in creation and providence are in themselves, or however liberally we are supplied with temporal benefits; none of his operations could give us *sinners* cause of joy and triumph in him, if it were not for that great work, on this day especially commemorated by Christians; when He, who “died for our sins, “was raised again for our justification.” And if distant views of this great Deliverer so animated the praises of ancient believers; how should we abound in these expressions of exulting gratitude, who enjoy the meridian light of this “Sun of Righteousness,” which kings, prophets, and righteous men so long desired to see! (*Notes, Matt. xiii. 16, 17. Luke x. 23, 24.*) Well may we say, on contemplating the mysteries of redemption, “O LORD, how “great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.” For in them angels and arch-angels behold and adore the manifold wisdom and love of God. (*Notes, Eph. iii. 9—12. 1 Pet. i. 10—12.*) But how many, who are called Christians, in the arrogant folly of infidelity, or in the brutish stupidity of a licentious and worldly life, despise

with majesty: the LORD is clothed with strength, *wherewith* ^c he hath girded himself: ^d the world also is established, that it cannot be moved.

2 ^e Thy throne is established ^f of old: ^g thou art from everlasting.

c xviii. 32. lxxv. 6.
Is. xi. 5.
d lxxv. 3. xcvi. 10.
Is. xlv. 12. 18.
xlix. 8. li. 16.
Heb. i. 2, 3.
e xlv. 6. cxlv. 13.
Prov. viii. 22, 23.
Dan. iv. 34. Mic.
v. 2.
f Heb. from then.
g xc. 2. cii. 24—

27. Heb. i. 10—12. xiii. 8. Rev. i. 8. 11, 17, 18. ii. 8.

and disregard, and therefore know nothing of, the glorious displays which God has made of himself to us! Nor indeed do men, under the clear light of the gospel, generally understand, that God grants prosperity to wicked men in awful displeasure; and that their momentary flourishing is in order to their being “destroyed for ever.” Yet as “the LORD is most High for evermore,” it certainly follows that “all his enemies shall perish, and that all the “workers of iniquity shall be scattered.” Let us not then envy their prosperity, but pity their misery, and pray for their conversion, whilst we seek for ourselves the salvation and the grace of the gospel; that, being daily anointed with the renewed unction of the Holy Spirit, we may at length be exalted to behold and share our Redeemer’s glory, and to witness the ruin of all impenitent sinners, and of those especially who have been our enemies because of our relation to Christ. For the flourishing of the righteous is of a permanent nature: amidst tribulations and temptations, they grow in strength of faith and depth of experience, obtain increasing influence, and become fruitful and useful. Such Christians are real blessings to many while they live, and even after they are departed; (*Notes, John xv. 12—16. 2 Pet. i. 12—15;*) and they themselves shall be most “blessed for evermore.” Let us then seek to be planted by faith, and rooted by love, “in the courts “of the LORD:” that we may flourish, not merely in the leaves and blossoms of knowledge, profession, and discourse, but in the substantial fruits of a holy, useful life; and this more and more, as we advance towards the close of our pilgrimage. Let us learn to detest the sentiment of many, who profess much zeal for the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, yet would persuade us, that believers generally grow less zealous as they grow older. (*Note, Rev. ii. 2—5.*) It is true, that rash, indiscreet, and ostentatious earnestness will gradually be laid aside, to make way for more simple, humble, prudent zeal and diligence: but a real, evident, and permanent decrease in the substantial fruits of piety and charity, is enough to bring any man’s former integrity into question, whatever his profession may have been. Nay indeed, the uprightness and faithfulness of the Lord himself are concerned: the branches of the true Vine, which are fruitful, shall be purged, and made more fruitful. (*John xv. 2.*) But if we have made him “the Rock of our salvation,” he will make it appear, that “there is no unrighteousness in him,” by enabling us to go on, with increasing delight and fruitfulness, even under the decays of nature; until he transplant us to his courts above, there to grow and flourish, and be fruitful for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM XCIII. V. 1, 2. There is no title to this psalm, in the Hebrew; but in the Septuagint it is entitled, ‘For

3 ^g The floods have lifted up, O LORD, the floods have ^h lifted up their voice: ⁱ the floods lift up their waves.

4 The LORD on high is ^k mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

5 ^l Thy testimonies are very sure: ^m holiness becometh thine house, O LORD, ⁿ for ever.

g xviii. 4. lxix. 1, 2. 14—16. Is. xvii. 12, 13. Jer. xlv. 7, 8. Jon. ii. 3. Rev. xii. 15. xvii. 15. h xcvi. 11. xcvi. 8. Is. lv. 12. i ii. 1—3. cvii. 25, 26. cxix. 3—5. Acts iv. 25—27. k lxv. 7. lxxxix. 6. cxiv. 3—5. Job xxxviii. 11. Jer. v. 22. Mark iv. 37—39. l xix. 7, 8. cxix. 111. 129. 138. 144. Is. viii. 20. Matt. xxiv. 35. Heb. vi. 17, 18. 1 John v. 9—13. m v. 4—7. xcix. 5. 9. Lev. x. 3. xix. 2. Is. lii. 11. Zech. xiv. 20, 21. John iv. 24. 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17. Rev. xxi. 27. * Heb. to length of days.

‘the day before the sabbath, when the earth had been inhabited, An ode of David:’ and the Jews have a tradition, that it was composed to be sung on the sixth day of the week, in commemoration of the earth being on that day completed and replenished with inhabitants. (*Notes, Gen. i. 20—31.*)—The great Creator of the world, the eternal JEHOVAH, is the universal and everlasting King and Governor over all his creatures. He is also “clothed,” or arrayed, not as other kings with costly robes, but “with majesty and power” incomprehensible, yea infinite, which appertain to him, as self-existent, in such a manner that they are absolutely his own; “he hath girded himself with them,” and not derived them from any other. And the same power, which at the creation established the earth and the whole world, and gave a law which cannot be broken, has also established the throne of the Creator on an immoveable basis, as necessarily resulting from his own eternity and all-sufficiency.—The government of God, however, over his own people, seems especially intended: and the Jews themselves acknowledge that the stability of the Messiah’s kingdom is predicted, and that he is peculiarly meant in this and several of the following psalms. Indeed, Immanuel is clothed and hath girded himself with majesty and strength; and the power which established the world, establishes also the mediatorial kingdom of the Redeemer, “whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting.” (*Notes, xlv. 1—7. xcvi. 10—13. xcvi. 1. xcix. 1—4. Jer. x. 9—11. Mic. v. 2. Zech. ix. 9, 10. Matt. ii. 3—6.*)

V. 3, 4. The impetuous torrents of large rivers, swelled by sudden floods, and bearing down all before them, with irresistible fury and tremendous noise; and especially “the mighty waves of the sea,” during a violent storm, which absolutely baffles description, and distances imagination; are the emblems of the numerous and powerful enemies, which have in every age, by varied means, set themselves furiously and clamorously to oppose the kingdom of God and his Christ. (*Notes, xlv. 1—3. lxv. 6, 7. Is. xvii. 12—14. Jer. xlv. 7, 8.*) But he who at first set bounds to the proud ocean; who drove back the waters of the deluge to their ancient channel; who divided the Red Sea and Jordan for his people to pass through; who “walked on the waves of the sea,” and “rebuked the winds and waves,” saying, Peace, be still, and there was a great calm: even he is higher and more powerful than all “the floods of ungodly men,” who rage against him and his people; as well as “mightier than the noise of many waters.” (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, civ. 6—9. cvii. 23—30. Gen. viii. 1—3. Ex. xiv. 21—23. 26—30. Josh. iii. 16, 17. Job xxxviii. 8—11. Jer. v. 20—25. Matt. viii. 23—27. xiv. 25—27.*)

PSALM XCIV.

The Psalmist calls on God to take vengeance on the persecutors of his church, 1—4. He complains of their cruelty and impiety, and sharply reproves their atheistical folly, 5—11. He shews the benefits of affliction, attended by divine teaching; and the security of God’s people, 12—15. He calls for helpers against evil-doers; declares his experience of God’s goodness, and foretels the destruction of persecutors, 16—23.

V. 5. Revealed truth, and the promises grounded on it, are “the testimonies” of God, which “are very sure,” and can never fail. (*Notes, xix. 7—11. cxix. 111. 129. Is. viii. 20. 1 John v. 9—12.*) These ensure the safety of the church and the salvation of each believer. In these testimonies, and his faithfulness to them, God shews his own holiness: and it becomes, or is the ornament and beauty of, all who belong to his family, to resemble and imitate him in holiness. (*Notes, Lev. x. 3. xxi. 6—8. Is. lii. 11, 12. Ez. xlv. 7—14. 1 Pet. i. 13—16. ii. 9, 10.*) “The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his; and, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (*Notes, 2 Tim. ii. 19—22.*) “Sacred and inviolable is the word of our King; sacred and inviolable should be the loyalty of his subjects.” *Bp. Horne.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

JEHOVAH might have determined to shew his justice, holiness, and awful power alone, in his dealings with the inhabitants of this revolted province of his universal kingdom. But he has been pleased to make choice of fallen men, for the display of the riches of his mercy, and of the power of his renewing grace. In effecting this great design, the Father has “given all power in heaven and earth” to his only begotten Son, “the second Adam,” “the Lord from heaven;” (*Notes, 1 Cor. xv. 20—28. 45—49;*) who, by his humiliation and sufferings, has made atonement for our sins and purchased our salvation. “He is able to save to the uttermost all those who come to God by him;” and can, to the glory of all the divine attributes, not only pardon, but deliver, uphold, and protect all who trust in him. The combined legions of evil spirits and ungodly men do indeed furiously threaten and assault his kingdom on earth, as the tempestuous waves once did the bark in which Jesus sailed. But he needs only to arise, and speak with authority, and they will tremble and desist; as knowing that “the LORD on high is mightier” than they all. While “his sure testimony” engages his protection to his church, his true disciples have nothing to fear.—But we should all carefully enquire whether his kingdom have indeed been set up in our hearts. This will best be decided by examining, whether we so believe his testimonies and depend on him for salvation, as to be led to love and follow after that holiness, which his precepts command and his example displays, which becomes all who profess the truth, and is bestowed on all his real servants, in a measure on earth, and completely in heaven for ever.

* Heb. God of revenges.

a Deut. xxxii. 35. 41. 42. Is. xxxv. 4. lix. 17. Jer. 1. 23. Nah. i. 2. Rem. xii. 19. 2 Thes. i. 8. Heb. x. 30.

† Heb. shine forth.

b vii. 6. lxxviii. 1. lxxiv. 22. Mic. v. 9.

c 1. 6. Gen. xviii. 25. John v. 22. 23. 2 Cor. v. 10.

d xxxi. 23. Job xl. 11, 12. Is. ii. 11, 12. 17. x. 12. xxxvii. 23. 29.

36—38. Jer. 1. 31, 32. Dan. iv. 37. v. 22—24. 1 Pet. v. 5. Rev. xviii. 6—8.

e xliii. 2. lxxiv. 9. 10. lxxix. 5. lxxx. 4. lxxxix. 46. Jer. xlvii. 6. Rev. vi. 10.

f Esth. v. 11, 12. vi. 6—10. vii. 6. 32. Job xx. 5. Acts xii. 22, 23.

g xxxi. 18. lix. 7. 12. lxxiv. 3, 4. lxxiii. 8, 9. cxi. 3. Prov. xxx.

14. Jer. xviii. 18. Matt. xii. 24, 34. Jude 14, 15.

Job xxi. 14, 15. Is. x. 13—15. xxxvii. 24, 25. Dan. vii. 8, 11. 25. viii. 11. xi. 36, 37. Rev. xii. 5, 6.

i vii. 2. xiv. 4. xlv. 22. lxxiv. 8, 19, 20. lxxix. 2, 3, 7. cxxix. 2, 3. Is. iii. 15. li. 5. Jer. xxii. 17. li. 20—23. 34. Mic. iii. 2, 3. Rev. xvii. 6.

Jer. l. 11. Rev. xi. 3. 1 Is. x. 2. xiii. 15—18. Jer. vii. 6. xxii. 3. Ez. xxii. 7. Mal. iii. 5. m x. 11—13. ix. 7. Job xxii. 12, 13. Is. xxix. 15. Ez. viii. 12. ix. 9. Zeph. i. 12. Luke xviii. 2, 4.

O LORD * God, to whom vengeance belongeth; ^a O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, [†] shew thyself.

2 ^b Lift up thyself, ^c thou Judge of the earth: ^d render a reward to the proud.

3 LORD, ^e how long shall the wicked, how long shall ^f the wicked triumph?

4 *How long* ^g shall they utter and speak hard things? and all the workers of iniquity ^h boast themselves?

5 They ⁱ break in pieces thy people, O LORD, and ^k afflict thine heritage.

6 They ^l slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless.

7 Yet ^m they say, The LORD shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it.

8 Understand, ⁿ ye brutish among the people; and ^o ye fools, when will ye be wise?

9 ^p He that planted the ear, ^q shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?

10 He that ^r chastiseth the heathen, ^s shall not he correct? ^t he that teacheth man knowledge, *shall not he know?*

11 ^u The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they *are* vanity.

12 ^v Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O LORD, and ^w teachest him out of thy law;

13 That thou ^x mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, ^y until the pit be digged for the wicked.

14 For ^z the LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake ^a his inheritance.

Hab. iii. 16. 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18. 2 Thes. i. 7, 8. Heb. iv. 9. Rev. xiv. 13. lv. 23. Jer. xviii. 20, 22. 2 Pet. ii. 9. iii. 3—7. Rev. vi. 10, 11. xi. 18. 1 Sam. xii. 22. Is. xlix. 14, 15. Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. John x. 27—31. Rom. viii. 30, 38, 39. xi. 1, 2. Heb. xiii. 5. c 5. xxxiii. 12. Deut. xxxii. 9. Jer. x. 16. Eph. i. 18.

NOTES.

PSALM XCIV. V. 1—7. The writer of this psalm is not known; and though some parts of it answer very well to the conduct of Saul and his courtiers, especially in the slaughter, not only of the priests, but of their widows and fatherless children, and also that of the unoffending Gibeonites; (5, 6. *Notes*, 1 Sam. xxii. 17—19. 2 Sam. xxi. 1—3;) yet it might equally suit many other corrupt times of the church of Israel, and of the Christian church also.—Whatever persecutions, cruelties, and iniquities the Psalmist and his pious friends experienced or witnessed; they did not consider themselves as allowed to execute vengeance: but they called on “the God of revenges,” (to whom it belonged to punish criminals and defend his people,) to appear in glory and majesty, and to recompense the blasphemies and proud boastings of their haughty persecutors. (*Notes*, vii. 6, 7. Deut. xxxii. 34, 35. Is. lix. 16—19. lxxiii. 1—6. Rom. xii. 17—21. Heb. x. 28—31. Rev. vi. 9—11. xviii. 20. xix. 1—6.) They were grieved and distressed, and thought it long, while they were compelled to hear and witness the triumphs and revilings of ungodly men, and to learn how they encouraged themselves in their detestable cruelties by atheistical principles. (*Notes*, lxxiv. 10, 11. lxxix.)—The last verses are future in the original, and in several versions, and may be thus paraphrased: ‘Unless thou appear to execute vengeance, they will entirely crush thy people, and reduce thy heritage, the nation of Israel, to the deepest misery; for they are direct Atheists, or at least they do not believe that God at all beholds or regards the actions of men, or will call them to account for any part of their conduct. “They say, JAH shall not see.”’ (*Note*, lxxviii. 4.)—‘Seeing the church was then so sore oppressed, it ought not to appear strange to us, if we see it so now; and therefore we must call to God, to take our cause in hand.’ (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, x. 2—13. lix. 7, 8.)

V. 8, 9. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xlix. 10. xcii. 6, 7.) ‘Shall not he hear your blasphemies, who gave you the faculty of hearing? and shall not he see all you do, who gave you the power of seeing? Is it possible he should give to others, what he wants himself?’ *Bp. Patrick*. (*Note*, Prov. xx. 12.)—‘The Psalmist uses the word *planted* to describe the situation of the ear; and the word *formed* to denote the structure of the eye. ... The mechanism of the ear, like a root planted (נָטַע) in the earth, is sunk deep into the head, and concealed from... view. Whereas the ball of the eye... is prominent on the face, and presented to general observation.’ *Hervey*.

V. 10, 11. The word rendered “chastise” generally implies force, constraint, punishment, or even binding; whereas that translated “correct” denotes milder and gentler discipline and instruction.—‘If God punish whole nations for their sins, it is mere folly for any one man, or else a few, to think that God will spare them.’ (*Note*, ix. 17.)—He first taught Adam in Paradise, and, since the fall, has in various ways taught his posterity, all the useful knowledge which they possess; even those of them who abuse their talents in rebellion against him: and is not he himself omniscient, as well as omnipotent? (*Marg. Ref.*) But he well knows the emptiness and presumption of the thoughts, reasonings, speculations, and imaginations of apostate men, even of the very wisest and most ingenious of them; and how worthless, pernicious, and false they are. (*Notes*, ii. 1—3. xlix. 10—13. Rom. i. 21—23. 1 Cor. iii. 18—23.)

V. 12—14. (*Notes*, i. 1—3. xxxii. 1, 2. Job v. 17. Matt. v. 3—12. Heb. xii. 4—13.) ‘Not he that prospers in his wickedness is happy, but he whom thou chastenest, O LORD, when he doeth amiss; and thereby teachest to study and obey thy law with greater care and diligence: which will quiet his mind under all his troubles, and at last procure the removal of them; when absolute de-

d 2, 3. vii. 8, 9.
ix. 16. lviii. 11.
cxxxv. 3. Deut.
xxxiii. 35, 36.
Job xxxv. 14.
Mic. vii. 9. Mal.
iii. 18. 2 Pet. iii.
8—10. Rev. xv.
3, 4.
e xxxvii. 5—7. 34.
cxxxv. 4, 5. Job
xvii. 9. xliii. 11,
12. Jam. v. 7—
11. 1 John ii. 19.
* Heb. shall be
after it.
f Ex. xxxii. 26—
29. Num. xxv.
6—13. Judg. v.
23. 1 Kings xviii.
39, 40. 2 Kings
ix. 32. x. 15. Is.
lix. 16. lxxiii. 5.
Jer. v. 1. Ez.
xxii. 30. Matt.
xii. 30. 3 John 8.
g Neh. v. 7. Jer.
xxvi. 16—19. John vii. 50, 51.

15 But ^d judgment shall return unto
righteousness: and ^e all the upright in
heart ^f shall follow it.

16 ^f Who will rise up for me against
the evil-doers? or ^g who will stand
up for me against the workers of in-
iquity?

17 ^h Unless the LORD *had been* my
Help, my soul had ⁱ almost ^j dwelt in
silence.

18 When I said, ^k My foot slippeth;
thy mercy, O LORD, held me up.

19 ^l In the multitude of my thoughts

h cxviii. 13. cxxxv. 1—3. cxlii. 4, 5. John xvi. 32.
† Or, quickly. i xlii. 3. xxxi. 17. cxv. 17.
k xvii. 5. xxxvii. 23, 24. xxxviii. 16. cxix. 116, 117. cxxi. 3. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Job xii. 5. Is.
xli. 10. Luke xxii. 32. 1 Pet. i. 5. l xliii. 2—5. lxi. 2. lxxiii. 12—16. lxxvii. 2—10.
Jer. xx. 7—11. Hab. iii. 16—18. Rom. v. 2—5. 2 Cor. i. 4, 5. 1 Pet. i. 7, 8.

within me, thy comforts delight my
soul.

20 Shall ^m the throne of iniquity have
ⁿ fellowship with thee, which ^o frameth
mischief by a law?

21 They ^p gather themselves together
against the soul of the righteous, and
^q condemn the innocent blood.

22 ^r But the LORD is my Defence;
and my God is ^s the Rock of my refuge.

23 And ^t he shall bring upon them
their own iniquity, and shall ^u cut them
off in their own wickedness; *yea*, the
LORD our God shall cut them off.

52. 58—60. Jam. v. 6. Rev. xvii. 6. r 10. xxvii. 1—3. lix. 9. 16, 17. lxxii. 2. 6.
s xviii. 2. Is. xxxiii. 16. t vii. 16, ix. 16, 17. lv. 23. lxiv. 8. Esth. vii. 10. Prov. i. 31.
v. 22. Dan. vii. 24. u xii. 3. 1 Sam. xxvi. 10, 11. Prov. xiv. 32. Ez. xviii. 24. Dan. ix. 26.

struction and ruin, mean time, are preparing for the un-
godly.' *Bp. Patrick*.—The sharpest correction, by which
God leads men to search, believe, and obey his word, are
inestimable benefits; persecutors and tyrants often are the
instruments of this salutary correction to the chosen tribes
of God; the persecuted and oppressed, not the persecutors
and oppressors, are the happy persons: they will have
rest, when the day of vengeance overwhelms the wicked.
(*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 2 *Thes.* i. 5—10.) God may indeed
let his people endure sharp and tedious sufferings, but he
“will never leave them, no nor ever forsake them.”
(*Notes*, xxxvii. 27, 28. 1 *Sam.* xii. 22. *John* x. 26—31.)
“Therefore they may boldly say, The Lord is my Helper,
“and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.” (*Note*,
Heb. xiii. 5, 6.)

V. 15. When iniquity triumphs, judgment *seems* to de-
cline from righteousness: but when the Lord executes
vengeance on the wicked, and delivers his people, then
“judgment *returns* to righteousness.” This the upright
in heart confidently expect; and therefore they adhere to
the cause of piety, and continue to wait upon God in the
midst of all discouragements. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xxxvii.
5—8. 34. *Jam.* v. 7—11.)

V. 16—18. It is probable, that the Psalmist had ex-
pected, that many would join him in withstanding the op-
pression to which he was exposed, and which was the com-
mon cause of the nation; and that he called on them for
that purpose. (*Notes*, Ex. ii. 11—15. xxxii. 27—29. *Acts*
vii. 17—29.) But when he found himself disappointed, he
was ready to give up all for lost; and had not God been
his Helper, he must *soon* have been laid in the silent grave.
His experience, however, did not accord to his fears; for
when his foot slipped, and he seemed to himself about to
fall without remedy, his merciful God upheld him.—When
our Lord entered on his last scene of sufferings, he called
on his disciples to watch with him one hour; but he called
in vain. They first slept, and then they all forsook him
and fled. (*Notes*, *Matt.* xxvi. 40—56.) Yet he was carried
through all, and advanced to the throne of glory: and
David's case was but a feeble shadow of Christ's, either in
his humiliation or exaltation. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 19. The thoughts, contrivances, anxieties, and per-
plexities of the Psalmist's mind, seem to be here repre-

sented by the intricacies of a thicket, or labyrinth, from
which there appears to be no way of escape: (for this is the
import of the original word:) but communion with God,
and the consolations of his Spirit, so filled his heart with
joy and gladness, as entirely to raise him above them all,
and to fill his soul with delight, and adoring, thankful joy.
(*Notes*, xlii. 4—11. lxxiii. 3—13.)

V. 20, 21. The evident injustice, oppression, and fraud
of persecuting rulers, who perhaps at the same time pre-
tend zeal for the honour of God, form an encouragement
to the persecuted: for it is certain that the righteous Lord
will have no *fellowship* with such workers of iniquity, under
the colour of law and justice, and will give no counten-
ance to them; however for a time he may permit them to
escape with impunity.—“Righteousness and innocence are
“most atrocious crimes, in the eyes of wickedness and guilt.
“For these crimes Cain slew his brother Abel, the Jews
“crucified Christ, the pagans tortured and murdered his
“disciples, and bad men in all ages have persecuted the
“good. “Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate
““you.”’ *Bp. Horne*.—The narrative, in the New Testa-
ment, of the chief priests, scribes, elders and people of
Israel, with Pilate and his soldiers, and the Roman power,
all collected against the innocent and righteous Saviour,
fully answers to this description: and it is hardly possible
to think, that the Holy Spirit did not intend those events,
whatever occasioned the Psalmist thus to express himself.
(*Note*, lviii. 1, 2.)—The words *righteous* and *innocent* are in
the singular number: and the Jews themselves allow, that
this psalm relates to the Messiah's kingdom. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 22, 23. (*Notes*, vii. 8—11. xxvii. 1—3. 2 *Tim.* iv. 16
—18.) The nation of the Jews, speaking by their rulers,
teachers, and priests, and the congregation assembled at
Jerusalem to keep the passover, when demanding the cru-
cifixion of Christ, vehemently exclaimed, “His blood be
“on us and on our children:” and the destruction of
Jerusalem with unexampled slaughter, and the state of the
Jews ever since, form an instance of the manner in which
God brings on persecutors “their own iniquity, and cuts
“them off in their own wickedness:” indeed those events
seem to have been expressly foretold. (*Notes*, ix. 15, 16.
Esth. vii. 10. *Dan.* ix. 25—27. *Matt.* xxvii. 24, 25.)
“Armed with the shield of faith, and the sword of the

PSALM XCV.

An exhortation with exulting joy to praise God the Rock of our salvation, for his greatness, as the Crea-

‘ Spirit, we rise superior to every effort of diabolical malice, and secular power ; waiting in patience and hope for the coming of that day, when He who hateth unrighteousness, and with whom the throne of iniquity can have no fellowship, shall visit the wickedness of the wicked upon them ; when ... the righteous shall be glorified with their Lord and Saviour.’ *Bp. Horne.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

Those, who imagine that the exuberant goodness and mercy of God are inconsistent with the exercise of rigorous justice, and with the infliction of vengeance on the wicked, must certainly have formed very erroneous conceptions of his character : for he is indeed “ a God of revenges.” (*marg.*) “ Vengeance belongs to him ” alone, except as he delegates others to be his executioners of it : (*Note, Rom. xiii. 3—5 :*) and such as have seen his “ glory in the face of “ Jesus Christ,” readily perceive the most perfect harmony between his justice and mercy ; while others are “ blinded “ by the god of this world,” whatever wisdom they seem to possess, or have the reputation of. (*Notes, 2 Cor. iv. 3—6.*) We should however remember, that vengeance does not belong to us ; and therefore we must “ render to “ no man evil for evil,” but leave our cause with the Judge of the earth. Under oppression and persecution we should beseech him to “ shine forth,” and shew himself, and to render a reward to the proud and ungodly : not so much that we may be freed from suffering ; as that we may not be grieved by beholding the triumphs, and hearing the slanders, blasphemies, and boastings, of the workers of iniquity.—It is most horrible wickedness in any case to “ murder the widow, the stranger, and the “ fatherless : ” but when these are the Lord’s heritage, his chosen people, who are broken in pieces and butchered for his sake, the impiety becomes still more atrocious ; and the pious spectator must needs be filled with the deepest sorrow and indignation. Such wretches, as commit these daring crimes, cannot believe that there is a God, or that he sees, and will call them to an account for, their conduct : and indeed infidelity and atheism are the proper attendants on injustice and cruelty. But the Christian, while, in earnestly pleading for the deliverance of the church, he must request the ruin of all her enemies, if they continue implacable, would still be far more gratified by their conversion. He will therefore pray that this change may take place : and with boldness and meekness, as he has opportunity, he will expostulate with them on the brutish folly of their principles and conduct.—It would not be *credible*, if it were not *undeniable*, that millions of rational creatures should live, move, speak, hear, understand, remember, will, and effect their purposes ; and yet discourse and behave, as if they verily believed, that the God, from whom they derive all these capacities, could neither see, nor hear, nor understand, and would never punish their rebellious abuse of them ! But they will find, that JEHOVAH is the Fountain of knowledge, wisdom, and power, as well as of goodness and justice : and he will

tor and Sovereign of the world, 1—5 ; and to worship him, as his creatures, and his peculiar people, 6, 7 : with a solemn warning not to tempt him, as Israel did in the wilderness, 8—11.

shew them, that he was acquainted with the secret thoughts of their hearts ; which are equally unreasonable and wicked, and are sure to terminate in vexation, if not in destruction. We may therefore conclude, without hesitation, that the most afflicted believer is far happier than the most prosperous among ungodly men. (*Notes and P. O. Luke xvi. 19—26.*)

V. 12—23.

Afflictions are frequently the means of bringing sinners to repentance, and faith in the Saviour : and every man should think himself happy, who, being chastened of the Lord, is under the correction taught his truths and will, from the sacred word, and by the Holy Spirit. For he will find rest to his soul under adversities, and at length rest from them ; and the wicked will harass him, only till the pit be prepared, into which they shall sink and rise no more for ever. Let not then the upright in heart fear, lest the Lord should cast off his people : let them still cleave to him and follow after righteousness ; and at length the just Judge will terminate the triumphs of his enemies, and the sorrows of his servants.—We should, according to our station in the church or in society, endeavour to unite all around us, in attempting to stem the torrent of impiety ; but we need not wonder, if we find the remnant of believers timid and inactive, in proportion as the wicked are daring and enterprising. Yet we must bear our testimony to the truth, and use our endeavours to serve the cause of godliness, though we do it alone, and in sackcloth : and the Lord will help and protect us, till our testimony be finished ; let who will attempt to silence us, by terror, or in a dungeon, or in the grave. But unless he uphold us, our feet will slip : and if we have been preserved from falling into sin, or shrinking from our duty, on trying occasions, we should give him the whole glory, and encourage our brethren.—When urgent difficulties press upon our minds, respecting our own case and our peculiar temptations, conflicts, and trials, or about the cause of God, multitudes of thoughts, contrivances, and apprehensions will arise within us ; the indulgence of which only increases vexation, solicitude, or distrust, and renders our views more and more gloomy and desponding. Then should we retire, and spread the case before the Lord, and pour out our hearts in prayer unto him : thus we shall find light arise in the midst of our darkness ; and divine consolations will often, not only satisfy and calm, but even delight our souls.—The believer needs not be anxious about the event, either to himself, or to the church : even though he should see those in authority, who frame mischief in enacting persecuting laws, and multitudes “ gathering themselves together against the soul of the righteous “ to condemn the innocent blood.” The righteous Lord may indeed for a while bear with these things, but he will never patronize “ the throne of iniquity : ” and while he defends his cause, and is the Rock and Refuge of every saint, he will bring upon their haughtiest enemies “ their “ own iniquity, and cut them off in their own wickedness ; “ yea, the LORD our God shall cut them off.” May we then join and adhere to that party, which is sure at length

O Come, let us ^bsing unto the LORD: ^clet us make a joyful noise to ^dthe Rock of our salvation.

2 ^eLet us ^fcome before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with ^g'psalms.

3 For ^hthe LORD is a great God, and a great King ⁱabove all gods.

4 ^kIn ^lhis hand ^mare ⁿthe deep places

xxiv. 3. lxxvi. 8. cvii. 8. 15. 21. cxviii. 1. cxviii. 1. cxxxviii. 1-3. cxlviii. 11-13. cl. 6. xlvii. 6, 7. lxxvi. 1, 2. lxxxii. 1. cxvi. 1, 2. ci. 1. Ex. xv. 1. 21. 1 Chr. xvi. 9. Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16. Rev. v. 9. xiv. 3. xv. 3. lxxvi. 1. cxviii. 4. —8. c. 1. Ezra h. iii. 11-13. Is. xii. 4-6. Jer. xxxiii. 11. Matt. xxi. 9. Rev. xix. 6. d lxxxix. 26. Dent. xxxii. 15. 2 Sam. xxii. 47. 1 Cor. x. 4. e v. 7. c. 2. 4. Jer. xxxi. 12, 13. * Heb. prevent his face. xvii. 13. marg. f cv. 2. Jam. v. 13. g lxxxvi. 8-10. xcvi. 4. xcvi. 9. cxlv. 3. Jer. x. 6, 7. h xlvii. 2. xlviii. 2. Jer. x. 10. xlv. 18. xlviii. 15. Dan iv. 37. Mal. i. 11. 14. Matt. v. 35. i cxxxv. 5. Ex. xviii. 11. Is. xlv. 8. Jer. x. 10-16. k xxiv. 1. Job xi. 10. † Heb. whose. l cxxxv. 6.

of the earth: ^mthe ⁿstrength of the hills is his also.

5 ^oThe sea is his, and he made it: and ^phis hands formed the dry land.

6 ^qO come, ^rlet us worship and bow down: ^slet us kneel before the LORD ^tour Maker.

7 For ^uhe is our God; and we are ^vthe people of his pasture, and the

m lxxv. 6. xcvi. 5. Job ix. 5. Mic. i. 4. Nah. i. 5. Hab. iii. 6. 10. † Or, heights ... are. § Heb. Whose the sea is. xxxiii. 7. Gen. i. 9, 10. Job xxxviii. 10. 11. Prov. viii. 29. Jer. v. 22. n Prov. viii. 26. o l. Hos. vi. 1. Matt. iv. 2. Rev. xxii. 17. p lxxii. 9. Ex. xx. 5. Matt. iv. 9. Mark xiv. 35. Acts x. 25, 26. Rev. xxii. 8. q 1 Kings viii. 54. 2 Chr. vi. 13. Ezra ix. 5. Dan. vi. 10. Luke xxii. 41. Acts vii. 60. xx. 36. xxi. 5. Eph. iii. 14. r c. 3. Job xxxv. 10. Ec. xii. 1. Is. liv. 5. John i. 3. 1 Pet. iv. 19. s xlviii. 14. lxxvi. 6. cxv. 3. Ex. xv. 2. xx. 2. Jer. xxxi. 33. Heb. xi. 16. t xxiii. 1. lxxix. 13. lxxx. 1. c. 3. Is. xl. 10, 11. Ez. xxxiv. 30, 31. John x. 3, 4. 14-16. Acts xx. 28. 1 Pet. ii. 25.

to prevail and triumph over all opposition, and that for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM XCV. V. 1. This Psalm has no title in the Hebrew: but the Septuagint call it 'A Psalm of David;' and the apostle fully sanctions this testimony, by his manner of quoting it; "Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, "To-day if ye will hear his voice, &c." "Again he limiteth a certain day, saying in David," "To-day, after so long a time, To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." (Notes, 7-11. Heb. iii. 7-13. iv. 3-11.) This passage also manifestly shews, that the apostles considered the scriptures of the old Testament as the language of the Holy Spirit, whoever committed that language to writing. The Holy Ghost spake by David. (Notes, Matt. xxii. 41-46. Mark xii. 35-37.)—The Psalm appears to have been composed for the use of the Israelites, as they ascended in companies to the sanctuary, or as soon as they entered into the courts of the Lord; being an introduction to the sacred services there performed, and especially the Psalmody, which had recently been instituted. And it is still retained in the offices of our church for similar purposes.—The Psalmist 'sheweth that God's service standeth not in dead ceremonies, but chiefly in the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.' (Note, l. 7-15.)—Rock of our salvation.] Marg. Ref. d.—Notes, lxxxix. 19-37, v. 26. Ex. xvii. 5, 6. Is. xii. 2.

V. 2. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.) 'Let us...triumphantly laud the Author of all the good we enjoy, and in whom we may safely confide for ever. Let us approach unto his presence with thankful hearts, to acknowledge the benefits we have received from him; and devoutly proclaim with triumphant hymns, what a joy it is to us, that we may address ourselves unto him.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 3. Gods.] 'Even the angels, (who in respect of men are thought as gods,) are nothing in his sight; much less the idols which man's brain inventeth.' (Notes, lxxxii. 1. 6-8. xcvi. 3-7. cxxxviii. 1. Heb. i. 5-7.)

V. 4, 5. The recesses of the earth, which man cannot penetrate or investigate, are in the hand of our Creator, and open to his inspection.—The word rendered "strength," and in the margin heights, is derived from a root signifying to weary: because men are wearied in ascending the heights of the mountains.—'The treasures which lie hid in the deep places of the earth beneath; the majestick pride and strength of the hills, which tower above and lift up

' their heads to heaven; the unnumbered waves of the great and wide sea, which roll in perpetual motion round the world; the rich and variegated produce of the dry land, crowned with verdure and beauty; together with every thing that liveth in the waters or on the earth, are all under the government of our God.' Bp. Horne. (Marg. Ref.—Note, xciii. 3, 4.)

V. 6. The former verses were intended to animate the people in joyful praise and thanksgiving: but this seems a call to humble prayer and supplication.—'Since God made our bodies, as well as our souls, it is meet and right that they should bear their part in his service, and that internal worship should be accompanied and signified by that which is external.' Bp. Horne.—Three words are used: "We will prostrate ourselves, we will bow our heads, we will kneel, &c." (Notes, Gen. xvii. 1-3. 1 Kings viii. 22.)—'Let us all, with the lowest prostrations devoutly adore his majesty: let us...bow both our bodies and souls, in token of our subjection to him: let us fall on our knees, and submissively acknowledge the duty we owe to the great Lord, who gave us our Being.' Bp. Patrick.—Kneeling is the posture of prayer most commonly mentioned, both in the old Testament, and in the new. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Dan. vi. 10, 11. Acts xxi. 1-6.)

V. 7. (Notes, Ex. xix. 5, 6. xx. 2.)—The Creator of the world became the God, or the covenanted Friend, of Israel: and the nation was under special obligations to devote themselves to his worship and service; being taken peculiar care of by him, and favoured with manifold advantages above all other nations. They were "his people and the sheep of his pasture." (Notes, xxiii. 1-3. lxxx. 1.) Yet this was only an outward relation and privilege to most of them: the whole company were a type of the true Israel; and nations professing Christianity are in great measure in a similar situation to that of Israel. Now, in large congregations, some may be supposed to be spiritual worshippers; and others to be destitute of saving and sanctifying faith, though attending on the means of grace. The former part of the Psalm, therefore, may be considered as an address to the true worshippers, exciting them to alacrity and fervency in their spiritual sacrifices: but the latter part of it, is a warning to the unbelievers, from the example of the Israelites in the days of Moses; and the apostle has taught us to apply it to the case of professed Christians, and to that of all who hear the gospel. If they ever mean to hear, that is, to believe and obey, the voice of God, let them lose no time, but attend without delay;

^a Heb. iii. 7. 13. sheep of his hand. "To-day, ^{*}if ye will hear his voice,

^x Prov. viii. 6. Is. 8. ^y Ex. viii. 15. 1 Sam. vi. 6. Dan. v. 20. Acts xix. 9. Rom. ii. 5. Heb. iii. 13. 12. 25. ^z Ex. xvii. 2. 7. Num. xiv. 11. 22. 27. xx. 13. Deut. i. 34, 35. vi. 16. Heb. iii. 8, 9. 15.—19. Jude 5. ^{*} Heb. contention. a lxxviii. 17, 18. 40, 41. 1 Cor. x. 9. b Num. xiv. 22. Matt. xi. 20—22. John xv. 24.

8 ^y Harden not your heart, as ^zin the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9 When ^ayour fathers tempted me, proved me, and ^bsaw my work.

10 ^cForty years long was I ^dgrieved with *this* generation, and said, It is a people that do ^eerr in their heart, and ^fthey have not known my ways:

11 Unto whom ^gI swear in my wrath, ^hthat they should not enter into ⁱmy rest.

34, 35. Heb. iii. 11. 18. Matt. xi. 28, 29. Heb. iv. 4—11. Rev. xiv. 13.

h Gen. ii. 2, 3. Jer. vi. 16.

lest the sentence of exclusion should be past, and the door be for ever shut.—'He sheweth wherein they are God's flock, that is, if they hear his voice.' (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 1 Cor. x. 1—12. Heb. iii. 7—13. Jude 5—8.)

His pasture.] 'From those pastures, O thou good Shepherd, suffer us not to stray, or, if we do stray, bring us speedily back again, by any means, which thou, in thine infinite wisdom, shalt think fit. Wholesome is the discipline, which drives us into the fold, and keeps us there. ...What follows to the end of the psalm is undoubtedly spoken in the person of God himself, who may be considered, as addressing us in these latter days, by the gospel of his Son.' *Bp Horne.*

V. 8. *Harden*, &c.] *Notes*, Ex. iv. 21. ix. 12. Is. vi. 9, 10.—The original words for "provocation" and "temptation," are *Meribah* and *Massah*. (*Notes*, Ex. xvii. 7. Num. xx. 10—13.)

V. 9—11. (*Notes*, Num. xiv. 22, 23. Matt. iv. 5—7.—The word (מִרְיָא) translated was "grieved," is rendered by the Septuagint, *provoked*; and the apostle has followed that reading, though our version uses the word *grieved*. Some versions render it, 'I held them in abhorrence.' It is certainly a much more indignant word, so to speak, than that used by the apostle, when he says, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit, &c." (*Note*, Eph. iv. 30—32 :) for he is speaking of the wrong tempers and other failures of true Christians; but the Psalmist, or rather the Holy Spirit by him, refers to the obstinate unbelief and rebellion of that generation which fell in the wilderness, after all which they had seen and heard of JEHOVAH's power, majesty, and goodness. "They rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and fought against them." (*Notes*, Is. lxiii. 10. Acts vii. 51—53.) The root of all this rebellion lay in their hearts; they "erred," or *wandered*, "in their hearts;" they were influenced by "an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." They were apostates and idolaters: they disliked the holy service of God, and delighted in the sensual mirth and indulgences of idolatry, and in worldly pursuits; they were "carnally-minded, and enmity against God;" they "said to God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." The Lord therefore passed the irrevocable sentence of exclusion from Canaan, confirmed with an oath: and he set them forth in his word as a warning to all ages and nations; lest by imitating their example, they should be for ever secluded from that heavenly rest, of which Canaan was a faint shadow. (*Notes*, Ex. xxxii. 1. Num. xiv. 1—30. P. O. 26—45. *Notes*, Heb. iv. 1—11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord, being infinitely powerful, wise, just, merci-

ful, and faithful; the Creator, Benefactor, Sovereign, and Proprietor of all worlds; ought to be universally adored, loved, and praised by all his rational creatures; and gratitude to him should be the joy of every heart. But none of our fallen race cordially render him this reasonable tribute, unless they have known him as, in Christ Jesus, "the Rock of our salvation." This "great God," this "King above all gods," in whose "hand are the deep places of the earth," and the reservoirs of the mighty ocean, and whose is "the strength of the hills" which he has formed, is the Friend, the Father, and Portion of all believers. Their Creator is become their Shepherd: he sought them when lost, and brought them to his fold, and now feeds them, with tenderness and care, as the sheep of his hand: (*Notes*, cxix. 176. Is. xl. 9—11. Luke xv. 3—7. 1 Pet. ii. 18—25, v. 25 :) yea, "he laid down his life for the sheep." (*Notes*, Is. liii. 4—6. John x. 10—18. Heb. xiii. 20, 21.) How should *they* then delight in celebrating the praises of their glorious and gracious Benefactor, and in thanking him for his unspeakable mercies! and how gladly should they embrace every opportunity of meeting in his courts, to join their grateful songs of praise with those of their fellow Christians!—When we thus assemble together to worship our God, we should endeavour to express by our deportment, as well as to cultivate in our minds, believing confidence, joyful gratitude, and reverential awe: and, as conscious of our own meanness and unworthiness, and mindful of his infinite majesty and glory, we should "bow down, and kneel before the LORD our Maker."—But we must not imagine, that all, who meet in our religious assemblies, are at present capable of rendering such spiritual worship, or that they partake of such inestimable privileges. In general it is to be feared, they are but a remnant; like the few believers found in Israel, when as a nation they were excluded from Canaan through unbelief.—While therefore the true people of God should excite each other, and ministers should excite them, to rejoice in God and to render him praise; and they ought to consider his solemn worship, as the chief business of their assembling together; the rest are to be addressed, in the name and by the authority of God, to hear, and obey his voice, and accept of his salvation. The abundant encouragements of the gospel should be set before them, as well as the awful terrors of the law; to convince and assure them, that the Lord is still "ready to forgive," and to save all who come to him. But it is a concern, which admits of no delay: death may come before to-morrow, if the sinner will not hear the voice of God to-day; or he may be consigned to final impenitence, and be "hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." Yet men in general procrastinate, and "harden their hearts" against present convictions: they do violence to their own consciences,

PSALM XCVI.

Israel, and all nations, are called on to celebrate the praises of God, to shew forth his salvation, and to join

in his worship, 1—10. The whole creation is excited to rejoice in the prospect of his coming, and of his righteous judgment, 11—13.

O ^a Sing unto the LORD a new song: ^b sing unto the LORD, all the earth.

2 Sing unto the LORD, ^c bless his name; ^d shew forth his salvation from day to day.

3 ^e Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

4 For ^f the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised; he is ^g to be feared above all gods.

5 For ^h all the gods of the nations are idols: but ⁱ the LORD made the heavens.

6 ^k Honour and majesty are before him: ^l strength and beauty are in ^m his sanctuary.

^{Is. xliv. 8, &c. xli. 1, 2. Jer. x. 3—5. 14, 15. Acts xix. 26. 1 Cor. viii. 4. Is. xlii. 5. Jer. x. 11. k viii. 1. xix. 1. lxiii. 2, 3. xciii. 1. civ. 1. Heb. i. 3. 2 Pet. i. 16, 17. l xxvii. 4. xxix. 9. 1, 2. m 1 Chr. xvi. 27.}

^e xxii. 27. lxxii. 18, 19. cxvii. Is. xix. 23—25. xlix. 6. Dan. iv. 1—3. vi. 26, 27. Mic. iv. 2. Zech. ix. 10. Matt. xxviii. 19. Luke xxiv. 47. Rev. xiv. 6, 7. ^f lxxxvi. 10. lxxxix. 7. cxlv. 3. Ex. xviii. 11. 1 Sam. iv. 8. Neh. ix. 5. ^g lxvi. 3. 5. lxxvi. 7. lxxxix. 7. xcv. 3. Jer. v. 22. x. 6, 7. Luke xii. 5. Rev. xv. 4. ^h cxv. 3—8. cxxxv. 15—18. ⁱ Gen. i. 1. Heb. i. 3. 2 Pet. i.

and plunge into those pleasures and pursuits, which banish reflection, and increase their natural aversion to the truths and service of God. Thus is he “grieved” and provoked by their obstinacy; and his patience is wearied out by their contempt of his favour, their disregard of his displeasure, and their unbelieving neglect of his salvation. When this is the case, the Lord “gives them up to their own hearts’ lusts:” and then they will never be able to enter heaven, any more than the condemned generation of Israel could enter Canaan. Let sinners then take warning by this awful example, and not approach the brink of that precipice, whence these ancient rebels were cast down into destruction. Let them fear giving way to temptation, by presuming upon the patience and mercy of God; let them be careful not to sin on under the means of grace, and against the conviction of their own consciences: let them be aware of the evil of their own hearts, which leads them to wander from God, and to remain ignorant of his ways, because *haters* of them: and let them dread giving into prejudices, or infidel objections to the gospel, because they are averse to its salutary restraints; or devising a scheme of religion more suited to their pride and lusts, and less disquieting to their consciences. These are a few of the numerous methods, by which Satan blinds and hardens numbers in our religious assemblies, to their everlasting destruction. Finally, let us all then “fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it.” (*P. O. Heb. iii. 7—19. iv. 1—11.*)

NOTES.

PSALM XCVI. V. 1. The Septuagint prefixes the following title to this Psalm, ‘When the house was built after the captivity, an Ode of David.’ Hence it has been conjectured, that after the captivity, when the temple was finished, it was selected, (perhaps by Haggai or Zechariah,) from the rest of the song of praise, used by David at the removal of the ark; and that, some alterations having been made, it was appointed, as a proper expression of the people’s thankful joy on that occasion. (*Notes, 1 Chr. xvi. 7—36. Ezra iii. 8—11. vi. 16—18.*) It is, however, generally allowed to contain a prediction of the Messiah’s coming and kingdom. “A new Song;” a song calculated to celebrate new mercies, prefigured by old ones wrought for Israel in former times: a song fit for the voices of renewed and regenerate men to sing in the new Jerusalem, in those new heavens and that new

earth, which constitute the new creation, or kingdom of ‘Jesus Christ.’ *Bp. Horne.* (*Notes, xxxiii. 2, 3. xl. 1—5. Rev. v. 8—10. xiv. 1—5.*)—‘The prophet sheweth, that the time shall come, that all nations shall have occasion to praise the Lord for the revealing of his gospel.’—The greatest part of the Psalm has already been considered, as constituting a part of that Psalm of praise, which was sung when David removed the ark to mount Zion. (*Notes, 1 Chr. xvi. 23—33.*) It is not there called “A new Song:” and this perhaps implies that it was altered by some prophet, as adapted to a new occasion.

V. 2. The clause rendered “Shew forth his salvation, &c.” literally means “Proclaim the glad tidings of his salvation from day to day.” The publick, unremitting, and zealous preaching of the gospel, by the apostles and primitive evangelists, to Jews and Gentiles, and by a succession of ministers ever since; with the praises and thanksgivings offered to God by them, and their numerous converts, are evidently predicted. (*Notes, 1 Chr. xvi. 23, 24. Is. xl. 9—11. lii. 9, 10.*)

V. 3; 4. The glory of God, or that which constitutes him altogether glorious, even his attributes, especially his wisdom, justice, truth, and mercy; is manifested by his word, and in his works, of which that discovery is most distinguished, which he has made of his harmonious perfections in the person and salvation of Christ, and in the wonders of redeeming love. The glory of God, in his wonderful works for Israel of old, had, by various means, been made known to the heathen; yet they adhered to their idols: (*Marg. Ref.*) but when the apostles declared his glory, as displayed by the gospel; immense multitudes renounced idolatry, and at length the whole ancient system of idolatry was subverted, through a large part of the world.—‘Seeing he will reveal himself to all nations contrary to their own expectation; they ought all to worship him contrary to their imaginations, and only as he hath appointed.’ (*Notes, xxii. 27, 28. lxvii. lxxxvi. 9, 10. 1 Chr. xvi. 25, 26.*)

V. 5. *Idols.] Vanities, Things of nought.* The Septuagint renders it “dæmons,” or devils. (*Notes, 1 Cor. viii. 4—6. x. 18—22.*) Demon (δαίμων, δαιμονιον,) bears a favourable meaning in heathen vocabularies, so to speak; but always signifies an evil spirit, or devil in the New Testament. ‘The idols, or whatsoever made not the heavens, are not God.’ (*Note, Jer. x. 11.*)

V. 6. *Notes, xxvii. 4—6. l. 1. 2. lxiii. 1—4. 1 Chr. xvi. 27.*

n xxix. 1, 2. lxxviii.
32—34. Luke ii
14.
o xxii. 27. lxxvi. 1,
2. lxxvii. 3, 4.
Rom. xv. 9, 10
Rev. v. 9. xix.
6

7 ⁿ Give unto the LORD, ° O ye kin-
dreds of the people, give unto the LORD
p glory and strength.

8 Give unto the LORD ^a the glory
* *due unto* his name: ^r bring an offering,
and ^s come into his courts.

9 O worship the LORD ^t in the [†] beauty
of holiness: ^u fear before him, all the
earth.

10 ^x Say among the heathen *that*
the LORD reigneth: ^y the world also
i. 11. Rom. xii. y
1. xv. 16. Phil.
ii. 17. iv. 18. Heb. xiii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. ii. 5. Rev. viii. 3, 4. s c. 4. t xxix. 2.
cx. 3. Ezra vii. 27. † Or, *glorious sanctuary*. Ez. vii. 20. Dan. xi. 45. Luke xxi.
5, 6. u xxxiii. 8. lxxvi. 7. 11. x xviii. 49. cxxvi. 2. Mal. i. 11. 14. Gal. i. 16.
y ii. 8—12. lix. 13. xciii. 1, xcvi. 1. xcix. 1. Dan. ii. 44. Matt. iii. 2. Rev. xi. 15. xix. 6.
z Is. xlix. 8. Col. ii. 7. Heb. i. 3.

V. 7—9. ‘Ascribe unto the LORD, O ye people, from
‘whatever family ye come, ascribe unto him that incom-
‘parable majesty, and supreme dominion, ... which you
‘give to imaginary gods: and renounce them all; and,
‘acknowledging the LORD alone to be the omnipotent
‘King of all the world, do him honour suitable to the ex-
‘cellency of his majesty: bring him an oblation, in token
‘of your subjection to him, and humbly worship him in
‘his temple, ... where he hath fixed his glorious residence
‘among us.’ ‘Adore his transcendent perfections; and
‘let all the people approach his presence with a pious
‘trembling, and dread to offend their Sovereign.’ *Bp.*
Patrick. (Notes, xix. 1, 2. 1 Chr. xvi. 28, 29. 2 Chr. xx.
20, 21.)

V. 10. ‘He prophesieth that the Gentiles shall be par-
‘takers with the Jews of God’s promise.’—When the apos-
tles went and preached the mediatorial kingdom of God,
as set up and administered by the Son of his love, to all
the nations, what did they but fulfil the command here
given? (Notes, Matt. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 14—16.
Luke xxiv. 44—49.) And as far as their doctrine has been
cordially received, the moral state of the world has been
established on an immovable basis. But we are still loudly
called on to pray, “Thy kingdom come;” (Notes, Matt.
iii. 2. vi. 10. 13. 33, 34. Rev. xi. 15—18;) and to exhort
one another to “say among the heathen, The LORD
“reigneth:” as well as to do all in our power, according
to our several stations and talents, to make known God our
Saviour to all the nations of the earth. (Notes, xciii. 1, 2.
1 Chr. xvi. 30.)

V. 11—13. These verses have peculiar animation, as a
call on the universe at large, to break forth into joyful
praise, and celebrate the coming, redemption, and kingdom
of the Saviour: but they are more literally rendered as a
direct prediction. “The heavens shall rejoice, and the
“earth shall be glad; the sea shall roar, &c.” (Notes,
xcviii. 7—9. cxlviii. 7—14. 1 Chr. xvi. 31—33. Is. xlii. 10
—12. xlv. 23. lv. 12, 13.) The second coming of Christ,
as well as the first, seems predicted; when “the crea-
“ture,” or creation, “shall be delivered from the bondage
“of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of
“God.” (Note, Rom. viii. 18—23.) The kingdom of the
Redeemer is the kingdom of *righteousness and truth*: he
rules the world in equity, justice, and truth; he fulfils the
gracious promises to his believing people; and the triumph of
righteousness and truth, over wickedness and falsehood, is

shall be established that it shall not be
moved: ^a he shall judge the people
righteously.

11 ^b Let the heavens rejoice, and let
the earth be glad; ^c let the sea roar,
and the fulness thereof.

12 ^d Let the field be joyful, and all
that is therein: then shall all the trees
of the wood rejoice

13 Before the LORD: ^e for he cometh,
for he cometh to judge the earth: ^f he
shall judge the world with righteous-
ness, and the people with his truth.

a 13. ix. 8. lxxv.
4. xcviii. 9.
xi. 3—5. Ac.
xvii. 31. Rom.
ii. 5, 6. iii. 5, 6.
Rev. xix. 11.
b lxxix. 34. cxlviii.
1—4. Is. xlv.
23. xlix. 13
Luke ii. 10. 13
14. xv. 10. Rev.
xii. 12. xix. 1—7
c xcviii. 7—9.
d lxxv. 12, 13. Is.
xlii. 10, 11. lv.
12, 13.
e xcviii. 9. Is. xxv.
8, 9. Mal. iii. 1,
2. 1 Thes. iv. 16
—18. 2 Thes. i.
10. 2 Tim. iv. 8.
Tit. ii. 13. 2 Pet.
iii. 12—14. Rev.
xi. 18. xxii. 20.
f 10. Rev. xix. 11.

the certain effect. And when he shall come to judge the
world, the justice and truth of God will be revealed and
glorified, in the destruction of the wicked according to his
threatenings; and the faithfulness of God, in fulfilling his
largest and kindest promises to his redeemed and devoted
servants. (Notes, Ps. 1. 3—6. 2 Thes. i. 5—10. Rev. xx.
11—15.)

The people. (13) עַמִּים: “Peoples,” plural, including the
inhabitants of every land.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When our Emmanuel had finished his work on earth,
and was received to his glory in heaven, the church began
to “sing a new song” unto him, and to bless his name:
and his apostles and evangelists lost no time, but “having
“received the promise of the Father” in the pouring out
of the Holy Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, they imme-
diately proclaimed the glad tidings of his salvation; so
that “daily in the temple, and from house to house they
“ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ;” and in
“a short time they began to declare his glory among the
“heathen, and his wonders among all people.” His honour
and majesty, his strength and excellency, were at that
eventful period so displayed in his doctrine and by his
miracles, that vast multitudes renounced their idols, to
worship JEHOVAH in “the beauty of holiness,” as “God
“in Christ reconciling the world unto himself;” to “ren-
“der unto him the honour due unto his name;” to bring
their spiritual sacrifices, and to come into his courts. Still
this salvation is spread abroad; it is said “among the
“heathen, that JEHOVAH reigneth;” and we are taught
to hope and pray for that time, when he shall establish
his kingdom in righteousness over all nations, and when
the whole creation shall rejoice in him, and shew forth his
praise.—At length the incarnate God will come to judge
the earth, to execute his just vengeance on his enemies,
and to fulfil his promises to his people.—What then are
we? Would that day be welcome to our hearts? Are we
prepared to join the joyful acclamations of all his servants
on earth and in heaven? If this be not our case, let us
now begin to prepare to meet our God, by seeking the
pardon of our sins, and the renewal of our souls to ho-
liness. If we are ready, let us bless his name, bear up
cheerfully under our difficulties, endeavour to promote the
peace and enlargement of his kingdom; and in our proper
place, and doing our proper work, let us be as faithful

PSALM XCVII.

The nations are called on to rejoice in the coming of the righteous kingdom of God, and in the subversion of idolatry, 1—7. The church rejoices because of his judgments, and in his universal sovereignty, 8, 9. An exhortation to holiness, and joy in God, 10—12.

THE ^a LORD reigneth; ^b let the earth rejoice; ^c let the ^{*} multitude of isles be glad *thereof*.

² ^d Clouds and darkness *are* round about him: ^e righteousness and judgment *are* the ^{*} habitation of his throne.

Gen. xviii. 25. Heb. i. 8, 9. † Or, establishment. Prov. xvi. 12.

a xlii. 1. xvi. 10.
11. xcix. 1. Ob.
21. Matt. iii. 3.
vi. 10. 13. Mark
xi. 10. Col. i.
13. Rev. xi. 17.
b xcvi. 4—6. Is.
xlix. 13. Luke
ii. 10, 11.
c Gen. x. 5. Is.
xi. 11. xxiv. 14
—16. xli. 5. xlii.
4. 10—12. xlix.
1. ii. 5. lx. 9.
lxvi. 19. Zeph.
ii. 11.
* Heb. many, or,
great isles.
d xviii. 11, 12.
lxxvii. 19. Ex.
xx. 21. xxiv. 16
—18. Deut. iv.
11, 12. 1 Kings
viii. 10—12.
Nah. i. 3. Rom.
xi. 33.
e xlv. 6, 7.
lxxxix. 14. xcix. 4.

³ A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about.

⁴ His lightnings enlightened the world: ^h the earth saw and trembled.

⁵ The hills melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of ^k the Lord of the whole earth.

⁶ The heavens declare his righteousness, and ^m all the people see his glory.

⁷ Confounded be all they that serve

lxiv. 1, 2. Mic. i. 3, 4. Nah. i. 5. Hab. iii. 6. k xlvii. 2. lxxxiii. 18. Is. liv. 5.
Mic. iv. 13. Zech. iv. 14. Mark xi. 3. 1 Cor. i. 2. l xix. 1. xxxvi. 5, 6. l. 6. lxxxix.
2. 5. Is. i. 2. Rev. xix. 2. m lxvii. 4. xcvi. 3. Num. xiv. 21. Is. vi. 3. xlv. 6. lx.
2, 3. Hab. ii. 14. Matt. vi. 9, 10. n Ex. xx. 4. Lev. xxvi. 1. Is. xxxvii. 18, 19.
xli. 29. xlii. 17. xlv. 9—11. Jer. x. 14. Rev. xiv. 8—10.

xviii. 8. xxi. 8.
9. 1. 3. Deut. iv.
11. 36. v. 4. 21.
24. xxvii. 22.
Dan. vii. 10.
Nah. i. 5, 6.
Hab. iii. 5. Mai.
iv. 1. 2 Thes. i.
8. Heb. xii. 29.
2 Pet. iii. 10—
12. Rev. xi. 5.
xx. 15.
g lxxvii. 18. cxliv.
5, 6. Ex. xix. 16
—18.
h civ. 32. cxiv. 7.
Job ix. 6. Jer. x.
10. Matt. xxvii.
50, 51. xxviii. 2.
3. Rev. xi. 19.
xix. 11.

i Judg. v. 4, 5. Is.
xxiv. 19, 20.
Job ix. 6. Jer. x.
10. Matt. xxvii.
50, 51. xxviii. 2.
3. Rev. xi. 19.
xix. 11.

servants, who are habitually expecting and desiring the coming of their Lord.

NOTES.

PSALM XCVII. V. 1. The Septuagint entitle this 'A Psalm of David, after his land was restored to him,' meaning that he composed it, when he was re-established in his government, after Absalom's rebellion.—But, whatever gave occasion to it, no doubt "the Spirit of God, speaking by" the Psalmist, foretold the kingdom of Christ, and his victories.—This verse may literally be thus rendered, "JEHOVAH reigneth, the earth shall rejoice; yea the multitude of the isles shall be glad thereof." It is a direct prediction of the conversion of the Gentiles to Christ, and their joy in him: and the evidence from prophecy appears very much obscured, by rendering such prophecies as exhortations. When, in the twelfth verse, the righteous are exhorted to rejoice in God, the *imperative*, not the *future* tense, is used.—'He sheweth that where God reigneth, there is all felicity and spiritual joy.—The gospel shall not be only preached in Judea, but through all isles and countries.'—'We Britons, as inhabiting one of those heathen isles, and enjoying so fair a portion of evangelical blessings, have reason to repeat this verse with a particular pleasure and energy.—The Hebrews called by the name of "isles," יַמִּים, not only countries surrounded by the sea, but all the countries which the sea divided from them; so that the term became synonymous with "Gentiles." Thus it is said, Is. xlii. 4, "The isles shall wait for his law;" which passage, Matt. xii. 21, is expounded as follows, "In him shall the Gentiles trust." Bp. Horne.—Europe, however, and the isles between Asia and Europe, seem more generally meant by this expression. (Notes, Gen. x. 2—5, conclusion. Is. xxiv. 13—15. xlii. 10—12. lx. 8, 9. lxvi. 19—23. Zeph. ii. 11.)

V. 2. "Clouds and darkness" may either denote the terrors, with which the Lord appals his enemies, when he goes forth to execute righteous vengeance upon them; or the obscurity which rests upon his dispensations and dealings with his people, till the accomplishment of his promises and prophecies throws light upon them. (Notes, lxxvii. 19, 20. Nah. i. 2—6, v. 3.) But, however it may appear to his creatures, or even to his most eminent saints; however they may be ready to say, "All these things are

"against me," or, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious?" and however the wicked may blasphemously revile his awful justice, as tyranny or cruelty; yet righteousness and judgment are the basis, the *support* and *establishment*, "of his throne." (Notes, lxxxix. 13, 14. xcix. 4.) His mercy-seat is founded on judgment and righteousness; the justification of the believer, through the merits and atonement of Christ, magnifies the law, and honours the justice of God, as well as his grace. Every providential dispensation, whatever present appearances may be, springs from the same glorious union of justice and mercy, in the manifold wisdom, truth, and faithfulness of God. And "the day of wrath will be the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds." (Notes, Rom. ii. 4—6. iii. 21—31.)

V. 3—7. In the deep but righteous judgment of our King, Jerusalem and its inhabitants were miserably destroyed, as by a consuming fire, for their enmity to him and his kingdom. (Notes, Matt. xxii. 1—10. xxiv. 1, 2.)—The subversion of the deep-rooted foundations of idolatry, throughout the immense Roman empire, during the first three centuries, and by the conversion of Constantine the emperor to Christianity, may next be predicted, in metaphorical language taken from the displays of the divine power and presence at mount Sinai. (Notes, l. 1—6. Ex. xix. 16—20. Deut. iv. 11. v. 22—29. xxxiii. 2. Heb. xii. 18—21.) The mountainous obstructions, which before seemed to render the general promulgation of Christianity insurmountable, thus melted before God, like wax before the fire: (Notes, Is. lxiv. 1—3. Mic. i. 2—4:) the devoted worshippers of idols, even the greatest of them, were alarmed as by tremendous lightnings and earthquakes. His righteousness, in the destruction of the persecuting tyrants of those times, was conspicuous as the heavens: all the people, or *peoples*, beheld the divine glory, in making his cause triumphant: and the pagans were confounded, and ashamed of their idols, in which they had so long gloried. Not only did angels worship the exalted Redeemer; but rulers, who are the vice-gerents of the great God, submitted to him, and became his subjects: and all the mighty ones of the earth prostrated themselves before him, who had thrown down the idol gods of the heathen, by his presence and power. (Marg. Ref.)—The Septuagint render the word translated "gods," by *angels*;

Ex. xxv. 20. graven images, that boast themselves
2 Chr. iii. 13. of idols: ^o worship him, all *ye* gods.

12. Rev. v. 11 **8** ^p Zion heard, and was glad; and
—14. the daughters of Judah rejoiced,
xlvi. 11. Is. ii. 3. ^q because of thy judgments, O LORD.
lii. 7—10. lxii. 11. Zeph. iii. 14
—17. Zech. ix. 9. Matt. xxi. 4—
9.

9 For thou, LORD, art ^r high above
q lii. 6. lviii. 10. all the earth: thou art exalted ^s far
Rev. xviii. 20. above all gods.
xix. 1—7.

10 ^r Ye that love the LORD, ^t hate
lxxxiii. 18. Eph. i. 21. Phil. ii. 9—11.
xcv. 3. xcvi. 4. **cxv. 3—8. cxxv. 5.** **Ex. xviii. 11.** **Jer. x. 8. 10.** **t xci. 14.** **Rom. viii. 28.** **1 Cor. viii. 3.** **Jam. i. 12.** **ii. 5.** **1 Pet. i. 8.** **1 John iv. 19.** **v. 2, 3.** **u xxxvi. 4.** **ci. 3.** **cxix. 104. 163.** **Prov. viii. 13.** **Am. v. 15.** **Rom. vii. 15. 24.** **xii. 9.**

evil: ^x he preserveth the souls of his
xxxix. 23. xxxvii. 28. 39. 40. cxlv. 20. **Prov. ii. 8.** **Is. xlv. 17.** **John x. 28—30.** **Rom. viii. 28—30.** **1 Pet. i. 5.** **cxv. 3.** **Jer. xv. 21.** **Dan. iii. 28.** **vi. 22.** **27.** **2 Thes. ii. 8—12.** **iii. 2.** **1 John v. 18.** **Rev. xiii. 8.** **xviii. 28.** **cxii. 4.** **Esth. viii. 16.** **Job xxii. 28.** **Prov. iv. 18.** **Is. ix. 1.** **2. lxii. 1.** **Mic. vii. 9.** **John xii. 46.** **Rev. xxi. 23.** **xxii. 5.** **a cxxvi. 5, 6.** **Gal. vi. 8.** **Jam. v. 7—11.** **b xxxiii. 11.** **xxxiii. 1.** **Hab. iii. 17, 18.** **Zeph. iii. 14—17.** **Phil. iv. 4.** **c xxx. 4.** **lx. 6.** **Hab. i. 12, 13.** **Heb. xii. 10.** *** Or, to the memorial.**

11 ^y Light is ^z sown for the righte-
ous, and gladness for the upright in heart.

12 ^z Rejoice in the LORD, ye right-
**eous; and ^a give thanks ^b at the remem-
brance of his holiness.**

and thus the apostle quotes the verse, when speaking of the dignity of Christ. (*Notes*, xcv. 3. *Heb. i. 5—7.*) Hence we learn that Christ himself as Emmanuel, is peculiarly intended. He is the Object of universal adoration: and all the angels of God, (instead of receiving worship from Christians, according to the abominable idolatry of the Roman Antichrist,) are fellow-worshippers with Christians, when adoring the great Redeemer.—Thus they were, under the law, represented by the Cherubim bowing down over the ark, “desiring to look into these things;” and in many respects joining in Israel’s worship: and thus they are introduced by John, as joining in the praises of the church, and saying, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” (*Notes*, *Ex. xxv. 10—21.* *1 Pet. i. 10—12.* *Rev. v. 11—14.*)

V. 8, 9. (*Note*, xlvi. 11.) ‘Jerusalem, the mother city, hath received the news of thy victories with a joyful heart; after whose example all the other cities of Judah are exceeding glad, O Lord, because thou hast judged righteously in destroying our idolatrous enemies, and defending thy faithful servants.’ *Bp. Patrick*. Whatever events gave occasion to the Psalm, the spiritual victories of the Lord our Saviour were certainly predicted. The church and all her assemblies, hearing of these revolutions, would greatly rejoice to see the judgment of God upon his enemies, and his exaltation above all the gods of the heathen.—“There is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth;” much more was there when the Redeemer triumphed over the idols of the heathen, and the kingdom of the devil.—Thus the tidings brought to the apostles, concerning the conversion of the Gentiles, caused them to rejoice and glorify God. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, *Luke xv. 8—10.* *Acts xv. 1—6.* *xxi. 17—21.* *Rev. xix. 1—6.*)

V. 10. ‘Shew your love to the LORD, by hating and forsaking all sin.’—There is a peculiar emphasis in this caution, with reference to the events supposed to have been predicted; as it is well known, that secular prosperity soon corrupted the visible church, in a most lamentable manner, and brought in an inundation of evils, which are by no means terminated at this day. Yet the souls of the faithful remnant have in every age been preserved, notwithstanding the snares of the world, in-dwelling sin, the contagion of false doctrine, and the fury of persecution. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xxxvii. 27, 28. *1 Sam. ii. 9.* *1 Pet. i. 3—5.*) ‘The redeemed...are characterised by their “love of God;” they are enjoined to “hate evil:” this

‘hatred is indeed a consequence and a sure proof of that love, when it is genuine and sincere. ...A Christian must not only serve God outwardly, but must inwardly “love” him: he must not content himself with abstaining from overt acts of sin, but must truly hate it. They who do so, are “the saints of God, whose souls he preserveth” from evil, and will finally “deliver” from the evil one, and his associates, by a happy death, and a glorious resurrection.’ *Bp. Horne.* (*Notes*, *Rom. viii. 28—39.*)

V. 11. ‘Though God’s deliverance appear not suddenly; yet it is sown and laid up in store for them.’ (*Notes*, cxii. 4. cxxvi. 5, 6. *Gal. vi. 6—10.*)—Light is the emblem of knowledge, holiness, and joy: and it is here compared to seed, which lies long under the clods, but at length comes up and yields an increase. (*Note*, *1 John i. 5—7.*) St. James exhorts Christians to wait and be patient, after the example of the husbandman: but he means *real* Christians, “the upright in heart,” who hate evil, and are true *saints*; for God will surely preserve them. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, lxxiii. 1. lxxxiv. 10, 11. *Jam. v. 7—11.*)

V. 12. *Give thanks, &c.*] Or, “Praise, for a memorial, “&c.” that is, “Celebrate the memorial of his holiness.” (*Notes*, xxx. 4. cxi. 4. *Matt. xxvi. 26—28.*) ‘Tribulation ... should not prevent our “rejoicing in Jehovah our righteousness,” who justifieth us from our sins; no adversity ought to make us negligent in celebrating, with thanksgiving, the “commemorations of his holiness,”... to the end that we may always remember, with gratitude, how great things he hath done for us already, and reflect with comfort on those much greater things, which he hath promised to do for us hereafter.’ *Bp. Horne.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The wise and righteous government of God is well calculated to rejoice the hearts of all rational creatures, except rebels, who have exposed themselves to his powerful vengeance: but the kingdom of JEHOVAH, as administered by the eternal Son, who has pardons to confer on the most guilty, is a source of joy even to the sinful inhabitants of the earth. The gospel also, when preached to those, who before “sat in darkness,” calls for the exercise of gratitude and gladness; and this our favoured isle has peculiar cause to be thankful: yet, alas! how few prize these privileges, or rejoice properly on account of them!—Under every dispensation, the counsels and dealings of the infinite God are too mysterious for man’s comprehension: but in the event we shall see, and now we ought to believe, that when “clouds and darkness are round about him, right-

PSALM XCVIII.

The Psalmist calls on the whole world to praise the Lord, for overcoming all opposition, in making known his salvation to Israel, and to the ends of the earth;

and to rejoice in the prospect of his coming to judgment, 1—9

A Psalm.

O Sing unto the LORD a new song, for he hath done marvellous things:

his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory.

2 The LORD hath made known his salvation; his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen.

3 He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Is-

rah. c ii. 5, 6. xlv. 3—5. cx. 2—6. Gen. iii. 15. Is. li. 10. lix. 16. lxiii. 5. John xvi. 33. Acts xix. 20. Col. ii. 15. Heb. ii. 14, 15. Rev. iii. 21. vi. 2. xvii. 14. xix. 11—21. d Is. xlv. 21—23. xlix. 6. Matt. xxviii. 19. Mark xvi. 15. Luke ii. 30—32. iii. 6. Rom. x. 18. Tit. ii. 13. e xxii. 31. xxiv. 5. Is. xlv. 24, 25. xlvii. 13. lxii. 2. Jer. xxxiii. 6. John xvi. 8—10. Rom. iii. 21—26. ix. 30. x. 3, 4. 2 Cor. v. 21. Phil. iii. 9. 2 Pet. i. 1. f cvi. 45. Lev. xxvi. 42. Deut. iv. 31. Mic. vii. 20. Luke i. 54, 55, 72. Rom. xv. 8, 9.

“eousness and judgment are the basis of his throne.”—It is, however, evident from history, that from time to time, his wrath, like a consuming fire, has gone “before him to burn up his enemies round about.” When he comes in his power to set up his kingdom, all opposition must melt away like wax before the fire; and dismay and ruin must be the effects of obstinate rebellion against him: whilst the inhabitants of heaven will “adore his righteousness, and all the people shall see his glory.” Confusion will be the portion of all those, who worship and glory in graven images; and surely this idolatry is no less criminal *within*, than it is *without*, the pale of the visible church! The destruction of the imperial authority of pagan Rome, which had for ages been employed to support idolatry, was but a prelude of the destruction of that antichristian power which soon succeeded it, but has far surpassed it in impieties and iniquities: (*Notes*, 2 *Thes.* ii. 8—12. *Rev.* xviii. 4—8 :) and the Lord Jesus will ere long come, and confound all idolaters throughout the earth, and put an end to idolatry of every kind.—All the angels of God worship him: we cannot therefore err in joining their adoration, and in “honouring the Son, even as we honour the Father:” (*Note*, *John* v. 20—23 :) and the monarchs of the earth will never consult their own interest and honour, till they prostrate themselves before him, and use their authority in obedience to his commandments. (*Note*, ii. 10—12.) As these events take place, the church of God, in every land, does greatly rejoice: nay, we cannot but be glad on account of those judgments of God upon persecuting tyrants, which promote the success of his gospel.—But if we really love the Lord, and desire that his “name should be hallowed, his kingdom come, and his will be done on earth as in heaven;” (*Notes*, *Matt.* vi. 9, 10;) we shall in proportion hate and dread the evil of sin, and carefully watch against the commission and the occasions of it. This is the best expression of our love, and our most effectual method of forwarding those desirable events.—The remnant of upright believers shall be preserved in the worst of times; and the light of joy and consolation is sown for them, in a good soil, and will surely spring up and ripen to a glorious harvest. Let us then rejoice in the Lord, though in the world we have tribulation: let us thankfully recollect, that his purity, justice, truth, and goodness, are pledged to support and deliver all, who trust in him: and, as he infinitely hates sin, yet freely loves the person of the sinner who believes in Christ; he will certainly make a final separation between the man whom he loves, and the sin which he

hates, and sanctify his people wholly, in body, soul, and spirit.

NOTES.

PSALM XCVIII. V. 1. This is called *A Psalm*; the Septuagint add, ‘of David.’—It very much resembles the ninety-sixth. It especially celebrates, prophetically, the salvation of the Redeemer, by his almighty power accomplishing his holy decrees, notwithstanding the opposition of earth and hell. (*Note*, xvi. 1.) ‘He, by his almighty goodness alone, and incomparable strength, hath wrought salvation for those, who were as unworthy to be helped by him, as they were unable to help themselves.’ *Bp. Patrick*. The words, rendered “gotten him the victory,” are literally, “hath saved for him;” but in doing this he obtained the most glorious victories: and others still more glorious will at length be acquired; of which the deliverances and victories of Israel, from their departure out of Egypt to the termination of the Mosaick dispensation, were but faint shadows. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2. The salvation and righteousness of God are often united in Scripture, as shewing the way of a sinner’s acceptance, “by the righteousness of our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ:” (*Notes*, li. 14. lxxi. 13—15. lxxxv. 9—13. *Is.* xlv. 8. 20—25. xlvii. 12, 13. li. 4—6. lxi. 10, 11. *Zech.* ix. 9, 10. *Rom.* iii. 21—26 :) and these were made known, to the heathen, in the most publick manner, by the preaching of the apostles. But perhaps the awful, yet righteous vengeance, executed on the Jewish nation for rejecting the gospel, while salvation was thus sent to the gentiles and welcomed by them, was intended. “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness!” (*Note*, *Rom.* xi. 22—24.)

V. 3. ‘In sending the Messiah, God shewed himself mindful of the promises, which “mercy” prompted him to make, and “truth” required him to perform. These promises were made to the house of Israel, ... and the apostles offered salvation first to the Jews: but to them it was never intended that evangelical blessings should be confined. ... The gospel was accordingly preached to the nations, the apostles made their progress through the world, and “all the ends of the earth saw the salvation of God.” ... Yet once again, let all the “ends of the earth” “see thy salvation.”’ *Bp. Horne*. (*Notes*, xxii. 27, 28. lxvii. lxxxv. 10—13. lxxxix. 1—4. *Is.* xlv. 20—22. lii. 9, 10. *Jer.* xxxiii. 14—16. *Am.* ix. 11, 12. *Mic.* vii. 18—20. *Luke* i. 67—75. ii. 25—32. *Acts* xiii. 42—48. *Rom.* xv. 8—13.)

g 2. xxii. 27. lxvii. 7. Is. xlv. 22. lii. 10. Acts xiii. 47. xxviii. 28. Rev. v. 9.

rael: "all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

4 ^h Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all the earth; make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise.

5 Sing unto the LORD ⁱ with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

6 ^k With trumpets and sound of cornet, make a joyful noise before the LORD, ^l the King.

7 ^m Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; ⁿ the world, and they that dwell therein.

8 Let ^o the floods clap *their* hands: ^p let the hills be joyful together

9 Before the LORD; ^q for he cometh

to judge the earth: ^r with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.

PSALM XCIX.

Exhortations to adore the power, equity, and holiness of the Lord as reigning in Zion, 1—5. Encouragements to worship him, from the examples of Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, 6—9.

THE ^a LORD reigneth; ^b let the people tremble: ^c he sitteth *between* the cherubims; ^d let the earth ^e be moved.

2 The LORD is ^f great in Zion; and he is ^g high above all the people.

3 Let them praise ^h thy great and terrible name; ⁱ for it is holy.

h cxi. 9. cxlv. 17. Josh. xxiv. 19. 1 Sam. ii. 2. Is. vi. 3. John xvii. 11. Rev. iv. 8. xv. 3, 4.

V. 4—6. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xlvi. 5—7. lxxxi. 1—5.) 'The Psalmist... bids the whole earth break forth into joy, and exult in God her Saviour, with every token of gratitude;... with voices, and instruments of all kinds, in perfect harmony, with tempers and affections according in like manner, men are enjoined to sound aloud the praises of their great Redeemer.' *Bp Horne*.

V. 7—9. (*Note*, xcvi. 11—13.) "The floods" and "hills," (or more literally, the *rivers and mountains*), are here substituted for "the fields and the trees of the wood" which are mentioned in the ninety-sixth psalm.—The different orders of rational creatures in the universe seem to be poetically described under these metaphors, as rejoicing and exulting all at once with every expression of triumph and delight in the reign of the great Messiah. (*Notes*, cxlviii.) Angels celebrated his birth with glad songs of triumphant praise, and fervent congratulations of man's felicity. No doubt they triumphed with joyful praise at his ascension. They rejoice over every sinner that repents; they are his "ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation;" and they will execute his sovereign decisions at the day of judgment; admiring the equity and rectitude, as well as the truth and mercy, of his whole administration. (*Notes*, 1 Chr. xvi. 32, 33. Is. lv. 12, 13.)—The passage, as before, is future, and rather a *prediction*, than an *exhortation*, though implying both.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The great Redeemer, by "his right hand and his holy arm," obtained for himself here on earth most glorious victories: by his life, death, and resurrection, he overcame the world, sin, Satan, and death; and by his triumphant ascension he 'opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.' These are the marvellous works of JEHOVAH, JESUS, which demand from us new and perpetual songs of praise.—But we are more especially to enquire, whether "his holy arm have gotten him the victory" in our hearts, over the power of Satan, unbelief, and sin. If this be our happy case, we shall soon exchange all profane, light, and sensual strains, for new songs of joy and thanksgiving;

and our lives will harmonize with our lips in celebrating Emmanuel's praise. To bring sinners to experience this needful change, he has made known his salvation by the preaching of his gospel. "The ministration of condemnation" shews the justice of that sentence, which is denounced against transgressors; and "the ministration of righteousness" and "of the Spirit" declares the way, in which sinners may be justified and sanctified before him. (*Note*, 2 Cor. iii. 7—11.) Thus "his righteousness hath he shewed *openly*," and not by types and shadows, "in the sight of the heathen:" and his ministers are required to use "great plainness of speech," in warning, instructing, and inviting men to partake of these blessings.—When the Redeemer came, JEHOVAH remembered the engagements, which his mercy dictated and his truth performed, to the house of Israel: and, blessed be his name, this remote corner "of the earth hath seen the salvation of our God!" Let then his people in all lands rejoice in their Saviour and King: and let them celebrate his praises, in every way and by every means, which can express how greatly they rejoice and glory in him; how they welcome him to the throne in their hearts, delight in his pleasant service, and "find rest to their souls" by reliance upon him.—As all nature proclaims the Creator's glory, may all nations speedily resound with the Redeemer's name, whilst the blessings of his kingdom fill the earth with gladness. Yet sin in its dreadful effects will not be utterly abolished, until the Lord shall "come to judge the world in righteousness." Then this visible creation will be dissolved; and his people will enter those "new heavens, and that new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." "Seeing then we look for such things, let us be diligent, that we may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." (*Notes*, 2 Pet. iii. 10—16.)

NOTES.

PSALM XCIX. V. 1—3. The Septuagint assign this psalm also to David; it is uncertain, whether on sufficient grounds or not.—The word, rendered "tremble," signifies also to *rage* or *fret*; (*Note*, iv. 3—5;) and being *future*,

4 The King's ¹ strength also loveth judgment; ^k thou dost establish equity, thou ¹ executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob.

5 ^m Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at ⁿ his footstool; for ^{*} he is holy.

6 ^o Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; ^p they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.

the opposition of the Jews and Gentiles to the establishment of Messiah's kingdom, and their furious persecutions of the church in the primitive times, seem to be predicted: (Note, ii. 1—3 :) as well as the consternation of the opposers; while they witnessed the success of the gospel, and saw their resources, one after another, failing them, and every thing forboding their disgrace and ruin. For it was evident that "the LORD was great in Zion," and reigning on a throne of grace; (Notes, Ex. xxv. 22. Heb. iv. 14—16. xii. 22—25. Rev. xiv. 1—5;) and was determined to effect a revolution in the moral and religious state of the world; and to shew himself "high above all people," or, *over all the peoples.* (*plur.*) So that nothing remained but unreserved and cordial submission; and a willing exchange of idolatry and superstition, for the spiritual worship of the awful and holy name of Israel's God. —"They shall praise," &c. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, cxi. 9, 10.*)

V. 4. 'Though none can resist him, yet he is not a King that uses his power to wrong or oppress his subjects; but to do them right, and to give them relief, in which he delights.' ... He hath 'hitherto governed the seed of Israel with exact justice and singular mercy.' *Bp. Patrick.*—'Although the strength of our King be infinite, yet it is never exerted, but in righteousness and just judgment, which are his delight; they compose the firm basis of his throne, and direct his whole administration. Impenitent rebels must feel the weight of his arm, and none can accuse the justice of their punishment: but in all other cases, he is "mighty only to save."' *Bp. Horne.* (Notes, xlv. 6, 7. lxxii. 1—7. lxxxix. 13, 14. xcvi. 11—13. xcvi. 1, 2. Is. ix. 6, 7. xi. 2—5. xxxii. 1, 2. Zech. ix. 9, 10.)

V. 5. This is a call on the *trembling* or *raging* persecutors, to submit to God, and bow to the Messiah's sceptre, (9. Notes, ii. 7—12,) as well as on his people to extol and worship their God and Saviour. The temple, or the ark of the covenant, was the footstool before which they were to prostrate themselves in humble adoration. These were typical of the person and mediation of Emmanuel. (Notes, 1 Chr. xxviii. 2. Lam. ii. 1.)

V. 6. God had often been so provoked at Israel, as to threaten to destroy the nation: but Moses and Aaron, at one time, and Samuel at another, and in like manner the priests, and prophets, and zealous believers, in different ages, interceded; and so the nation was spared. These however, were only types of that great Mediator, "who is able to save to the uttermost all them that come to God

7 He spake unto them ^q in the cloudy pillar: ^r they kept his testimonies, and the ordinance *that* he gave them.

8 Thou answeredst them, O LORD our God: ^s thou wast a God that forgavest them, ^t though thou tookest vengeance of ^u their inventions.

9 ^x Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at ^y his holy hill; for ^z the LORD our God is holy.

lxxxvii. 1—3. z 3. 5. 1 Sam. ii. 2. Is. v. 16. vi. 3. lvii. 15. Hab. i. 12, 13. Luke i. 49. 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. Rev. iii. 7. iv. 8.

"through him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Notes, Heb. vii. 20—25.)—The wrath of God, therefore, against the opposers of the gospel, need not drive any to despair: for he, who heard Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, through the typical sacrifices, and spared Israel, would spare all who submitted, and sought mercy through the sacrifice and intercession of Christ. The same consideration was also well calculated to encourage the prayers and supplications of the persecuted and afflicted church. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, cvi. 19—23. Ex. xxxii. 11—14. Num. xiv. 13—19. xvi. 22. 1 Sam. vii. 9. Jer. xv. 1.*) —*Priests.*] Notes, Ex. xxiv. 5. Lev. viii. 25—32. Deut. xviii. 15—19.

V. 7. *In the cloudy pillar.*] Or "*From the cloudy pillar.*" (Notes, Ex. xix. 7—9. xxxiii. 8—11. Num. xii. 4—8.) Thus the Lord, in a most condescending manner, made known his will to Moses and Aaron, and by them to Israel. To Samuel also he revealed himself with great clearness, though in another way: and they answered his kindness, by an habitual course of spiritual worship, according to his ordinances, and zealous obedience to his commandments; so that they were both blessed and blessings to Israel. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 8. *Tookst vengeance, &c.*] In answer to the prayers of Moses, Aaron, and Samuel, the Lord repeatedly spared the nation of Israel: yet he took vengeance on the ring-leaders of rebellion among them; and he caused the people to suffer for "their own inventions" and even by means of them. (Notes, Ex. xxxii. 34, 35. Num. xiv. 22, 23. 33, 34. 39—45.) When Aaron burned incense between the living and the dead, the plague was stayed; yet many of the people had previously died of it. (Notes, Num. xvi. 41—50.) And when Samuel prayed for the people, they were spared; but their king, whom they had sinfully desired, proved a severe scourge unto them. (1 Sam. xii. 16—23. Hos. xiii. 10, 11.)

V. 9. (Note, 5.) "His holy hill," is here substituted, for "his footstool;" which confirms the interpretation above given. 'Imitate therefore the piety of those admirable men; and raise your thoughts, and affections, and voices, to extol and magnify the Lord our God, as much as you are able; for you can never do it enough. ... For the Lord our God is incomparably above all other beings, and alone worthy of your adoration.' *Bp. Patrick.*—'Singing with the spirits above, "Great and marvellous are thy works... Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."' *Bp. Horne.* (Note, Rev. xv. 1—4, v. 3.)

PSALM C.

^a *Tit. tit. Or, thanksgiving.*

^b *xxvii. 11. xlvii. 1. 5. lxvi. 1. 4. xcv. 1, 2. xcviii. 4. Is. xxiv. 14—6. xlii. 10—12. Zeph. iii. 14. Luke xix. 37.* A solemn call to the joyful worship of God, as our Creator and Shepherd, and to adore his everlasting goodness, mercy, and truth, 1—5.

^a A Psalm of ^{*} praise.

^c *lxvii. 4. lxviii. 32. cxvii. Deut. xxxii. 43. Zech. xiv. 9. Rom. xv. 10. Heb. the earth* **MAKE** a joyful noise unto the LORD, ^c all [†] ye lands.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

JEHOVAH reigning on a mercy-seat may be viewed with joy by all his faithful subjects; but his great salvation will aggravate the guilt of obstinate rebels: and, as hitherto the greatest number, even of those who have heard the gospel, have continued impenitent and unbelieving, the inhabitants of the earth have abundant cause to tremble at the report of the Redeemer's absolute authority and almighty power. But he still "waiteth to be gracious:" let then all who hear, take warning and seek his mercy.—Our God is "great in Zion, and high above all people;" and the chief of sinners may yet rejoice, and praise his great and terrible name; though "he is holy," yea, because he is holy. His power is exercised in perfect wisdom and justice: and while he executes just punishment on his enemies, he most delights in shewing mercy to the humbled transgressor. As he loves judgment and righteousness in his own administration; so he establishes equity among his subjects, and requires them to be "holy, because he is holy." His worshippers must bow before him in humility and reverence, and seek conformity to him; whilst they exalt him by their adorations, and give him the glory of their salvation.—There have always, however, been many professed worshippers of God, who have neither believed his truths, nor obeyed his will: and there is so much faulty in all of us, that our persons and services might justly be rejected by him. But our Prophet and High Priest, of far greater dignity than Moses, Aaron, or Samuel, who received and declared to us the will of the Father; who himself perfectly observed his testimonies and ordinances, and who "bare our sins in his own body on the tree;" continually pleads for us before the throne, and prevails for our pardon and acceptance. Encouraged by these glad tidings, we may come before him and call upon his name, and expect an answer of peace; nay, our supplications for others may be an extensive blessing to them; "for the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." But would we thus be heard, we must uprightly walk in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord. And as no prayers will prevent the ruin of impenitent sinners; so believers will surely be corrected by their own inventions, when they commit iniquity, though the Saviour's intercession prevent their final condemnation. (Notes, 1 Cor. xi. 29—34. Heb. xii. 4—13. Rev. iii. 18, 19.) Let us then entertain high and honourable thoughts of the LORD our God; and not only exalt him with our lips, but give him the throne in our hearts: and while we worship him upon his mercy-seat; let us never forget that he is holy; and that he abhors hypocrisy, and dead formality in worship, as much as profaneness and infidelity.

2 ^d Serve the LORD with gladness: ^e come before his presence with singing.

3 ^f Know ye that the LORD he is God: ^g it is he that hath made us, and ^h not we ourselves; ⁱ we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

47. 1 Kings xviii. 36—39. 2 Kings xix. 19. Jer. x. 10. John xvii. 3. Acts xvii. 23, 24. 2 Cor. iv. 6. Gal. iv. 8, 9. 1 John v. 20. g xcv. 6. cxix. 73. cxxxix. 13, &c. cxlix. 2. Job x. 8—13. Ec. xii. 1. Eph. ii. 10. 1 Pet. iv. 19. † Or, his we are. xii. 4. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. h lxxiv. 1, 2. lxxviii. 52. lxxix. 13. xcv. 7. Is. xl. 9—11. lxiii. 11. Ez. xxxiv. 30, 31. John x. 14—16. 26—28. Acts xx. 28, 29. 1 Pet. ii. 9. 25. v. 2—4.

NOTES.

PSALM C. *Title.* 'There is no other psalm hath the like title with this; which is called "A Psalm of praise," or rather of thanksgiving, and acknowledgment for divine blessings, as the word is translated v. 4, and in most other places. ... The Hebrews imagine ... it was peculiarly appointed to be sung, when the sacrifices of thanksgiving were offered.' *Bp. Patrick.* (Notes, cxvi. 17—19. Lev. vii. 12—18. Jer. xxxiii. 10, 11, v. 11. Heb. xiii. 15, 16.)

V. 1. The Psalmist 'invites all the world to join with the Israelites, in the service of him, who was kind and gracious to them beyond expression. Accordingly, we Christians now properly use it, in acknowledgment of God's wonderful love to us in Christ; by whom we offer up continually spiritual sacrifices, for redeeming us by the sacrifice he made of himself; for making the world anew, and creating us again unto good works, according to his faithful promises, which we may depend upon for ever.' *Bp. Patrick.*—*All ye lands.*] Notes, Ps. lxvi. 1—3. cxvii. P. O.

Joyful noise.] The sound of the trumpets, at the beginning of the Jubilee, seems alluded to. (Notes, lxxxix. 15—18. Lev. xxv. 8—13.)

V. 2. These reiterated calls to joy and gladness, in serving God, should not pass unnoticed: for they shew, that exalted piety is the most abundant source of true rejoicing: and that sorrow and dejection do not spring from piety, even in religious persons; but arise from the want of more religion, and from occasional circumstances. (*Marg. Ref.*—Notes, xxxiii. 1. Rom. xiv. 13—18, v. 17. Gal. v. 22—26. Phil. iv. 4. 1 Pet. i. 8, 9.)

V. 3. Some versions render this verse as follows: "Acknowledgment that JEHOVAH is God: It is he, (and not we ourselves,) that made us his people, and the sheep of his pasture:" and this is indeed the more literal translation.—'His we are; and by his power and goodness, not our own, we are become so great and mighty a nation; whom of his own good will alone he hath made his peculiar people, of whom he takes a tender care.' *Bp. Patrick.* (Notes, Deut. vii. 6—8. 1 Sam. xii. 22. John xv. 12—16.)—*Sheep, &c.* (Notes, xxiii. xcv. 7. Ez. xxxiv. 23—31. John x. 26—31.)—'To deny that we created ourselves, is altogether needless: but that it is not to be ascribed to our industry or wit, that we are raised to a happy condition, is a proper expression of humility.' *Bp. Patrick.*—'He chiefly means touching the spiritual regeneration, whereby we are his sheep and people.' (Notes, John iii. 7, 8. 2 Cor. iv. 5, 6. Tit. iii. 4—7. Jam. i. 16—18.)—The marginal reading, *His we are.* requires an alteration in the original text.

ⁱ lxvi. 13. cxvi. 17—19.
^k xcvi. 2. ciii. 1. 2. 20—22. cxlv. 1, 2. 1 Chr. xxix. 13. 20. Col. iii. 16, 17. Heb. xiii. 15.
 4 ⁱ Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: ^k be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name.

ⁱ lii. 1. lxxxvi. 5. cvi. 1. cvii. 1. 8. 15. 22. cxix. 68. Jer. xxxiii. 11.
^m xxxvi. 5. ciii. 17. cxviii. 1—4. cxxxvi. 1, &c. Luke i. 50.
ⁿ lxxxv. 10. lxxxix. 1, 2. cxix. 90, 91. cxlvi. 6. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Deut. vii. 9. Jer. xxxiii. 20. 21. Mic. vii. 20. Rom. xv. 8. 9. Tit. i. 2. Heb. vi. 13—18.
 5 For ⁱ the LORD is good; ^m his mercy is everlasting; ⁿ and his truth endureth to ^{*} all generations.

PSALM CI.

David declares in what manner he purposes to rule his household, and his kingdom, for the suppression of sin, and the encouragement of piety, 1—8.

* Heb. generation and generation. lxxxix. 1. marg.

V. 4. *Marg. Ref.*—Notes. xcv. 1, 2.

V. 5. “JEHOVAH is good:” he is the source of all beauty and perfection in the creature; how altogether lovely must he needs be in himself! “His mercy is everlasting,” extending through time into eternity: “and his truth,” or his fidelity in accomplishing his promises, “endureth to all generations,” evidenced to the whole race of mankind, from Adam to his last born son. The Psalms, which celebrate these attributes, will never, therefore, be out of date, but each successive generation will chant them, with fresh propriety and with fresh delight, until by saints and angels they are sung new in the kingdom of God. *Bp. Horne.*—The word good seems also to mean, the bounty and kindness of God to all his creatures. “GOD is LOVE.” (*Marg. Ref.*—Notes, ciii. 15—18. cxxxvi. 1—3. John i. 17. 1 John iv. 7, 8.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The service of God would be the delight of all rational creatures, did they all know and love his glorious excellences, and were they sensible of their immense obligations to him. As far as we on earth take pleasure in worshipping him, and can serve him with gladness of heart, and songs of fervent praise; we emulate the employment, and anticipate the joys of heaven. Let us then study to know more and more fully the glorious and eternal JEHOVAH, as our Creator, and the God in whom we live, and move, and are; by whose arm we are upheld, and on whose bounty we are fed; and then we shall understand how reasonable it is, that we should be thankful and obedient to him. But if we can also say,

‘And when like wandering sheep we strayed,
 ‘He brought us to his fold again;’ *Watts.*

we shall have abundant cause “to enter into his courts with praise, to be thankful to him, and to bless his name.” His goodness to us has been great beyond expression: the effects of his mercy will be everlasting to our souls; and his faithfulness is the perpetual security, for the performance of his largest promises. And, as JEHOVAH’s truth and mercy endure for ever; sinners of every land should be invited to come and rejoice in his salvation.—In the fulness of time the Gentiles were admitted into the Christian church, in performance of the Old Testament prophecies, but contrary to the narrow expectations of the Jews: and assuredly the inhabitants of all lands will ere long come, and “make a joyful noise before God our Saviour.” So that this song of praise

A Psalm of David.

^a I WILL sing of mercy and judgment: ^b unto thee, O LORD, will I sing.

² “I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. ^d Oh, when wilt thou come unto me? ^e I will walk within my house with ^f a perfect heart.

³ I will ^g set no ^{*} wicked thing before

^{xxiv. 15. 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5. f 1 Kings ix. 4. xi. 4. 2 Chr. xv. 17. Is. xxxviii. 3. g xviii. 20—23. xxvi. 4, 5. xxxix. 1. cxix. 37. 113. Ex. xx. 17. 2 Sam. xi. 2, 3. 1 Kings xxi. 2, &c. Job xxxi. 1. Prov. vi. 25. xxiii. 31—35. Ec. vi. 9. Jer. xxii. 17. Hos. vii. 6, 7. Mic. ii. 2. Matt. v. 28. Jam. i. 13—15. * Heb. thing of Belial. 1 Kings xxi. 13.}

^a lxxxix. 1. xcvi. 8. ciii. 6—9. cxxxvi. 10—22. Rom. ix. 15—18. 22. 23. xi. 22. Rev. xv. 3, 4. xix. 1—3. ^b lxxi. 22, 23. ^c 6. lxxv. 1, 2. cxix. 106. 115. 1 Sam. xviii. 14, 15. xxii. 14. 2 Sam. viii. 15. 2 Chr. xxx. 12. xxxi. 20, 21. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. ^d xl. 17. cxliii. 7, 8. ^e Gen. xviii. 19. Deut. vi. 7. Josh. i. 8. xxxviii. 3. ^f 1 Kings ix. 4. xi. 4. 2 Chr. xv. 17. Is. xxxviii. 3. ^g xviii. 20—23. xxvi. 4, 5. xxxix. 1. cxix. 37. 113. Ex. xx. 17. 2 Sam. xi. 2, 3. 1 Kings xxi. 2, &c. Job xxxi. 1. Prov. vi. 25. xxiii. 31—35. Ec. vi. 9. Jer. xxii. 17. Hos. vii. 6, 7. Mic. ii. 2. Matt. v. 28. Jam. i. 13—15. * Heb. thing of Belial. 1 Kings xxi. 13.

should be considered as a prophecy, and even used as a prayer, for the coming of that time, when all people shall “know that the LORD he is God,” and shall become his worshippers and “the sheep of his pasture.”

NOTES.

PSALM CI. *Title.*—“The title tells us who made this psalm: and the matter of it is so plain, that any body may see, that it is a pious resolution of David, to govern first himself, and then his court, and then his kingdom, with so much care, that the good might expect all favour from him; but no wicked man, of any sort, have the least countenance.” *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, lxxv. 2—4. Gen. xviii. 17—19.)—“In the person of David advanced to the throne of Israel, we hear King Messiah declaring how he intended to walk, and to govern his household the church; and also describing the qualifications, which he should require in his ministers and servants.” *Bp. Horne.*

V. 1. The mercy of God shewn towards him, and his righteous judgments upon his persecutors, were not only the subjects of David’s grateful praise, but the pattern which he proposed to imitate in his administration. (*Notes*, lxxxix. 1—4. cxxxvi. 10—22. Rom. xi. 22—24.) “David considereth what manner of king he would be, when God should place him in the throne, promising openly that he would be merciful and just.” (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4.)

V. 2. “Though as yet thou deferrest to place me in the kingly dignity; yet I will give myself to wisdom and uprightness, being a private man.” Some, however, think that the psalm was composed while David ruled over Judah, but not over Israel.—David purposed to unite wisdom and piety with justice and mercy, in his behaviour before his family and court, as well as in his publick administration. He fully determined to walk uprightly in the ordinances and commandments of God, as an example to his people. (*Notes*, title. Deut. vi. 6—9. Josh. xxiv. 15. 2 Sam. vi. 20. 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5.) But knowing that his ability to perform his vow would depend upon the Lord’s presence with him; he prayed with earnest desires, and as impatient of delay, that the Lord would speedily come and dwell with him, and bless him. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, Ex. iii. 12.) “O when wilt thou perfect what thou hast begun for me; and settle me peaceably in my kingdom: then I shall be able to live more regularly than now in this state of war and confusion.” *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 3. “I will not propose to myself, or think of carry-

^h xvii. 10. Rom. xii. 9. ⁱ xiv. 3. xxxvi. 3. xl. 4. lxxviii. 41. 57. cxxv. 5. Ex. xxxii. 8. mine eyes: ^h I hate the work of ⁱ them that turn aside; ^k it shall not cleave to me.

4 ¹ A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not ^m know a wicked person.

5 Whoso ⁿ privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath ^o an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer.

ⁿ vi. 8. cxix. 115. Prov. ix. 6. xxii. 24. Matt. vii. 23. 2 Cor. vi. 14—16. 2 Tim. ii. 19. n xv. 3. 1. 20. Ex. xx. 16. xxiii. 1. Lev. xix. 16. Prov. x. 18. xx. 19. xxv. 23. Ez. xxii. 9. 1 Cor. v. 11. 1 Tim. iii. 11. Tit. ii. 3. x. 2—4. xviii. 27. cxxxviii. 6. 1 Sam. ii. 3. Job xl. 11, 12. Prov. vi. 16—19. xxx. 13. Is. ii. 11. Dan. iv. 37. Ob. 3, 4. Luke xviii. 14. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.

6 ^p Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, ^q that they may dwell with me: he that walketh ^r in a perfect way, he shall serve me.

7 ^r He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not ^t tarry in my sight.

8 I will ^s early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may ^t cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD.

^u xv. 4. xxxiv. 15. cxix. 63. Prov. xxviii. 28. xxix. 2. Matt. xxiv. 45. Luke xii. 43. 44. Rom. xiii. 1—4. q John xii. 26. xiv. 3. xvii. 24. Rev. iii. 20, 21. xxi. 3. * Or, perfect in the way. cxix. 1—3. marg. Phil. iii. 12—15. r 2 Sam. iv. 10—12. 2 Kings v. 26, 27. Prov. xxix. 12. Acts i. 16—20. 25. v. 1—10. t Heb. be established. s lxxv. 10. Prov. xvi. 12. xx. 8. 26. Jer. xxi. 12. Mic. iii. 1—4. 9. u xlvi. 2. 8. Hos. ix. 3. Mic. ii. 8—10. Rev. xxi. 27. xxii. 14, 15.

ing into execution, any iniquitous scheme of politicks, however advantageous and tempting it may appear; I will...reject it at once: "I hate the work of them that turn aside," of them who, in their counsels and their actions, deviate from the divine law, to serve their own interest. ...No such corrupt principle shall adhere to my soul, or find a place in my affections. How noble a resolution for a king to make; but how difficult an one for a king to keep! Bp. Horne.—He sheweth that magistrates do not their duty, except they be enemies to all vice.' (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxxvi. 1—4. cxxv. 4, 5.)

V. 4. 'I will turn him instantly out of my service, who shall dare to suggest to me any crooked counsels: I will have no familiarity with him, much less make him my favourite, who makes no conscience how he compasses his ends.' Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 2 Sam. xiii. 3, 4. xvi. 20—23. xvii. 1—4. 1 Kings, xxi. 4—16. Prov. xxix. 12.)

V. 5. 'In promising to punish these vices, which are most pernicious in them that are about kings, he declareth that he will punish all.'—Detraction, ambition, and avarice, are three weeds, which spring and flourish in the rich soil of a court. ...Shall we imagine these vices less odious in the eyes of that king, whose character was composed of humility and charity? Or will Christ admit those tempers into heaven, which David determined to exclude from his court upon earth? Bp. Horne. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1. 16—21. lii. 3, 4. 2 Sam. xvi. 1—4. xix. 24—30. Prov. vi. 12—19. xxv. 23.)

V. 6. One great improvement of power or authority, as a talent, either in church or state, consists in carefully and wisely selecting fit persons for all the different services required, in order to the prosperity and good order of both: though alas! this is very rarely indeed attended to, and men with David's spirit in this respect are every where exceedingly wanted. (Marg. Ref.) 'I will look out for trusty persons, men fearing God, and of clear integrity; and...make them of my privy council; and no man shall bear any other office in my court, but he that lives unblameably.' Bp. Patrick.—David found it much easier to resolve and purpose, though sincerely, and in the sight of God, than to accomplish his purposes: as many things in his subsequent administration proved; especially his sparing Joab, and continuing him in authority, after his murder of Abner; and also his conduct respecting Absalom; not to speak of his more awful transgressions. (Notes, 2 Sam. iii. 28, 29. 38, 39. xiv. 13—22. Rom. vii. 15—17.)

V. 7. 'No subtle knave, ... that devises cunning cheats to oppress my subjects, shall remain in my service.

'Though he have craftily got into it under a guise of simplicity; yet no false informer, flatterer, or any other sort of liar, shall continue in my favour.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 2 Sam. iv. 9—12. 2 Kings v. 20—27. Prov. xx. 8. xxix. 12. Acts v. 1—11.)

V. 8. Early.] Or, "in the mornings," that is, every morning. (Note, Jer. xxi. 11, 12.) 'In the very beginning of my reign, and as the first concern of every day, I will thus endeavour to crush and cut off the wicked, and to reform the city of God.' Promptitude, activity, and perseverance are alike necessary to suppress vice in the state; and to keep the visible church, and even its most sacred offices, pure from the pollution of ambitious and covetous hypocrites. The latter is called "the city of the LORD:" but it has too often been made a city of merchandise, and even "a den of thieves" or robbers. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Matt. xxi. 12, 13. John ii. 13—17.) In all this, David was an evident type of Christ, our righteous King, who alone fully accomplishes these most excellent purposes. (Note, xlv. 6, 7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When we celebrate the praises of the divine perfections, we should, in many cases, consider them as patterns for our imitation: but we never can so clearly understand in what respect this example is imitable by us, as when we view it exhibited in the person of the incarnate Son of God. (Notes, John i. 14—17. Eph. v. 1, 2. Phil. ii. 5—8. 1 Pet. ii. 18—25.) His compassionate and condescending love to sinners harmonizes with the most perfect abhorrence of sin: and his conduct, as our exalted King, is conformable to his holy life on earth. He does not connive at any wickedness, or bear it in his presence; he abhors "the work of them that turn aside" from his righteous ways; and can no more allow his disciples to cleave to sin, than he can commit it himself. Those who continue of a perverse disposition must depart from him; and at the day of judgment he will reject all the workers of iniquity, as those whom he "never knew." He will as certainly punish the subtle, undermining slanderer, as the murderer: pride and covetousness will no more escape, than adultery or drunkenness: and hypocrites, and liars of every kind, will be doomed to the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. (Notes, Rev. xxi. 5—8. xxii. 14, 15.) In short, he will destroy all impenitent sinners; and those with peculiar detestation, who form a part of his visible church, and are a scandal to it. Such are often removed from the earth, to prevent further mischief; but at length a final and eternal separation shall be made, and no wicked

PSALM CII.

The Psalmist pours out doleful complaints before the Lord, 1—11. He takes comfort from the eternity of God, 12. He predicts the triumph of the church, though then desolated, according to the promises of God, at the appointed time, and in answer to the prayers of his people, 13—17. He records the mercies of the Lord for the benefit of posterity, 18—22. Conscious of his own weakness, he rests his hope on the unchangeableness of God our Saviour, 23—28.

A prayer * of the afflicted, when he is ^a overwhelmed, and ^b poureth out his complaint before the LORD.

HEAR my prayer, O LORD, and ^d let my cry come unto thee.

2 ^e Hide not thy face from me in the day *when* I am in trouble; ^f incline thine ear unto me: ^g in the day *when* I call, answer me speedily.

3 For ^h my days are consumed ⁱ like smoke, and ^j my bones are burned as an hearth.

4 ^k My heart is smitten, and ^l withered like grass; ^m so that I forget to eat my bread.

5 By reason of ⁿ the voice of my groaning, my bones cleave to my ^o skin.

6 I am ^p like ^q a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.

7 I ^r watch, and am as a sparrow ^s alone upon the house top.

8 ^t Mine enemies reproach me all the day; *and* they that are ^u mad against me, are ^v sworn against me.

9 For ^w I have eaten ashes like bread, and ^x mingled my drink with weeping,

10 ^y Because of thine indignation and thy wrath; for ^z thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.

11 ^a My days *are* like a shadow that declineth; and ^b I am withered like grass.

^c My days are like a shadow that declineth; and ^d I am withered like grass.

k vi. 2, 3. xlii. 6. lv. 4, 5. lxix. 20. lxxvii. 3. cxliii. 3, 4. Job vi. 4. x. 1. Lam. iii. 13. 20. Matt. xxvi. 37, 38. 11. xxxvii. 2. 1s. xl. 7. m 9. 1 Sam. i. 7. 8. Ezra x. 6. Acts ix. 9. n vi. 6. 8. xxxii. 3, 4. xxxviii. 8. —10. Job xix. 20. Prov. xvii. 22. Lam. iv. 8. t Or, flesh. o Job xxx. 29, 30. 1s. xxxviii. 14. Mic. i. 8. p 1s. xxxiv. 11—15. Zeph. ii. 14. marg. Rev. xviii. 2. q xxii. 2. lxxvii. 4. cxxx. 6. Deut. xxxviii. 66, 67. Job vii. 13—16. Mark xiv. 33—37. r xxxviii. 11. Lam. iii. 28—30. s xxxi. 11—13. lv. 3. lxix. 9, 10, 20. lxxxix. 51. Rom. xv. 3. t ii. 1. Luke vi. 11. Acts vii. 54. xxvi. 11. u Acts xxiii. 12, &c. x lxix. 21. 1s. xlv. 20. Lam. iii. 15, 16. Mic. i. 10. vii. 17. y xlii. 3. lxxx. 5. Job iii. 24. Lam. iii. 48, 49. z xxxviii. 3. 18. xxxix. 11. xc. 7—9. Lam. i. 18. iii. 39—42. v. 16. Dan. ix. 8—14. Rom. iii. 19. a xxx. 6, 7. lxxiii. 18—20. cxlvii. 6. 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. 2 Chr. xxv. 8. 2 Cor. iv. 9. b 3. xxxix. 5, 6. cix. 23. cxliv. 4. Job xiv. 2. Ec. vi. 12. Jam. iv. 14. c 4. 1s. xl. 6—8. Jam. i. 10. 1 Pet. i. 24.

person shall ever enter the city of the Lord, in the world to come. (Note, Rev. xxi. 22—27.) But he will search out the faithful, who repent and renounce their sins, trusting in his mercy; watching over them, and shewing them all favour: and they, by his grace, learn to walk before him in truth and righteousness. These are his servants on earth, and they shall dwell with him for ever in heaven. This is his determination, and invariable conduct; nor will he treat any as his people, whom he does not “redeem from all iniquity, and” progressively “purify unto himself, a peculiar people zealous of good works.”—This example should be copied by rulers and magistrates especially: justice, truth, goodness, and piety should be visible in their whole conduct: and then their patronage and influence would unite with the impartial and vigorous exercise of their authority, in discountenancing all vice and impiety, in protecting the righteous, and in promoting the cause of God. By a resolute and steady adherence to such a plan, wicked doers might be reclaimed or restrained; and we might appear like a part of the city of God, by the prevalence of equity and piety. Ministers, heads of families, and all others, in the superior relations or stations of life especially, have also an important duty in this matter. Their example and influence, and the exercise of their authority; their refusal to be at all acquainted with notorious sinners, or to shew favour to them, or even to employ them; their decided disapprobation of slanderers, flatterers, and all dissemblers; and the encouragement of the faithful, humble, and upright, would have an extensive good effect; if they would adopt David’s resolutions, or rather imitate Christ’s example. It is true this would require much wisdom and courage; and of ourselves we are not sufficient for such services: but the Lord would come to

us, and even abide with us, if we earnestly and cordially intreated him; and then his grace would be sufficient for us, his favour would render any station comfortable, and his blessing would crown our endeavours with success. But let us recollect, that if we refuse to obey his command and copy his example, while we call him our Lord and Master, he will treat us as hypocrites and liars, exclude us from his family, and drive us with indignation from his presence, as workers of iniquity, whom he never acknowledged or approved. (Notes, Matt. vii. 21—27.)

NOTES.

PSALM CII. Title. “A prayer for the afflicted, when he shall be overwhelmed, and shall pour out his meditation before the face of JEHOVAH.”—This psalm seems to have been written towards the conclusion of the Babylonish captivity; or, as some think, just after the return of the remnant under Zerubbabel; for the use of the pious Jews who were overwhelmed with affliction, on account of the desolations of their holy city and temple: yet they poured out their complaint with hopes of redress, as God had promised to restore them again to their own land. (Notes, cxxxvii. Ezra iii. 8—13. ix. 5—15. Neh. i. 4—11. ix. 5—38. Jer. xxix. 11—14. Dan. ix.)—The termination of the reign of antichrist, and the glorious consequences of that event, seem also to be clearly predicted. (Notes, 1s. lxiii. 15—19. lxiv.)

V. 1, 2. ‘Albeit we be in never so great miseries; yet there is ever place left for prayer.’ (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1. 7—15. xci. 14—16. Phil. iv. 5—7.)

V. 3—11. ‘These excessive kinds of speech shew how much the affliction of the church ought to wound the hearts of the godly.’—Perhaps the Psalmist was griev-

d 24—27. ix. 7. 12 But ^d thou, O LORD, shalt endure
 xc. 1, 2. Deut. for ever; and ^e thy remembrance unto
 xxxiii. 27. Is. all generations.

13 ^f Thou shalt arise, and have
 xlv. 6. lx. 15 mercy upon Zion: for the time to fa-
 Lam. v. 19 vour her, yea, ^g the set time is come.

14 For ^h thy servants take pleasure
 Heb. xlii. 8. in her stones, and favour the dust
 Rev. i. 17, 18. thereof.

15 So ⁱ the heathen shall fear the
 e cxxxv. 13. Ex. name of the LORD, and all the kings
 iii. 15. of the earth thy glory.

16 ^k When the LORD shall build up
 f vii. 6. xlv. 26. Zion, ^l he shall appear in his glory.

17 ^m He will regard the prayer of
 li. 18. lxix. 35. 36. Is. xiv. 32. 33. 34. Jer. xxi. 10—14. Jer. xxi. 10—12. 23. Zech. ii. 10—12. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000.

the destitute, and ⁿ not despise their
 o xxii. 24. 1. 25. prayer.

18 ^o This shall be written for the
 lxxi. 18. lxxviii. generation to come; and ^p the people
 4—6. Ex. xvii. which shall be created, shall praise the
 14. Deut. xxxi. LORD.

19 For ^q he hath looked down from
 19. &c. Job xix. 'the height of his sanctuary; from hea-
 23. 24. Dan. ix. ven did the LORD behold the earth;

20 ^r To hear the groaning of the pri-
 2. John xx. 31. soner; ^s to loose ^t those that are ap-
 Rom. xv. 4. pointed to death;

21 ^u To declare the name of the
 1 Cor. x. 11. LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusa-
 2 Tim. iii. 16. lem;

22 ^v When the people are gathered
 17. 2 Pet. i. 15. p xxii. 30. 31. xlv. 16. 17. Is. xliii. 7. 21. lxxv. 17—19. 2 Cor. v. 17. 18. Eph. ii. 10. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10. q xiv. 2. xxxiii. 13. 14. Deut. xxxv. 15. 1 Kings viii. 39. 43. 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Job xxii. 12. Heb. viii. 1, 2. ix. 23, 24. s lxxix. 11. Ex. ii. 23—25. iii. 7. 2 Kings xiii. 4. 22. 23. Job xxiv. 12. Is. xiv. 17. lxi. 1—3. Jer. li. 34, 35. Zech. ix. 9—12. t 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11

ously afflicted in his own person, as well as on account of publick calamities: but he seems to personate Jerusalem and the church, during the desolations of the captivity. He complains that his life and health vanished like the smoke, which is scattered by the wind; his strength decayed as wood is consumed by the fire; and his spirits dried up as the grass is withered by the scorching sun. He had lost his appetite, was reduced to a skeleton, courted solitude as the pelican, or *bittern*, and the owl; was deprived of sleep, and spent his time in mourning and complaints. The unjust reproaches and formidable combinations of his enraged enemies, united with the just indignation of God, to fill him with deep distress. It seemed as if the Lord had only raised him to prosperity, in order to cast him down: and he was constrained to feed upon sorrow as his bread, and, as it were, mingle his drink with tears. In short he was like a man about to expire of some wasting sickness. 'Whilst I wait for better times, my life declines apace; like a shadow, which being come near to its utmost length, is ready to vanish.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, vi. 1—7. xxxii. 3—5. xxxviii. 1—10. xlii. 1—3. lv. 4—8. lxix. 1—4. 16—20. lxxx. 5, 6. lxxxviii. 3—9. *Job* vi. 1—4. vii. 1—6. xix. 5—22. xxx. 15—24. *Is.* xxxviii. 9—15.)—All this well applies to the state of the church, during the Babylonish captivity; and corresponds to the language of Jeremiah in the book of Lamentations. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 12. It is very beautiful and instructive to view the Psalmist consoling himself, under all his afflictions and the prospect of a speedy dissolution, while his people and the church were in deep distress; by the thoughts that God would still be glorious, would still favour the church, and restore her from her desolations. (*Notes*, 13—28.) His sufferings and death, therefore, might be regarded as comparatively of little consequence.—"Thy remembrance" may mean either the church's remembrance of JEHOVAH's wonderful works for Israel, and engagements to her; or rather his remembrance of his holy covenant, and of her desolate and afflicted state, from which he had promised to deliver her. (cxxxv. 13. *Note*, *Ex.* iii. 15.) "All gener-

ations have transmitted down unto us the memorial of thy faithfulness, and the glorious things thou hast done for thy people.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 13—22. God had, by his prophet Jeremiah, fixed a time for liberating the captive Jews, and for rebuilding the city and the temple: that time was come; and this excited the prayers of believers, who favoured the very dust and stones of Zion, for the sake of the temple which had stood upon it. (*Notes*, cxxxvii. 1—6. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 21. *Jer.* xxv. 8—12. xxvii. 4—9. xxix. 10—14. *Dan.* ix. 2, 3.) In their destitute and forlorn condition, they not only "groaned being burdened," with the oppression and persecution of those who detained them prisoners; but they were instant in prayers, which doubtless they accompanied with humiliation for their sins. These prayers the Lord would not despise; but in answer to them, as one "who looked down from his holy heaven," he would surely appear for their release; and when he had conducted them to Jerusalem, they would there declare his name and his praise. Under his protection and by his assistance, the temple would be rebuilt upon mount Zion: when he would appear so glorious in his power, truth, and love, that the heathen would fear his wrath, and all kings around him would stand in awe of his glory; many people would gather together out of the adjacent kingdoms to serve the Lord; and these events would be recorded for the edification of future ages, and of other nations, which should at length be brought into the church by the new creating power of God. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xxii. 30, 31. *Is.* liii. 9, 10. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.)—But this prophecy will have a more full accomplishment, when the Jews shall be converted to Christianity, and gathered from their dispersions; when the tedious captivity of the church, under the new-testament Babylon, shall finally be terminated; and when the fulness of the Gentiles, with all their kings and kingdoms, shall be brought into the church. (*Notes*, *Rev.* xviii. xix.)—The old version of the fifteenth and two following verses, is quite literal, and very expressive:—"Then the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory, when the LORD shall build up Zion,

together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

23 ^y He ^a weakened my strength in the way: ^b he shortened my days.

24 ^a I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: ^b thy years are throughout all generations.

25 ^c Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands.

26 ^d They shall perish, but thou shalt ^e endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:

27 But ^e thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

28 ^f The children of thy servants shall continue, and ^g their seed shall be established before thee.

^d Is. xxxiv. 4. li. 6. lxxv. 17. lxxvi. 22. Luke xxi. 33. Rom. viii. 20. 2 Pet. iii. 7—12. Rev. xx. 11. xxi. 1. ^e Heb. stand. 12. Ex. iii. 14. ^f Mal. iii. 6. John viii. 58. Heb. xiii. 8. Jam. i. 17. Rev. i. 8. 17. 18. ^g xc. 4. Job xxxvi. 26. xxii. 30. 31. xlv. 16. 17. lxxix. 35. 36. Is. liii. 10. lix. 20. 21. lxxv. 22. lxxvi. 22. h xc. 16, 17.

“and shall appear in his glory, and shall turn unto the prayer of the desolate, and not despise their prayer.”

V. 23, 24. Perhaps the Psalmist personally, from his time of life and state of health, had expected to see the re-establishment of Jerusalem, the prosperity of his people, and multitudes thronging to the temple to sacrifice, and to worship God. But he was unexpectedly seized with a debilitating disease, and concluded that he was about to be taken away in the midst of his days; as Job, Hezekiah, and others had done: and he prayed, as Moses also did, that he might live to witness the prosperity of his people, which he by faith clearly foresaw.—Some, however, apply this to the church of Israel. She was, as it were, on her way to meet her expected King; but at the captivity her strength was weakened, and her days seemed to be shortened: but she prayed to be spared, that she might receive the promised blessing.—*The midst of my days.* (24.) *Note,* lv. 23.—*Thy years,* &c.] *Notes,* 12. xc. 1, 2. John xiv. 18—20. Rom. v. 7—10. viii. 32—34. Col. iii. 1—4. Rev. i. 12—20, v. 18.

V. 25—28. The eternity and immutability of God, the Creator of the world, and the Saviour of the church, encouraged the pious Jews under their distresses. The visible creation indeed waxes old, and is wearing out, and will at length be changed as an old garment for a new one. (*Notes,* Is. li. 4—8. Matt. xxiv. 32—35, v. 35. 2 Pet. iii. 10—13.) But the Creator is “the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” (*Note,* Heb. xiii. 7, 8, v. 8.) And because he lives and reigns, his church must be preserved; a succession of believers, as the children of Abraham, shall serve him whilst the world endures; and all the redeemed shall live with him in heaven for ever.—We cannot but know, from the scriptures above referred to, what views the inspired writers of the Old Testament had of the expected Messiah, whom they spake of as the eternal and unchangeable Creator, as well as the Redeemer and King of Israel. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes,* Is. ix. 5, 6. John i. 1—3. Col. i. 15—20. Heb. i. 1—4.) The apostle, writing to the Hebrews, no doubt quoted this Psalm, in the sense in which it was generally understood. (*Note,* Heb. i. 10—12.)—“It cannot be too hard for thee to raise Zion out of her ruins, who hast many ages ago created this goodly fabrick of heaven and earth by thy eternal Word.” *Bp. Patrick.*—*Thou art the same.* (27.) “Thou art He.” (*Notes,* Ex. iii. 14. Is. xli. 2—4. John viii. 54—59.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The more overwhelming our afflictions are, the greater cause have we to “pour out our complaint before God;” and he has invited and commanded us to “call upon him

“in the time of trouble,” and has assured us, that he will not hide his face from us, or “leave us comfortless.”—In this world we must expect tribulation, and we know not how deep and durable our sorrows may be; but should they be so various and grievous, as to warrant the use of the strong language of this psalm, they would not be equal to our deservings; and it would still be “of the LORD’s mercies that we are not consumed:” still there would be hope for us to humble ourselves before him, and patiently to wait and pray for his forgiving love. (*Notes,* Lam. iii. 21—30. 39—41.) Then, should we even lose our relish for every earthly comfort, and be kept by pain and anguish from taking any rest; should we be treated with general contempt and hatred, and struggle with sore temptations and anguish of spirit, and have death continually before our eyes; we should still have inward supports, and hope would brighten our otherwise gloomy prospect.—The believer, who has attained to a good measure of ripeness in judgment and experience, will feel himself deeply interested in the concerns of the church. Her desolations, divisions, and corruptions, pain his heart, in his most prosperous days; and double the poignancy of his personal afflictions. The triumphs of infidels and profligates, and the sorrows of true believers, cause him to partake of the bread and water of affliction, and to humble himself before God in lamentations and prayers. On the other hand he rejoices in the promises of God, relating to the security and prosperity of his church: and the revival or increase of the power and purity of religion; and the enlargement and peace of the church, revive his heart, even under grievous pains, and at the approach of death. This might afford us never-failing comfort, if we duly attended to the word of God. The success of the gospel has indeed hitherto been small, compared with the hundreds of millions of the human species. The low estate of vital godliness, within the visible church, has often made her appear like one dying of a consumption: but “the LORD will” certainly “arise, and have mercy on Zion.” Though, like Jerusalem of old, the Christian church seems laid in ruins, by the assaults of open enemies, and the treachery of professed friends, and through the prevalence of idolatry, superstition, infidelity, and impiety; yet the servants of God “take pleasure” even in her ruins, and their prayers incessantly ascend to heaven in her behalf. They are indeed often poor and destitute in the world, and despised by proud, ungodly men; and sometimes they are laid to groan in prisons, as men appointed to death: but the Lord regards them, and will honour them; he will look down from heaven to hear and deliver them; he will build up Zion, that his glory may appear: and indeed “the set

PSALM CIII.

David earnestly praises God for his plenteous mercy and goodness to him, and to Israel, 1—10; for his fatherly compassion to the frailty of those who fear and obey him; and for his constant regard to their posterity, 11—18. He calls on men, and angels, and all creatures, to join him in blessing the Lord, the universal Sovereign, 19—22.

A Psalm of David.

BLESS the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, *bless* his ^c holy name.

2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits;

3 Who ^e forgiveth all thine iniquities; who ^f healeth all thy diseases;

4 Who ^g redeemeth thy life from destruction; who ^h crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender-mercies;

5 Who ⁱ satisfieth thy mouth with good *things*; so that ^k thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

6 The LORD ^l executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed.

7 He ^m made known his ways unto

a 22. civ. 1. cxlvi.
1. 2. Luke i. 46,
47.
b xlvii. 7. lvii. 7—
11. lxiii. 5.
lxxxvi. 12, 13.
cxi. 1. cxxxviii.
1. Mark xii. 30
—33. John iv
24. 1 Cor. xiv.
15. Phil. i. 9.
Col. iii. 16.
c xcix. 3. Is. vi. 3.
Rev. iv. 8.
d cv. 5. cvii. 7. 21.
cxvi. 12. Deut.
viii. 2—4. 10—
14. xxxii. 6, 18.
2 Chr. xxxii. 25.
Is. lxiii. 1. 7.
Jer. ii. 31, 32.
Luke xvii. 15—
18. Eph. ii. 11—
13.

e xxxii. 1—5. li.
1—3. cxxx. 8.
2 Sam. xii. 13.
Is. xliii. 25.
Matt. ix. 2—6.
Luke vii. 47, 48.
f xxx. 2. xxxviii.
1—7. xli. 3, 4, 8.
cvii. 17—22.
cxlvii. 3. Ex.
xv. 26. Num.
xii. 13. xxi. 7—
9. Is. xxxiii. 24.
liii. 5. Jer. xvii.
14. Jam. v. 15.
g xxxiv. 22. lvi.
13. lxxi. 23. Gen.
xlviii. 16. Job
xxxiii. 19—30.
Rev. v. 9.
h v. 12. Marg. viii.
5. xxi. 3. lxxv. 11.
Jam. i. 12. 1 Pet.
v. 4.

ix. 4. civ. 28. cvii. 9. cxlv. 15, 16. 1 Tim. vi. 17. k Is. xl. 31. Hos. ii. 15. 2 Cor.
iv. 16. l ix. 9. x. 14—18. xii. 5. lxxii. 4. 12. cix. 31. cxlvi. 7. Deut. xxiv. 14, 15.
Job xxvii. 13, &c. Prov. xiv. 31. xxii. 22, 23. xxxiii. 10, 11. Is. xiv. 4, &c. 17—19. lviii.
6, 7. Jer. vii. 6, &c. Ez. xxii. 7. 12—14. Mic. ii. 1—3. iii. 2—4. Jam. ii. 6. v. 1—6.
m lxxvii. 20. cv. 26, &c. Ex. xix. 8. 20. xx. 21. xxiv. 2—4. Num. xii. 7. Deut. xxxiv. 10.
Neh. ix. 14. Is. lxiii. 11, 12. John v. 45—47. Acts vii. 35, &c.

“time” to favour her is near at hand, and many revolutions, within the former kingdom of the papal Antichrist, seem evident presages of its approaching ruin. Shortly the Lord will deliver and purify his church, and Jews and Gentiles shall unite in worshipping God our Saviour, and in declaring his name and glory: and all the kingdoms of the earth shall become his worshippers and servants. Were not these things written for the use of “the generations “to come,” that nations then unborn might praise the Lord, when they beheld the performance of these ancient prophecies? It is true, the Christian church was so soon debilitated and corrupted, her days of prosperity were so shortened, and her enfeebled estate has been so prolonged, that many despair of happier days. Yet such are most evidently predicted, and the predictions are multiplied and varied, throughout the sacred volume: and he, who laid the foundation of the earth, is the unchangeable and eternal Support of his church: and as he has foretold the dissolution of the frame of nature, he has also assured us that his cause shall triumph on earth before that grand consummation. Let us then rejoice in God our Saviour, and give ourselves unto prayer; assured that the children of his servants shall continue, and be multiplied exceedingly, to the end of time; and that their seed shall be established for ever in heaven.

NOTES.

PSALM CIII. Title. David is supposed to have written this most beautiful Psalm, when he was newly recovered from a dangerous sickness to vigorous health. (*Notes*, xxx. xxxviii. title. 1—10. xli. 1—8.)

V. 1. ‘He wakeneth his dulness to praise God, shewing that both understanding and affections, mind and heart, are too little to set forth his praise.’ (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, lxiii. 5, 6. *Deut.* vi. 5. *Mark* xii. 28—34.) ‘He calleth forth all his powers and faculties, all that is within him, that every part of his frame may glorify its Saviour; that the understanding may know him, the will choose him, the affections delight in him, the heart believe in him, and the tongue confess him.’ *Bp. Horne*.

V. 2. David’s fear of losing the sense and remembrance of the benefits, which God had bestowed on him, shews both what the fallen nature of man is most prone to, and what divine grace teaches the regenerate chiefly to watch

and pray against; namely, ingratitude to God, and forgetfulness of his benefits; especially by means of present trials, conflicts, and discouragements. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, cvi. 12—14. 2 *Chr.* xxxii. 24—26. 31. *Luke* xvii. 11—19. *P. O.*)

V. 3, 4. The sickness, with which the Psalmist had been visited, was the correction of his sin: but, having obtained forgiveness of all his iniquities, the malady also was removed. Sinful passions are the diseases of the soul: but if sin be pardoned, these also will be healed: and in proportion as they are healed, we have evidence that our guilt is pardoned. (*Notes*, xxxii. 3—5. cvii. 17—22. *Job* xxxiii. 19—30. *Is.* xxxviii. 17—20. *Matt.* ix. 2—8. *P. O.* 1—8.)—*Crowneth* (or, encircleth) thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies. (4) *Note*, xxxii. 6, 7, v. 7. Thus his life was redeemed from the grave, and his soul from “the pit “of destruction;” and all his comforts were restored and increased. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5. *Eagle’s.*] It is generally agreed, that the eagle is very long-lived, and seems at an advanced age to possess the vigour of youth. Perhaps the Psalmist had nothing more in view than this. He had been reduced to great weakness, with loss of appetite and other infirmities, which he supposed to indicate his approaching death, or the labour and sorrow of old age. But he unexpectedly recovered health, appetite, and strength; and seemed, like the eagle, to be restored to the vigour of youth, at an advanced time of life.—Many traditions about the eagle seem not sufficiently proved: nor is it certain, that in moulting her feathers, she materially differs from other birds.—‘I can never sufficiently bless thy goodness, who... dost restore my strength, and makest my youth and freshness return like the eagle’s. Oh, that I may with fresh delight and joy be still praising thee, and be lifted up to heaven, (as they are when they have renewed their plumes,) in more vigorous love, and affectionate desires and endeavours, to employ all my renewed strength in thy faithful service.’ *Bp. Patrick*. (*Notes*, *Is.* xl. 27—31. *Ez.* i. 5—14. *Rev.* iv. 6—8.)

V. 6—8. Lively gratitude for recent personal benefits led the Psalmist to remember, with adoring praise, the glorious perfections of his gracious Benefactor, as manifested in his dealings with his creatures. The omnipotent Sovereign of the world uses his power in executing right-

11. 17. cxlvii. 11. Mal. iii. 16, 17. iv. 2. Acts xiii. 26.

19. 15. cxlv. 8. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Num. xiv. 18. Deut. v. 10. Neh. ix. 17. Is. lv. 7. Jer. xxxii. 18. Rom. v. 20, 21. Eph. i. 7, 8.

20. 13. Jon. iv. 2. Nah. i. 3. Heb. great of mercy.

21. 5. Is. lvii. 16. Jer. iii. 5. Mic. vii. 18, 19. cxxx. 3. Ezra ix. 13. Neh. ix. 31. Job xi. 6. Lam. iii. 22. Dan. ix. 18, 19. Hab. iii. 2.

22. 10. lxxxix. 2. Is. lv. 9. Eph. ii. 4—7. iii. 18, 19.

23. according to the height of heaven. Job xxii. 12. Prov. xxv. 3.

24. Luke i. 50.

25. l. cxlii. 3. Is. xlv. 6.

26. Is. xliii. 25. Jer. xxxi. 34. 1. 20. Mic. vii. 18. Heb. x. 2—4. 1 John i. 7. y Num. xi. 12. Deut. xiii. 5. Prov. iii. 12. Is. lxiii. 15, 16. Jer. xxxi. 9. 20. Matt. vi. 9. 32. Luke xi. 11, 12. xv. 21, 22. John xx. 17. Heb. xii. 5—11.

Moses, ^a his acts unto the children of Israel.

8 The LORD is ^o merciful and gracious, ^p slow to anger, and ^q plenteous in mercy.

9 He will not always chide; ^a neither will he keep *his anger* for ever.

10 He hath not ^r dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

11 ^s For ^t as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is ^u his mercy toward them that fear him.

12 As far ^v as the east is from the west, ^x so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

13 Like ^y as a father pitieth *his chil-*

dren; so the LORD pitieth ^z them that fear him.

14 For ^a he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that ^b we *are* dust.

15 *As for* man, ^c his days *are* as grass: as ^d a flower of the field, so he flourisheth.

16 For ^e the wind passeth over it, and ^f it is gone; ^g and the place thereof shall know it no more.

17 But ^h the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and ⁱ his righteousness ^j unto children's children;

18 To ^k such as keep his covenant, and to those that ^l remember his commandments to do them;

21—26. 2 Pet. i. 1. i xc. 16. Deut. x. 15. Is. xli. 8. Jer. xxxiii. 24—26. Acts xiii. 32—34. Rom. xv. 8. k xxv. 10. cxxxii. 12. Gen. xvii. 9, 10. Ex. xix. 5. xxiv. 8. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 31. Heb. viii. 6—13. l cxix. 9—11. Deut. iv. 23. vi. 6—9. Prov. iii. 1. Matt. xxviii. 20. Luke i. 6. Acts xxiv. 16. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2.

eousness, relieving the oppressed, and crushing the oppressor. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xii. 5, 6. lxxii. 4—7. xcix. 4.) This he especially did when he delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage; and by Moses made himself known to the people, and brought them acquainted with his works, his truth, and laws: and especially he shewed his glory to Moses, and proclaimed his name, as “merciful” and “gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.” (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, Ex. xxxiv. 5—7.) “How full of consolation to the penitent soul are the words of this verse!” (8) “The Lord is merciful” (רחום); the bowels of his tender compassion yearn over us, as those of a mother yearn over the child of her womb. He is “gracious” (חנן), ready to give us freely all things that are needful for our salvation. He is “slow to anger,” bearing with the frowardness of his children; ... giving them by this his long suffering, time for repentance: and he is “plenteous in mercy” (רב חסד), “great, mighty in mercy,” placing his chief glory in this attribute.’ *Bp. Horne*.

V. 9. ‘He sheweth first his severe judgment; but so soon as the sinner is humbled, he receiveth him to mercy.’—Assurances of this kind must always be understood of true believers; or of those who by affliction are brought to “repentance, and works meet for repentance:” for God will keep his anger *for ever*, in the full meaning of the words, against all that continue to the end of life impenitent and unbelieving. (*Notes*, 11—13. xxx. 5. lxxvii. 5—12. xcii. 6, 7. Is. lvii. 15, 16. Jer. iii. 4, 5. Mic. vii. 18—20.)

V. 10. ‘Blessed be his holy name, there is mercy even in our punishments: our sufferings are never so great as our sins.’ *Bp. Patrick*. Every mitigating circumstance, every remaining comfort or hope, is mercy: all short of final misery is mercy: and even the chastisements themselves are mercies, as means of grace used by our gracious Father, for our profit. (*Notes*, Ezra ix. 15. Job xi. 5, 6. Lam. iii. 21—23. Hab. iii. 2. Heb. xii. 4—11.)

V. 11—13. The immeasurable height of the arch of heaven, is an emblem continually before us, of the infinite mercy of God to his people. The space, between the

rising and setting sun, may remind us of the immense distance to which their guilt is removed from them; and the compassion of a tender Father feebly represents the kindness and tenderness of God to them. (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, Is. lv. 8, 9. Matt. vii. 7—11, v. 11.) A wise and good father will not be severe to mark every failure in his child; he will encourage his feeble attempts to obey him; he will feel every stroke which he inflicts, when chastising him for his good; and he will always gladly remove his sufferings when he is able. The character, to which these blessings exclusively belong, even those “who fear God,” should be carefully noted. (*Notes*, 15—18. cxlvii. 10, 11. Gen. xxii. 11, 12. Ec. xii. 11—14, v. 13. Acts x. 1, 2. 34, 35.)

V. 14. The word rendered “our frame,” generally means, the *device* or *imagination* which we frame in our hearts. The clause seems to mean, that God knoweth our fallen nature, both in respect of its depravity, and frailty; and should he deal with us in strict justice, we must all be crushed and destroyed. He therefore exercises fatherly compassion to those who fear him; notwithstanding the evil which he witnesses in their hearts and lives: and he is long-suffering to the wicked, giving them space for repentance, and repeatedly warning them, before he inflicts deserved punishment. (*Notes*, Rom. ii. 4—6. 2 Pet. iii. 9. 14—16. Rev. ii. 20—23.) *Our frame*.] יצָרְנוּ. Gen. vi. 5. viii. 21.—*Quod formamus, fingimus, cogitamus*. Robertson. (*Notes*, Gen. vi. 5. viii. 20—22, v. 21.)

Dust.] (*Note*, Gen. xviii. 27, 28.) The sentence “Dust thou art and to dust shalt thou return,” was pronounced against man as fallen. (*Note*, Gen. iii. 17—19.) “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (*Note*, Rom. v. 12—14.)

V. 15—18. (*Notes*, xc. 3—6. Is. xl. 6—8. Jam. i. 9—11. 1 Pet. i. 23—25.) This affecting illustration of human frailty, and the transient nature of all earthly glory and prosperity, frequently occurs in Scripture: but it is here contrasted, most beautifully, with the everlasting mercy and truth of God.—‘Let not man presume, who withereth

m ii. 4. ix. 7. xi. 4. cxv. 3. Is. lxvi. 1. Heb. viii. 1. n xlvii. 2. Dan. iv. 34. 35. Eph. i. 21. 22. Phil. ii. 9. 10. 1 Pet. iii. 22.

19 The LORD hath ^m prepared his throne in the heavens; and ⁿ his kingdom ruleth over all.

o cxlviii. 2. Luke ii. 13. 14. Rev. xix. 5. 6. * Heb. *mighty in strength*. 2 Kings xix. 35. Is. vi. 2. Matt. xxvi. 53.

20 ° Bless the LORD, ye his angels, * that excel in strength, that ^p do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

p Matt. vi. 10. Luke i. 19.

‘like the green herb: but then let not man despair, whose nature, with all its infirmities, the Son of God hath taken upon him. The flower which faded in Adam, blossoms anew in Christ, never to fade again.’ *Bp. Horne*.—The language used by the Psalmist is very emphatical: “The mercy of JEHOVAH, is from eternity, and to eternity.” (*Note*, xc. 1, 2. *Eph.* i. 3—8. iii. 9—12. 2 *Tim.* i. 9.) And this mercy, which is from everlasting in its source, and to everlasting in its efficacy, is ensured to all those who fear GOD, in every generation; who must therefore be the same with true Christians. (*Luke* i. 50.)—“And his righteousness unto children’s children.” ‘His just and faithful keeping of his promise;’ that is the promise made to Abraham, and in him to all believers, of special benefits to their posterity. (*Notes*, *Gen.* xvii. 7, 8. *Jer.* xxxii. 39—41. *Acts* ii. 37—40. *Rom.* iv. 9—12. *Gal.* iii. 10—14. *Heb.* vi. 13—15.) But then the persons spoken of, to prevent mistakes, are further characterized; “To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.” They come to God, according to the covenant of mercy ratified “with Abraham in Christ, which the law given four hundred and thirty years afterwards could not disannul;” (*Notes*, *Gal.* iii. 15—18. 26—29;) they adhere to it as their only ground of hope; and daily endeavour to “walk in all his commandments and ordinances blameless.” They cannot indeed perform his commandments (20); but they remember them, with a real desire and purpose of unreserved obedience, and habitually endeavour to accomplish that purpose.

V. 19. The mediatorial kingdom of God, as administered by Emmanuel, seems especially intended. This kingdom he “hath prepared,” and established “in the heavens,” out of the reach of all the changes of this lower world. According to his everlasting purpose, he began to do this by the promises and predictions of the great Redeemer, from the fall of Adam; and by the various introductory dispensations and institutions which made way for his coming; all of which have received their accomplishment in Christ our King, and in his exaltation in heaven, as “Head over all things to the church,” “angels, principalities, and powers” in heaven, as well as all men, being subject unto him. (*Notes*, xlvii. 6—9. *Dan.* ii. 44, 45. vii. 13, 14. 23—27. *Matt.* iii. 2. *Eph.* i. 15—23. *Rev.* xi. 15—18.)

V. 20—22. ‘In that we, which naturally are slow to praise God, exhort the angels which willingly do it, we stir up ourselves to consider our duty, and awake out of our sluggishness.’ (*Notes*, cxlviii. 1—13. *Luke* ii. 8—14. *Rev.* v. 11—14. xix. 1—6.)—The language used, concerning the obedience of “the angels, who excel in strength,” should be compared with that which describes the obedience of frail, sinful man (18). The business, privilege, and felicity of angels consist in perfectly doing their

q xxxiii. 6. *Gen.* xxxii. 2. 1 *Kings* xxii. 19. 2 *Chr.* xviii. 18. *Luke* ii. 13. r lxviii. 17. *civ.* 4. *Neh.* ix. 6. *Dan.* vii. 10. *Matt.* xiii. 41. xxiv. 30. 31. 2 *Thes.* i. 7. 8. *Heb.* i. 6, 7. 14. *Rev.* xxii. 8, 9.

21 Bless ye the LORD, ^q all ye his hosts; ye ^r ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

22 Bless the LORD, ^s all his works, in all places of his dominion: ‘bless the LORD, O my soul.

s cxlv. 10. cxlviii. 3—12. cl. 6. Is. xlii. 10—12. xliii. 20. xlv. 23. xlix. 13. Rev. v. 12—14. t i. *civ.* 1. 35. cxlvi. 1.

Maker’s will. ‘The heart of the Psalmist is full, and overfloweth with joy. Unable worthily to praise JEHOVAH for his mercies vouchsafed to the church, he inviteth heaven and earth to join with him, and to celebrate, in full chorus, the redemption of man.’ *Bp. Horne*. (*Marg. Ref.*)—‘Let all with one consent bless his holy name: and thou, my soul, be sure thou never forget to make one. O fail not to bear thy part in this joyful quire, that daily sing his praise.’ *Bp. Patrick*. (*Note*, 1, 2.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

“God is a Spirit,” and must be worshipped “in spirit and truth.” We must therefore “call upon our souls, and all that is within us, to bless his holy name:” we must also intreat him to assist us, that we may “lift up our souls” unto him; otherwise the most excellent words, and the most melodious singing, will be entirely unacceptable. But alas! how prone are we all to forget his benefits! Without constant recollection we shall continually omit to render thanks to God, for the unceasing favours of his providence and grace: and indeed we never keep pace with our great Benefactor in these returns, or in making a proper use of his goodness. His readiness to forgive makes way for all his other benefits to the sinful race of men: and without an interest in his pardoning mercy, no natural endowments, or providential gifts, will prove real blessings. But the true believer may praise the Lord, for having forgiven, and for daily forgiving, all his iniquities, having set forth his own “Son to be the propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world.” (*Note*, 1 *John* ii. 1, 2.) He is also daily healing the diseases of the soul, which are far more malignant than those of the body: and as he preserves our temporal lives, so he redeems the souls of his people from merited destruction, “and crowneth them with loving-kindness and tender mercies.” The plentiful provision made for our outward wants, and even for our enjoyment, demands a tribute of grateful praise: but the feast, with which our God satisfies the souls of his people, is a far more important obligation. (*Notes*, lxiii. 1—6.) The renewal of health after wasting sickness is very pleasant, and should be acknowledged with hearty thanksgiving: yet the renewal of our souls to holiness, and the renewal of our spiritual strength from day to day, are blessings of a nobler and more enduring nature. But we cannot recount the half of our mercies, nor by any means form a due estimate of them, till they be completed in eternal glory. We should therefore, to enliven our gratitude, trace these streams back to the fountain, and consider the Lord’s constant goodness to his people, as well as his peculiar kindness to us. He is the righteous Judge of the world, and the Patron of all that are oppressed: he rescued Israel from Egyptian bondage, and executed judgment on their haughty oppressors: but he

PSALM CIV.

The Psalmist celebrates the glory of the divine perfections, as displayed in creation and providence, 1—32. He determines perpetually to meditate with delight on God and his works, and predicts the destruction of the wicked, 33—35.

^a See on 35. ciii.
1, 2. 22.
^b vii. 1—3. Dan. a
ix. 4 Hab. i. 12.
^c cxlv. 3. Jer.
xxiii. 24. xxxii.
17—19.

BLESS the LORD, O my soul: ^b O LORD my God, ^c thou art very great:

redeems his people from a far more deplorable slavery. "He made known his ways unto Moses, and his acts to "the children of Israel:" but he has displayed, more clearly, his glorious perfections by his Son Jesus Christ; and has afforded us far greater advantages than they enjoyed. We are shewn in the most effectual manner, that "the LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and "plenteous in mercy:" and happy are we, if we have come at his invitation to share the blessings of his gospel. In this case, we may indeed experience rebukes and corrections; but "he will not always chide, neither will he "keep his anger for ever:" and every humbled penitent knows, "that he hath not dealt with him after his sins, "nor rewarded him according to his iniquities." If indeed this be our character, we need not yield to discouragement, at the consideration of our most atrocious and multiplied transgressions; seeing the mercies of God are still larger than they all: and when we trust in those mercies, he will put away our sins far from us, and "bury them in the "depths of the sea." Indeed we are yet weak and frail; our days are few, our temporal comforts are withering as the grass, and we shall soon be gone, and "our place will "know us no more:" but our heavenly Father "knoweth "our frame, and remembereth that we are dust;" and he pities us under all our sorrows and trials. He will indeed thwart our wayward inclinations, and will not indulge us to our hurt; he will also rebuke and correct us for our sins: but he will support and comfort us under every trial, and he cannot want power to relieve his afflicted children. His mercy is from everlasting in its origin, and to everlasting in its blessed effects, and should be habitually contrasted with all the fading glories of this world: and those, who belong to the Lord, have the fairest prospect of felicity for their children; and may entertain a cheerful hope, that he will make known his righteousness and salvation even to their remote posterity. But they are distinguished by their characters, as well as by their privileges: for they "join themselves to the Lord" according to his gracious covenant, and, while they trust in his mercy, they "remember his commandments to do them." (Notes, Is. lv. 1—3. lvi. 3—7.) Our glorious God and King has prepared a mercy-seat for his throne in heaven, on which he rules over all. Let us then rejoice, that innumerable hosts of angels, who "excel in strength," are continually celebrating his praises. Their employment and happiness consist in doing his commandments, in hearkening to the voice of his word, in being his servants, and doing his pleasure. Such would have been our constant delight, if we had not been *fallen* creatures; such it is in a measure become, if we are "born of God;" and such it will be for ever in heaven to all who arrive there: nor can we be per-

^d thou art clothed with ^e honour and majesty.

² Who coverest *thyself* ^f with light as *with* a garment: who ^g stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

³ Who ^h layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who ⁱ maketh the clouds his chariot: ^k who walketh upon the wings of the wind:

^d xciii. Is. lix. 17. Dan. vii. 9.
^e xxix. 1—4. xcvi. 6.
^f Matt. xvii. 2. 1 Tim. vi. 16.
^g 1 John i. 5. Is. xl. 22. xlv. 12. Zech. xii. 1. Heb. i. 10—12.
^h xviii. 11. Am. ix. 6.
ⁱ Is. xix. 1. Matt. xxvi. 64. Rev. i. 7.
^k xviii. 10. cxxxix. 9. 2 Sam. xxii 11. Nah. i. 3.

fectly happy, till we can take unwearied pleasure in perfect obedience to the will of our God. Let us then copy the examples of these bright spirits; and cordially join our feeble hallelujahs to their exalted praises of God our Saviour: let us glorify him, along with "all his works in "all places of his dominion;" and rejoice in hope, that the earth, as well as the heavens, will at length be filled with those who praise the Lord, and "do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word."

NOTES.

PSALM CIV. V. 1. The Septuagint ascribe this psalm to David; and as it opens with the same words, which both begin and close the preceding Psalm, some expositors conjecture that it was written at the same time. (Notes, ciii. 1, 2. 20—22.) The Psalmist "celebrates the mighty power "and goodness of God, in the fabrick of the world; as the "hundred and third doth his benefits to himself, and to the "rest of the children of men." *Bp. Patrick.*—"The prophet sheweth that we need not to enter into the heavens "to seek God; for as much as all the order of nature, with "the propriety and placing of the elements, are most lively "mirrours to see his majesty in."—He manifests himself in each of his works; and though he himself is invisible, yet his garments of glory and beauty are every where most clearly seen. (Notes, 2. xciii. 1. Is. lix. 16—19. Dan. vii. 9—12. Rom. i. 18—20.)

V. 2. The formation of light was the beginning of the work of this visible creation, by which God discovered his glory in the beauty and excellency of his other works. (Notes, Gen. i. 3—5. 14—19. Job xxxviii. 19—21. Is. xlv. 7. 2 Cor. iv. 5, 6.) Knowledge, wisdom, purity, and felicity, are denoted by the emblem of light; and with these the Lord is most gloriously arrayed. (Notes, xcvi. 11. Col. i. 9—14, v. 12. 1 John i. 5—7.) "Thou art kept from all mortal eyes by that inaccessible light, wherein thou dwellest above." (Note, 1 Tim. vi. 13—16.)—The writers of the New Testament expressly ascribe the work of creation to the divine Saviour: and when, at his transfiguration, "his "face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as "the light;" he gave his disciples a glimpse of "that "glory, which he had with the Father, before the world "was." (Notes and P. O. Matt. xvii. 1—13. Notes, John i. 4, 5. Rev. i. 12—20.) "The spacious heavens are the "royal pavilion, which thy sovereign power hath extended, "like a canopy, for thy Majesty, in this great palace of "the world." *Bp. Patrick.* (cxlviii. 8. Notes, cii. 25—28. Is. xl. 21—24. xlv. 12, 13.)

V. 3. JEHOVAH is here represented, as building the upper stories of his magnificent palace, in those waters above the firmament, whence the clouds are formed; upon

l Acts xxiii. 8. Heb. i. 7. 14.
 m 2 Kings ii. 11. vi. 17. Ez. i. 13, 14.
 * Heb. *He hath founded the earth upon her bases.*
 n xxiv. 2. xxxiii. 9. cxxxvi. 6. Job xxvi. 7. xxxviii. 4—7.
 o xciii. 1. xcvi. 10. Ec. i. 4. 2 Pet. iii. 10, 11. Rev. vi. 14. xx. 11.
 p Gen. i. 2—10. vii. 19, 20. 2 Pet. iii. 5, 6.
 r Gen. viii. 1. Prov. viii. 28, 29. Mark iv. 39. i cxiv. 3—7.
 i Or, *The mountains ascend, the valleys descend.*
 s Gen viii. 5.

4 Who ^lmaketh his angels spirits;
 m his ministers a flaming fire:
 5 * Who laid ⁿ the foundations of the earth, ° that it should not be removed for ever.
 6 Thou ^pcoveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.
 7 ^qAt thy rebuke ^rthey fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.
 8 [†]They ^sgo up by the mountains;

they go down by the valleys, unto the place which thou hast founded for them

9 Thou ^thast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.

10 ^uHe ^vsendeth the springs into the valleys, which ^wrun among the hills.

11 They ^xgive drink to every beast of the field: ^ythe wild asses ^zquench their thirst.

xxxiii. 7. Gen. ix. 11—15. Job xxvi. 10. xxxviii. 10, 11. Is. liv. 9. Jer. v. 22.

Heb. *Who sendeth.* cvii. 35. Deut. viii. 7. Is. xxxv 7. xli. 18. Heb. *walk.*

x cxlv. 16.

y Job xxxix. 5—8. Heb. *break.*

which he comes riding as in a chariot, when by his thunder and lightning he appals or destroys the inhabitants of the earth: and he “walketh upon the wings of the wind,” when storms and tempests execute his commands. (Notes, 2 Sam. xxii. 7—16. Is. xix. 1. Am. ix. 5, 6. Nah. i. 2—6. Matt. xxvi. 63—68. Rev. i. 7.) ‘How astonishingly magnificent and tremendous is the idea ... of the great King, riding upon the heavens, encompassed with clouds and darkness, attended by the lightnings, those ready executioners of his vengeance, and causing the world to resound and tremble at the thunder of his power.’ Bp. Horne.

V. 4. The old translation of this verse is strictly literal, “Which maketh the spirits his messengers, and a flaming fire his ministers.” The word rendered “spirits” may, however, be translated *winds*.—‘As the prophet here sheweth, that all visible powers are ready to serve God; so the apostle to the Heb. i. 7, beholdeth in this glass, how the very angels also are obedient to his commandment.’—‘He sends his angels, (and what king is there that hath such noble ministers?) sometimes in vehement winds, and sometimes in lightning and thunder, whereby they execute his royal pleasure.’ Bp. Patrick. ‘Who maketh those glorious spirits of heaven his messengers; and causeth them to appear in the forms of fire; and maketh both the winds and the fire to execute those offices of revenge, or preservation, which he committeth to them.’ Bp. Hall. The apostle’s infallible exposition, however, seems to include the whole ministration of angels, and to confine the verse to that subject; whence we learn that the holy angels are swift, like the wind, in obeying the commands of the Lord; and as a flame of fire with love and zeal. (Note, Heb. i. 5—7.)

V. 5. The great Creator so formed the earth, and ordered every thing respecting it, as to provide effectually, that it should preserve its relative situation in the universe, and its regular course, without deviation, perpetually, until the appointed time for its final dissolution. (Notes, xxiv. 1, 2. xciii. 1, 2. xcvi. 10. Job xxxviii. 4—7. Rev. xx. 11—15.)

V. 6—9. In the beginning the waters covered the whole chaotick mass, so that no mountains appeared above them: but at the voice of the Creator, which was as thunder, they hasted away. “And the mountains ascend, and the valleys descend, to the place which thou hast established for them. But thou hast set them” (the waters) “a bound which they shall not pass: they shall not return

“to cover the earth.” (8, 9).—This is the old version: it accords with the Septuagint, and is more clear than the present translation. ‘Immediately the dry land was seen; part of which, by thy wonderful contrivance, O LORD, rose up in lofty hills; and the rest sunk down in lowly valleys; where thou hast cut channels for the waters to run into the main ocean, the place thou hast appointed for them: and there, though they restlessly toss and swell; yet they cannot get over the shores, wherein thou hast inclosed them, nor shall they ever recover their former liberty, to overflow the earth again.’ Bp. Patrick. —‘Upon thy command the waters sunk down into one place, so as the hills, (thereupon appearing,) seemed to ascend, and the valleys to go down into their settled holowness: thither, by thy divine appointment, did the waters gather themselves, and there abide.’ Bp. Hall. (Notes, Gen. i. 2. 9. Job xxxviii. 8—11. Prov. viii. 26—30. Jer. v. 20—25.)—Some suppose that the retiring of the waters after the deluge was meant; and the clauses, “the waters stood above the mountains,” and “that they turn not again to cover the earth,” favour the interpretation. ‘The process at the creation was so exactly similar to that at the deluge, with regard to the circumstances here mentioned, that it matters not to which we apply the beautiful and truly poetical passage before us. In both cases, the earth was covered with the waters, as with a garment, in every part; in both cases they fled at the Almighty word, like the scattered remains of a routed army; from the heights of the mountains, whither they had ascended, they sunk down into the valleys; and from the valleys they retired to the bed of the ocean.’ Bp. Horne. Yet the Psalmist is speaking of creation: and a single exception (the *miracle* of the deluge,) does not abrogate the general rule, which is often spoken of. (Notes, Gen. vii. 10—23. viii. 1—3. 20—22. ix. 9—17. Is. liv. 6—10. Am. ix. 5, 6. Matt. viii. 23—27. 2 Pet. iii. 5—7.)

V. 10, 11. ‘The waters of the sea are not only prevented from destroying the earth, but, by a wonderful machinery, are rendered the means of preserving every living thing which moveth thereon. Partly ascending from the great deep, through the *strata* of the earth, partly exhaled in vapour from the surface of the ocean into the air, and from thence falling in rain, especially on the tops, and by the sides of mountains, they break forth in fresh springs, having left their salts behind them; they trickle through the valleys between the hills, receiving new supplies as they go; they become large rivers, and

16, 17. 1. 11.
lxxxiv. 3. cxlviii.
10. Matt. vi. 26.
* Heb. give a
voice. cxlviii. 9.
* cxlviii. 8. Deut.
xi. 11. Job
xxxviii. 25—28.
37. Jer. x. 13.
xiv. 22. Matt.
v. 45. Acts xiv.
17.

b 3. Am. ix. 6.

c lxxv. 9—13.

d cxlv. 15, 16.

cxlviii. 8, 9. Gen.

i. 11, 12, 29, 30.

ii. 5. 1 Kings

xviii. 5. Jer.

xiv. 5, 6. Joel

ii. 22.

e Gen. ii. 9. 16.

iii. 18. ix. 3.

f cxxxvi. 25. Gen.

iv. 12. Job xxxviii.

5. 1 Cor. iii. 7.

g xxxiii. 5. Judg. ix.

13. Prov. xxxi.

6, 7. Ec. x. 19.

Jer. xxxi. 12.

Zech. ix. 15—17.

Mark xiv. 23.

† Heb. to make

his face shine

with oil, or more

than oil. xcii. 10.

1 John ii. 20, 27.

Ez. iv. 16. v. 16.

xiv. 13.

12 By them shall ^athe fowls of the
heaven have their habitation, *which*
^a sing among the branches.

13 He ^awatereth the hills from ^bhis
chambers: ^cthe earth is satisfied with
the fruit of thy works.

14 He ^dcauseth the grass to grow
for the cattle, and ^eherb for the ser-
vice of man; that ^fhe may bring forth
food out of the earth;

15 And ^gwine *that* maketh glad the
heart of man, and ^hoil to ⁱmake his
face to shine, and ^jbread *which* strength-
eneth man's heart.

16 The ^ktrees of the LORD are full
of sap; the cedars of Lebanon which
he hath planted;

17 Where ^lthe birds make their
nests: ^mas for the stork, the fir trees
are her house.

18 The high hills *are* a refuge for
ⁿthe wild goats, and the rocks for ^othe
conies.

19 ¶ He appointeth ^pthe moon for
seasons: the sun knoweth his going
down.

20 Thou ^qmakest darkness, and it
is night: wherein all the beasts ^rof
the forest do creep *forth*.

21 ^sThe young lions roar after their
prey, and ^tseek their meat from God.

22 ^uThe sun ariseth; they gather
themselves together, and lay them
down in their dens.

23 ^vMan goeth forth unto his work
and to his labour until the evening.

the cedars of Lebanon, grow without man's care. They

are, both on this account, and also by reason of their mag-
nitude, "the trees of the LORD, ... which he hath plant-

ed;" yet by no means comparable to "the trees of right-
eousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be

"glorified." (Notes, xcii. 12—15. Is. lxi. 1—3.)

V. 17, 18. (Note, 12.) "Most admirable is that wis-
dom and understanding, which the Creator hath imparted

to the birds of the air, whereby they distinguish times
and seasons, choose the properest places, construct their

nest with an art and exactness unattainable by man, and
secure and provide for their young." Bp. Horne. The

kind and condescending attention of the omnipotent
Creator, to the meanest of his creatures, as thus introduced

along with his special regard to man, is very beautiful and
affecting to a serious mind. (Marg. Ref.—Note, Prov.

xxx. 24—28.)

V. 19. The Psalmist next celebrates the wisdom of God,
in the motions and revolutions of the heavenly bodies. The

moon divides time into months, and its changes divide the
months also: the seasons of the year were anciently com-
puted by moons, and the Jewish festivals were fixed in the

same manner.—"The sun, or solar light ... seemeth to
know the exact time of its coming on, and going off, and

fulfilleth the course prescribed to it without the least de-
viation." Bp. Horne. (Notes, Gen. i. 14—19. Lev. xxiii.

4. Num. xxviii. 11—15. Deut. iv. 19. Job xxxviii. 12—15,
v. 12. lxxiv. 13—17. Jer. xxxi. 35—37.)

V. 20—23. The bountiful and wise Creator has so or-
dered it, that the beasts of prey naturally shun the light,
and seldom leave their dens, till it is dark, and man is re-
tired to his rest: so that there is no great danger from them,
even in the regions where they most abound, except in the
night-time. Then they range abroad, and, in their way,
"seek their meat from God;" till the sun arises, and
man returns to his work, and then they retire to their
dens. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. i. 3—5. Is. xlv. 7.)
Wicked men, who choose darkness, as best suited to the
commission of their crimes with secrecy and impunity,
and who "hate the light" of God's word, "because their

12 Jer. xxii. 23.
Ez. xxxi. 6. Dan.
iv. 21. Ob. 4.
Matt. xiii. 32.
m Lev. xi. 19. Jer.
viii. 7.
n 1 Sam. xxiv. 2.
Job xxxix. 1.
o Deut. xiv. 7.
Prov. xxx. 26.
p viii. 3. cxxxvi.
7—9. Gen. i. 14
—18. Deut. iv.
19. Job xxxi. 26
—28. xxxviii. 12.
Jer. xxxi. 35.
q lxxiv. 16. cxxxix.
10—12. Gen. i.
4, 5. viii. 22. Is.
xiv. 7. Am. iv.
13.
r Heb. thereof do
trample on the
forest.
s xxxiv. 10. Job
xxxviii. 39. Is.
xxxi. 4. Ez. xix.
2, &c. Am. iii.
4.
t cxlviii. 9. Job
xxxviii. 41. Joel
i. 18, 20. ii. 22.
u Job xxiv. 13—
17. Nah. iii. 17.
John iii. 20.
v Gen. iii. 19.
Judg. xix. 16.
Ec. v. 12. Eph.
iv. 28, 2 Thes.
iii. 8—12.

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Wicked men, who choose darkness, as best suited to the
commission of their crimes with secrecy and impunity,
and who "hate the light" of God's word, "because their

24 O LORD, ^hhow manifold are thy works! ⁱin wisdom hast thou made them all: ^jthe earth is full of thy riches.

25 So is ^athis great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great ^bbeasts.

26 ^oThere go the ships; *there is* that ^dleviathan, *whom* thou hast ^{*}made ^eto play therein.

27 These ^fwait all upon thee; that thou mayest give *them* their meat in due season.

28 That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good.

29 Thou ^ghidest thy face, they are troubled; ^hthou takest away their breath, they die, and ⁱreturn to their dust.

30 Thou ^ksendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou ^lrenewest the face of the earth.

31 ^mThe glory of the LORD shall [†]endure for ever: ⁿthe LORD shall rejoice in his works.

32 He ^olooketh on the earth, and it trembleth: ^phe toucheth the hills, and they smoke.

[†] Heb. *be for ever.* n Gen. i. 31. Ex. xxxi. 17. Is. lxii. 5. lxv. 18, 19. Jer. xxxii. 41. Zeph. iii. 17. Luke xv. 5, 6. 22—24. o lxxvii. 16. xcvii. 4, 5. cxiv. 7. Is. lxiv. 2. Jer. iv. 23—26. v. 22. Am. viii. 8. Nah. i. 5, 6. Hab. iii. 5, 6. Rev. xx. 11. p l. 3. cxliv. 5. Is. lxiv. 1, 2. Rev. xix. 3.

“deeds are evil,” resemble the savage beasts, in this and many other respects: (*Notes*, Job xxiv. 13—17. John iii. 19—21. Rom. xiii. 11—14. Eph. v. 8—14. 1 Thes. v. 1—3:) as do they also, who spend the night in revels and dissipation, and retire to rest when they ought to set about some useful employment; for thus they seem to renounce their kindred to the human species, and to be ambitious of a relation to the wild beasts of the forest.—In nations which sit in darkness for want of revelation, Satan seems to have permission to range and devour at pleasure: (*Note*, Ex. xxii. 18:) but when “the Sun of Righteousness” arises, this roaring lion has his power diminished, and men are stirred up to “labour for the meat which endureth unto “everlasting life.”

V. 24. “Transported with a survey of the wonders which present themselves in heaven above, and on earth below, the Psalmist breaks forth into an exclamation, (and what heart has not already anticipated him?) on the variety and magnificence, the harmony and proportion, of the works of God, in this outward, and visible, and perishable world. What then are the miracles of grace and glory! What are those invisible and eternal things, “which God hath prepared for them that love him!”” *Bp. Horne.* (*Notes*, viii. 3—9. cxxxix. 17, 18. Rom. xi. 33—36. 1 Cor. ii. 6—9. Eph. iii. 9—12.)

V. 25, 26. “This great and spacious sea also, which seems to embrace the earth in its arms, is no less full of thy wonderful works.” *Bp. Patrick.*—“There is not in all nature a more august and striking object than the ocean. Its inhabitants are as numerous as those upon the land; nor is the wisdom and power of the Creator less displayed, perhaps, in their formation and preservation, from the smallest fish that swims, to the enormous tyrant of the deep, the leviathan himself. By means of navigation, Providence hath opened a communication between the most distant parts of the globe; the largest solid bodies are wafted with incredible swiftness, upon one fluid, by the impulse of another, and seas join the countries which they appear to divide.” *Bp. Horne.* (*Note*, Gen. i. 9.)—“There the ships sail as swiftly as the fishes swim; fetching us the riches both of sea and land: and there that great leviathan (in forming of whom thou hast shewn thy mighty power,) finds room enough to tumble up and down, and sport himself in his absolute do-

“minion over all that the sea contains.” *Bp. Patrick.*—Many authors, and among the rest, Bishop Patrick, in commenting on Job, suppose the leviathan to mean the crocodile: but the text before us so fully decides the leviathan to be an inhabitant of the sea, that this respectable author paraphrases it, in direct opposition to his exposition of the scripture before referred to! (*Notes*, lxxiv. 13—17. Job xli. Is. xxvii. 1.)—The word, rendered “things creeping,” is used concerning the fishes, in the history of the creation: and as none of them, properly speaking, have legs and feet, and many of them in great measure lie and crawl at the bottom of the water; there is a propriety in considering them as a peculiar species of reptiles. (*Gen.* i. 20. *marg.*)—*Beasts.* (25) Or, “Living creatures.” (*Note*, Rev. iv. 6—8.)

V. 27—30. The immense creation, forming one great family, maintained upon the riches and bounty of JEHOVAH, as the great Householder, is a very striking idea: whilst at his will one generation of creatures perish, a new generation succeeds; and successive crops of vegetable productions renew and cover the face of the earth. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, Matt. vi. 25—32.)—The Holy Spirit seems to be spoken of in Scripture, as the immediate agent in giving and preserving life, both natural, spiritual, and eternal. (*Notes*, xxxiii. 4—6, v. 6. Gen. i. 2. Job xxxiii. 1—7, v. 4.)

V. 31. The old version here is, “Glory be to the LORD for ever; let the LORD rejoice in his works.” Our present translation is more literal: but the variation shews, that no certain rule has been adopted, in rendering such passages; some being rendered in the future, as predictions, others as prayers, in the imperative; and that the context in general must determine in which sense we should understand them. “All future ages shall praise, as well as we, the same power, and wisdom, and goodness of the Lord; which appear so gloriously in all his works, that he himself is still delighted in the continuance of them, as he was at first in their contrivance.” *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, Gen. i. 31. Is. lxii. 1—5. Jer. xxxii. 39—41. Zeph. iii. 14—17. Luke xv. 3—7. 22—32. 2 Thes. i. 5—10.)

V. 32. “At his presence the very earth trembles, and the mountains, as our fathers saw at mount Sinai, are full of fire and smoke.” *Bp. Patrick.* It is probable, however, that earthquakes and volcanos, as terrific dis-

q lxiii. 4. cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2.
r i. 2. lxiii. 5, 6. lxxvii. 12. cxix. 15, 16. 111. 127. 128. 167. cxxxix. 17, 18. Prov. xxiv. 14.
s xxxii. 11. Hab. iii. 18. Luke i. 47. Phil. iv. 4.

33 ^aI will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God, while I have my being.

34 My ^r meditation of him shall be sweet: ^sI will be glad in the LORD.

35 Let ^t the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. ^u Bless thou the LORD, O my soul. Praise ye the LORD.

xxxvii. 38. lix. 13. lxxviii. 1, 2. lxxiii. 27. ci. 8. Judg. v. 31. Prov. ii. 22. Rev. xix. 1, 2. l. ciii. 1, 2. 22.

plays of the Creator's power, (in whatever way men account for them,) were also intended; and perhaps there may be some reference to the last general conflagration. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 2, 3. *Ex.* xix. 16—20. *Hab.* iii. 3—5. *Heb.* xii. 18—21. 2 *Pet.* iii. 10—13.)

V. 33. *Notes*, cxlv. 1, 2. cxlvi. 2.

V. 34. Meditation on the glorious perfections of God, as displayed in all his works of creation and providence; and still more, as harmoniously manifested in his works of redemption and grace; must be delightful to the soul, in proportion as it becomes spiritually minded. For it excites the most pleasing sensations of adoring, complacent, and grateful love, with admiration still more and more augmented, by further discoveries of the manifold wisdom, righteousness, faithfulness, and mercy of our God; and creating a sort of triumphant exultation, combined with confidence and self-congratulation, that this most glorious God is become our Salvation and our God, our Father, our Friend and Portion for ever. The felicity of heaven, no doubt, greatly consists in the joy of such contemplations, and rapturous adorations and thanksgivings; the beginning of this happy frame of mind is the earnest of heaven; and the capacity of delighting in such meditations and praises, is in good measure "the meetness for the inheritance of "the saints in light." (*Notes*, i. 1—3. lxiii. 1—6. cxxxix. 17, 18. *Phil.* iv. 4.)

V. 35. *Let the sinners, &c.*] Or, "The sinners shall "be consumed, &c." (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, lxxviii. 1—3.) The Psalmist concludes as he began, "Bless thou the "LORD, O my soul;" only calling on all that read and sing the psalm, and on all creatures, to join with him in praising the eternal and glorious God of heaven and earth: *Hallelujah.*—(*Notes*, lxxviii. 4. ciii. 1, 2. 20—22.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—11.

Every object, which we behold or reflect on, may remind us to bless and praise the Lord, who is very great, and arrayed with majesty, glory, and excellency, infinitely surpassing our comprehension. "His eternal power and "Godhead" are clearly seen, by the things which he has made: his glory, like the sun, becomes visible by its own splendour; and they are without excuse, who do not love, and thank, and worship him. (*Note*, *Rom.* i. 18—23.) The heavens stretched forth as his curtain; the light as his magnificent garment; the clouds as his chambers, or his chariot; the winds and flames as his servants and messengers; and the holy angels, executing his commands with inconceivable zeal, alacrity, and promptitude, are so many demonstrations of his power and authority; and shew that all his creatures serve him, apostate spirits, and apostate man, alone excepted. The less we can comprehend of the manner, in which the Creator retains the earth in its course, and the seasons in their order; the more we

should admire and adore his power, wisdom, and goodness: and while we consider the numerous and invaluable advantages, which we derive from the ocean, and from the wonderful process, by which the earth is watered from that great reservoir; we should remember to bless the Lord for his faithfulness to Noah and his posterity.

V. 12—30.

In these verses we are called on to observe, admire, and adore the wisdom, love, and power of God, in the instinctive propensities of all animals; by which they are not only led to the means of their own preservation, and the continuance of each species, but are rendered subservient to our comfort and benefit. And when we reflect on the provision, which the bounteous Creator has made for the wants of all his creatures, we should also notice the *natural* worship, so to speak, which they render unto him; while the feathered songsters warble his praises, and even the lions, roaring in the woods, "seek their meat "from God." Yet man, forgetful and ungrateful man, is favoured with the largest measure of his kindness: to him he gives all things richly to enjoy; not only bringing food out of the earth, but wine and oil for his exhilaration and pleasure. He has put the animal tribes under his dominion: even those, which render him no service, stand in awe of him, and are taught to retire to their dens, when the rising sun calls him to his work; and in general they only venture forth, when night has drawn her sable curtain to favour his repose. Well then may we break forth in admiration, and say, "O LORD, how manifold are thy "works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is "full of thy riches!" For the seas and the dry land, the air, and even the bowels of the earth, are abundantly replenished with useful treasures for the service of man. Yet let us remember that we are pensioners, and, in some sense, fellow commoners, with the inferior creatures; which "all wait upon the LORD," who "giveth them "their meat in due season;" which gather what he gives, and are examples to us of contentment and moderation. Let us also recollect, that death, which sweeps away the innumerable multitudes of living creatures that people the earth, and makes room for successive generations, first entered by man's sin; and likewise that we are not sent into the world, as leviathan into the great deep, "to play "therein;" either by living merely for amusement, or by preying upon our inferiors. We have much to do: we are sentenced to eat our bread in the sweat of our brow; and he who does nothing useful to society, lives upon the labour of others. We ought, therefore, to "work out "our own salvation," to improve our talents, and to serve our generation, from the morning to the evening of our lives; and then the faithful servant will enter into rest, and the slothful will be called to a severe account. Man alone lives beyond death. When the Lord takes away his breath, his soul enters on another state of existence; and his body shall at length be raised either to eternal glory or

PSALM CV.

a cxxxvi. 1—3.
 1 Chr. xvi. 7—
 22. xxv. 3. xxix.
 13. 20.
 b Is. xii. 4. Joel
 ii. 32. Acts ix.
 14. Rom. x. 13.
 1 Cor. i. 2.
 c lxxxix. 1. xevi.
 3. cxlv. 4—6.
 11. 12. Num.
 xxxiii. 23. Is. li.
 10. Dan. iii. 29.
 iv. 1—3. vi. 26,
 27.
 d xlvii. 6, 7. xevi.
 1, 2. xcvi. 1. 5.
 Judg. v. 3. Is.
 xii. 5, 6. xlii. 10
 —12. Eph. v. 19.
 Rev. xv. 3, 4.
 e lxxvii. 12. lxxviii.
 4—6. cxix. 27.
 Ex. xiii. 8, 9.
 14. Deut. vi. 6
 —9. Luke xxiv.
 14, &c.
 f xxxiv. 2. Is.
 xlv. 25. Jer. ix.
 23, 24. 1 Cor. i.
 29. 31. Gal. vi.
 14.
 g ix. 10. Prov. viii.
 17. Is. xlv. 19.
 lv. 6, 7. Lam.
 iii. 25. Luke xi.
 9, 10.
 h Am. v. 4—6.
 Zeph. ii. 2, 3.
 i lxxviii. 61. cxxxii.
 8. 2 Chr. vi. 41.
 k xxvii. 8.
 l lxxvii. 11. ciii. m
 2. Deut. vii. 18,
 19. viii. 2. xxxii. 7. Is. xliii. 18, 19. Luke xxii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 24—26. m cxix.
 13. Rev. xvi. 7. xix. 2.

An exhortation to praise God, to make known his works, to glory in him, and to seek his favour, 1—7. A brief history of God's goodness to his people, from the call of Abraham, to the settlement of Israel in Canaan, 8—45.

O ^a GIVE thanks unto the LORD; ^b call upon his name: ^c make known his deeds among the people.

² ^d Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: ^e talk ye of all his wondrous works.

³ ^f Glory ye in his holy name: ^g let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD.

⁴ ^h Seek the LORD and ⁱ his strength: seek his face evermore.

⁵ ^j Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;

⁶ ^k O ye seed of Abraham his servant, ye children of Jacob ^l his chosen.

⁷ He is ^m the LORD our God: ⁿ his judgments *are* in all the earth.

⁸ ^o He hath remembered his covenant for ever, the word *which* he commanded to ^p a thousand generations.

⁹ Which ^q covenant he made with Abraham, and his oath unto Isaac;

¹⁰ And confirmed the same unto Jacob for a law, *and* to Israel *for* ^r an everlasting covenant:

¹¹ Saying, ^s Unto thee will I give the land of Canaan, the ^t lot of your inheritance:

¹² When they were *but* ^u a few men in number; yea, very few, ^v and strangers in it.

¹³ When they went from one nation to another, from *one* kingdom to another people;

¹⁴ ^w He suffered no man to do them

n Ex. iii. 6. Is. xli. 8. 14. xlv. 1, 2. Rom. ix. 4, &c.
 o Deut. vii. 6—8. John xv. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 9.
 p xcv. 7. c. 3. Gen. xvii. 7. Ex. xx. 2. Deut. xxvi. 17, 18. xxix. 10—15. Josh. xxiv. 15—24.
 q xlviii. 10, 11. Is. xxvi. 9. Rev. xv. 4. 42. cxi. 5. 9. 1 Chr. xvi. 15. Neh. i. 5. Dan. ix. 4. Luke i. 72—74.
 r Deut. vii. 9. Gen. xvii. 2. xxii. 16, 17. xxvi. 3. xxviii. 13. xxxv. 11. Neh. ix. 8. Acts vii. 8. Heb. vi. 17. Gen. xvii. 7, 8. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Heb. xiii. 20. x Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 15. xv. 18. xxvi. 4. xxviii. 13. Heb. cord. lxxviii. 55.
 y Gen. xxxiv. 30. Deut. vii. 7. xxvi. 5. Is. li. 2. Ez. xxxiii. 24, &c.
 z Gen. xvii. 8. xxiii. 4. Acts vii. 5. Heb. xi. 9. 12. a Gen. xii. 14—17. xx. 1—7. xxvi. 14, &c. xxxi. 24—29. xxxv. 5. Ex. vii. 16, 17.

misery.—May the Lord then send forth his Spirit, and new create our souls to holiness; and renew the face of the earth by the conversion of sinners.

V. 31—35.

The power of the glorious God will be found at last, and often is seen to be at present, as terrible to the impenitent workers of iniquity, as beneficial to his humble worshippers and devoted servants: and in every way “his glory shall endure for ever; the LORD “shall rejoice in his works.” If he look with a frown upon the earth, it trembles; if he touch the hills in anger, they smoke, and kindle into a flame; and at length “the “day of the Lord will come ... in which the elements “shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the “works that are therein, shall be burnt up:” and then sinners, however numerous or powerful, shall perish without hope and for ever. But those who trust in his mercy, and love his name, shall sing his praises as long as they have their being, even to eternal ages. And if meditation on the glories of creation be so sweet to the soul; what superior glories must appear to the enlightened mind, when contemplating the great work of redemption! There all the divine perfections, with combined splendour, beam upon the soul, exciting astonishment, love, gratitude, and joy: there spiritual riches are discerned, far more unsearchable, than those temporal treasures which supply the wants of the whole visible creation: and there alone can a sinner perceive ground of confidence, and joy in God. While then we thankfully receive, and use moderately, and fear to abuse, the bounty of Providence; while we learn to trust in him who feeds the young lions, assured that he will not desert his children; let us fix our attention and choice on “that good part, which shall “never be taken from us:” and not only let us shew our gratitude by fervent songs of praise, and by exciting, as far

as we are able, all around us, to join in this delightful and heavenly employment; but by devoting ourselves, all we have and are, to the service of our God, and imitating his liberality and mercy, as we have opportunity and ability.

NOTES.

PSALM CV. V. 1, 2. (Notes, 1 Chr. xvi. 7—9.) ‘The ‘first part of this psalm at least (to the end of the ‘fifteenth verse) was made by David: ... and it is most ‘probable that he afterwards enlarged it; (for who else ‘would adventure to do it?) that it might be a more ‘complete commemoration of all the mercies of God ‘towards their nation.’ Bp. Patrick.—‘Musick and conversation are two things, by which the mind of man receives much good, or a great deal of harm. ... They, ‘who do in reality love their Saviour, will always find ‘themselves inclined to sing of him, and to talk of him. ‘In whom should the redeemed “glory” and exult, but ‘in their Redeemer?’ Bp. Horne. (Note, Phil. iii. 1—7, v. 7.) ‘By faith we find our Redeemer in this life, and ‘experience the power and comfort of his grace: but ‘hope and love still seek, and wish, and aspire after the ‘sight and enjoyment of him in heaven, whither he is ascended.’ Bp. Horne.

Talk ye (2) דברו; meditate ye: חשבו, my meditation, civ. 34. ‘Meditate on the wonderful works of God, that you ‘may talk of them, as from the abundance of the heart.’

V. 3—7. Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Chr. xvi. 10—14.

V. 8—12. Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Chr. xvi. 15—19. He hath remembered, &c. (8) In Chronicles, the Psalmist exhorts the people to be mindful of the covenant, which the Lord had made with their fathers; but here he teaches them to praise God for having always remembered it. Marg. Ref.—Notes, 42. Luke i. 67—75.

V. 13—15. Marg. Ref.—Note, 1 Chr. xvi. 20—22. Prophets. (15) ‘Meaning the old fathers, to whom God

^b Gen. xxvi. 11. wrong: yea, he reprov'd kings for their sakes; ^c 1 Kings xix. 16. ^d 1 John ii. 27.

^e Gen. xx. 7. 15 *Saying*, ^b Touch not ^c mine anointed, and do ^d my prophets no harm.

^e Gen. xli. 25—32. 54. xlii. 5, 6. 2 Kings viii. 1. Am. iii. 6. vii. 1. —4. Hag. i. 10. 11. ii. 17. Matt. viii. 8, 9. Rev. vi. 8. 16 Moreover, ^c he called for a famine upon the land: ^d he brake the whole staff of bread.

^f civ. 15. Gen. xlvii. 13. 19. Lev. xxvii. 26. Is. iii. 1. Ez. iv. 16. Acts vii. 11. 17 ^e He sent a man before them, *even* ^b Joseph, *who* was sold for a servant:

^g Gen. xlv. 5. 7, 8. 1. 20. 18 ⁱ Whose feet they hurt with fetters: ^c he was laid in iron.

^h Gen. xxxvii. 27, 28. 36. xxxix. 1. xlv. 4. Acts vii. 9. 19 Until the time that ^k his word came, the word of the LORD tried him.

ⁱ Gen. xxxix. 20. xl. 15. Acts xvi. 24. ^j Heb. *his soul came into iron.* 20 The ⁱ king sent and loosed him, *even* the ruler of the people, and let him go free.

^k xlv. 4. Gen. xli. 11—16. 25. Prov. xxi. 1. Dan. ii. 30. Acts vii. 10. 21 He ^m made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his [†] substance:

[†] Heb. *possession.*

22 To bind his princes at his pleasure; and ⁿ teach his senators wisdom.

23 ^o Israel also came into Egypt; and ^p Jacob sojourn'd in ^q the land of Ham.

24 And ^r he increased his people greatly; and ^s made them stronger than their enemies.

25 ^t He turned their heart ^u to hate his people, to deal subtly with his servants.

26 He ^x sent Moses his servant, *and* ^y Aaron whom he had chosen.

27 ^z They shewed ^a his signs among them, and ^b wonders in the land of Ham.

28 He ^c sent darkness, and made it dark; and ^d they rebelled not against his word.

^{cxxxv.} 8, 9. Ex. vii.—xi. Deut. iv. 34. Neh. ix. 10, 11. Is. lxiii. 11, 12. Jer. xxxii. 20, 21. [†] Heb. *words of his signs.* ^a 23. cvi. 22. ^b Ex. x. 21—23. Joel ii. 2. 31. Luke xxiii. 44, 45. 2 Pet. ii. 4. 17. ^c xcix. 7. Ez. ii. 4—8.

ⁿ Gen. xli. 33. 39. Is. xix. 12. ^o Gen. xlv. 9—11. xlv. 2—7. Josh. xxiv. 4. Acts vii. 11—15. ^p Gen. xlvii. 6—9. 28. ^q 27. lxxviii. 51. cvi. 22. Gen. x. 6. ^r Gen. xliii. 16. xlv. 3. Ex. i. 7. Deut. xxvi. 5. Acts vii. 17, 18. Heb. xi. 12. ^s Ex. i. 9. xii. 37. ^t Gen. xv. 13. Ex. ix. 16. x. 1. Deut. ii. 30. Rom. ix. 17—19. ^u Ex. i. 11—14. 16. ii. 23. Acts vii. 19. ^x lxxvii. 20. Ex. iii. 10. iv. 12—14. vi. 11. 26, 27. Josh. xxiv. 5. Mic. vi. 4. Acts vii. 34, 35. ^y Ex. vii. 1. 12. xxviii. 1, 2. 12. 29—32. xxix. 5. &c. Lev. viii. 7. &c. Num. xvi. 5—11. 40. 47, 48. xvii. 5. 1 Sam. xii. 6. ^z lxxviii. 43—51.

^c shewed himself plainly, and who were setters forth of ^d his word.' (Note, Gen. xx. 7.)

V. 16. Famine is here figuratively spoken of, as the servant of God, which at his call promptly attends to fulfil his righteous will. (Notes, Gen. xli. 28—32. 55—57. xlii.)—Bread is called *the staff*, or the support, of life: and the experience of seasons, in which corn is very scarce and dear, though short of absolute famine, gives a very affecting and distressing exposition of the phrase. (Notes, Lev. xxvi. 25, 26. Is. iii. 1—9, v. 1. Ez. iv. 9—17. xiv. 13—21.)

V. 17. The word translated “a man,” is by some rendered *an eminent man*. Joseph was an eminent character, though envied by his brethren, and sold for a slave: he was a great deliverer, and one of the most illustrious types of the Saviour, in the whole old testament. When God purposed to call for a famine in the land, he had sent an extraordinary man into Egypt, to make provision for Jacob's family. Joseph's brethren indeed “thought evil” against him, but God meant it for good.” (Notes, Gen. xxxvii. xlv. 5—8. xlix. 22—26. 1. 20.)

V. 18. It seems by this, that Joseph was very severely used, when first imprisoned by Potiphar. (Notes, Gen. xxxix. 19—23.)

V. 19—21. “Until his appointed time came, and the counsel of the LORD had tried him.” *Old Version*.—The word which Joseph spoke, as from God, when he interpreted the dreams of the chief baker and chief butler, was reported to Pharaoh: and when Joseph had interpreted Pharaoh's extraordinary dream too, he was not only released, but likewise advanced to the highest dignity. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. xl. xli. Prov. xxi. 1.) But till this time arrived, Joseph continued in prison, according to “the word,” or the counsel and decree, of God; that he might be tried as gold is tried in the furnace. (Notes, lxi. 8—12. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7.)

V. 22. “That he should bind his princes unto his will.” *Old Version*. The clause seems rather to denote the effica-

cious means used by Pharaoh, to secure the obedience of his princes to Joseph; than any severe measures used by Joseph himself, to punish the disobedient, or in requiring submission to his high authority.—The Septuagint thus render the verse: “That he should instruct his princes ‘even as himself; and make his elders wise;’ which well expresses the meaning.—Perhaps the wise maxims, which the elders or counsellors of Egypt, at this time, (a period far more ancient, than that of any other authentick history of Egypt,) learned from Joseph, or rather from God by him, being delivered down to their successors, contributed to stamp the counsels of Egypt with that character of wisdom, for which they were celebrated in after ages. (Notes, Gen. xli. 37—44. 1 Kings iv. 30—34. Is. xix. 11—14. Acts vii. 17—29, v. 22.)

V. 23—25. (Notes, Gen. xlii—xlvii. Acts vii. 9—14.) At first the Egyptians were *friends* to Jacob's family, for Joseph's sake: but after the death of Joseph and his patron, and the succession of another “king who knew not “Joseph,” the Egyptians became *enemies* to Israel. Their rapid increase, from a single family to a powerful people, excited envy, jealousy, dread, and hatred; which prompted both the king and his subjects to devise politick and detestable measures, for diminishing their numbers and strength, and for retaining them in bondage. (Notes, Ex. i.) And as the events which had taken place, by the providential appointment of God, gave *occasion* to this change in the disposition of the Egyptians; as he foresaw, and had predicted, that this would be the case; and as he determined to leave them to themselves and the natural tendency of their depraved hearts, in such circumstances; it is said, “He turned their heart to hate his people.” (Notes, Gen. xv. 12—15. Ex. iii. 19, 20. iv. 21. viii. 18, 19. ix. 12. Ezra vi. 22. Ez. xiv. 9—11. Rom. ix. 15—21. 2 Thes. ii. 8—12.)

V. 26—28. *They rebelled not*, &c. (28) Moses and Aaron boldly executed their commission, in every particular. They “feared not the wrath of the king; but endured as

- d lxxviii. 44. Ex. vii. 20, 21. Is. i. 2. Ez. xxix. 4, 5. Rev. xvi. 3.
- e lxxviii. 45. Ex. viii. 3—14. Rev. xvi. 13, 14.
- f lxxviii. 45. Ex. viii. 21—24. Is. vii. 18.
- g Ex. viii. 16—18. Heb. *their rain hail.*
- h lxxviii. 47, 48. Ex. ix. 18—28. Rev. viii. 7. xi. 19. xvi. 21.
- i Rev. ix. 4.
- k lxxviii. 46. Ex. x. 12—15. Joel i. 4—7. ii. 25. Rev. ix. 3—10.
- l lxxviii. 51. cxxxv. 8. cxxxvi. 10. Ex. iv. 23. xi. 4, 5. xii. 12, 29, 30. Heb. xi. 28.
- m Gen. xlix. 3.
- n Gen. xv. 14. Ex. iii. 22. xii. 35, 36. Acts xiii. 17.
- 29 He ^d turned their waters into blood, and slew their fish.
- 30 Their land ^e brought forth frogs in abundance, in the chambers of their kings.
- 31 He spake, and ^f there came divers sorts of flies ^g and lice in all their coasts.
- 32 He gave ^h them ⁱ hail for rain, and flaming fire in their land.
- 33 He ^j smote their vines also and their fig-trees; and brake the trees of their coasts.
- 34 He spake, and ^k the locusts came, and caterpillars, and that without number;
- 35 And did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.
- 36 ^l He smote also all the first-born in their land, ^m the chief of all their strength.
- 37 He ⁿ brought them forth also with silver and gold; and *there was not one feeble person* among their tribes.

- o Ex. x. 7. xii. 33. p Gen. xxxv. 5. Josh. ii. 9.
- q lxxviii. 14. Ex. xiii. 21, 22. xiv. 24. Num. ix. 15—22. Neh. ix. 12, 19. Is. iv. 5. 1 Cor. x. 1, 2.
- r lxxviii. 18, 26—28. Ex. xvi. 12, 13. Num. xi. 4—6. 31—33.
- s Ex. xvi. 14—35. Num. xi. 7—9. Deut. viii. 3. Josh. v. 12. Neh. ix. 20.
- t lxxviii. 23—25. John vi. 21—33. 48—58.
- u lxxviii. 15, 16. 20. cxiv. 8. Ex. xvii. 6. Num. xx. 11. Neh. ix. 15. Is. xlviii. 21. 1 Cor. x. 4.
- x See on 8—11.—Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 14—17. xiv. 14. Ex. ii. 24. Luke i. 54, 55. 72, 73.
- y Ex. xxxii. 12. Deut. ix. 5. 27. Mic. vii. 20.
- z lxxviii. 52, 53. cvi. 8—12. Ex. xv. 13. Deut. iv. 37, 38. Is. lxiii. 11—14. Acts vii. 36. xiii. 17.
- a Is. xxxv. 10. li. 10, 11. lv. 12. Jer. xxxi. 11, 12. Heb. *singing.*
- cvi. 12. Ex. xv. 1, &c. b xlv. 2, 3. lxxviii. 55. lxxx. 8. cxxxv. 10—12. cxxxvi. 21, 22. Josh. xi. 23. xxiii. 4. xxiv. 8, 13. Neh. ix. 22—25. c Deut. vi. 10, 11. Josh. v. 11. d Deut. iv. 40. v. 33. vi. 1, 2. 21—25. Ez. xxxvi. 24—28. Eph. ii. 8—10. Tit. ii. 14. e Heb. *Hallelujah.* cvi. 1. cl. l. *marg.* Rev. xix. 5, 4.
- 38 Egypt was ^o glad when they departed; ^p for the fear of them fell upon them.
- 39 He ^q spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night.
- 40 *The people* ^r asked, and he brought quails, ^s and satisfied them with ^t the bread of heaven.
- 41 He ^u opened the rock, and the waters gushed out: they ran in the dry places *like* a river.
- 42 For ^v he remembered his holy promise, ^w and Abraham his servant.
- 43 And ^x he brought forth his people ^y with joy, and his chosen with ^z gladness;
- 44 And ^a he gave them the lands of the heathen: and ^b they inherited the labour of the people;
- 45 ^c That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. ^d Praise ye the Lord.

“seeing him who is invisible.” (Notes, Heb. xi. 23—27.) They were sent, like Ezekiel, to deliver the message of God to haughty rebels; and were careful not to imitate their rebellion. (Notes, Ez. ii. 3—8.)—Some, however, explain the clause of the Egyptians, reading it as an interrogation:—“Did they not rebel against his word?” “Did they not persist in rebelling, amidst all the plagues inflicted on them?” (Notes, Ex. ii—xv. Acts vii. 20—36.)

V. 29—36. Marg. Ref.—Notes, lxxviii. 42—50.

V. 37, 38. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xii. 35—38. xiii. 17, 18. Is. lxiii. 11—14.) “Among such a number of men, women, children, and cattle, nothing was “weak and “feeble,” nothing unable to perform the journey. The “order was that “not a hoof should be left behind;” (Ex. x. 26:) and he who commanded, gave strength to obey.” Bp. Horne.

V. 39—41. Notes, lxxviii. 12—31. Ex. xiii. 21, 22. xvi. xvii. 1—7. 1 Cor. x. 1—5.

V. 42. In this Psalm the sacred writer records the goodness of God to Israel, without noticing Israel’s ingratitude and rebellion; which form in great measure the subject of the ensuing psalm. Yet he intimates, in this verse, that the Lord conferred all these benefits on them, entirely from regard to their ancestor “Abraham, his friend;” “and “to the word of his holiness,” which he had spoken to Abraham. (Notes, 3—17. Gen. xii. 1—3. xv. 17—21. xvii. 7, 8. xxvi. 2—5. xxviii. 13—15. Ex. iii. 15. Deut. vii. 6—8. ix. 2—17. Is. xli. 8, 9. Mic. vii. 18—20. Luke i. 46—55.)

V. 43—45. Marg. Ref.—Note, xlv. 1—3.—*Might observe his statutes, &c.* (45) Many of the laws given to Israel were of such a nature, that they could not be obeyed

in the wilderness, or at a distance from the sanctuary: (Notes, Num. ix. 1—5. Deut. xii. 8, 9:) so that there was a special reason, why they must inhabit Canaan, in order to observe the statutes and obey the laws of God: but in general, all their religious advantages and all the favours bestowed on them, were expressly vouchsafed, in order to separate them from other nations, and to render them the obedient worshippers of the true God. “Let all...whose lot hath fallen in “a land flowing with milk and honey,” upon earth, reflect, that God hath given them riches, and the leisure which riches procure, not for the purpose of indulging and corrupting themselves and others; but that they may glorify him, benefit their neighbours, and save their own souls.” Bp. Horne. (Notes, Ez. xi. 17—20. xxxvi. 25—27. Luke i. 67—75. Tit. ii. 11—14.)—This Psalm, like the preceding, and several which follow, concludes with the word Hallelu-jah. (Note, cvi. 1.) “For which, and all other his benefits, excite yourselves to “praise the Lord.” Bp. Patrick.—*The labour of the people.* (44) Deut. vi. 10, 11. Josh. xxiv. 13. Neh. ix. 25.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—22.

Our meditations on the works of the Creator, and on his providential goodness, should lead us to consider his special love to his chosen people; that we may have more enlarged views of his glory, and be more enlivened in admiring love and gratitude.—Whilst ungodly men, by their vain songs and corrupt conversation, inflame one another’s passions; Christians should edify each other, by singing the praises of God, and by “talking of all his wondrous “works:” and the New Testament furnishes us with more sublime and interesting subjects, than even the his-

PSALM CVI.

The Psalmist praises God, admires the happiness of his people, and prays to partake of it, 1—5. He recapitulates Israel's provocations, from their bondage in Egypt, to the time when they were settled in Ca-

tory of Israel's deliverance from Egypt, and settlement in the promised land, afforded that favoured nation. (*Notes, Eph. v. 15—20. Col. iii. 16, 17.*) Let believers then "glory in his holy name;" let sinners seek his face; and let us all remember the Redeemer's "marvellous works, his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth." The Lord has indeed remembered his covenant with Abraham, in raising up his promised "Seed, in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed:" and we Gentiles are in him become a chosen generation to shew forth his praises. (*Note, 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.*) Indeed true Christians have been hitherto but few in number, compared with the population of the globe; and they, strangers and pilgrims upon earth: yet a far better inheritance than that of Canaan is insured to them, by the oath and covenant of God. And if we have the unction of the Holy Spirit, no kings or people can do us harm; but our God will reprove the greatest of those who so much as attempt to injure us.—We greatly mistake, if we do not rank afflictions among our mercies: (17—19:) as they tend to prove the reality of our faith and love, to humble our pride, to wean us from the world, to quicken our prayers, to enlarge our experience of the Lord's faithfulness to his promises, to encourage our dependence, to bow our hearts into submission, and to soften them into compassion to our brethren. (*Notes, Rom. v. 3—5. 2 Cor. i. 1—7. iv. 13—18. Heb. xii. 4—11. Jam. i. 2—4. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7. iv. 12—16.*)—When the Lord calls, famines obey his word; and by withholding bread he breaks "the staff of life," to punish the iniquities of guilty nations, and to exercise the faith and patience of his people. But he will assuredly provide for those who trust in him: and he often previously makes arrangements, in order to supply those wants of which his servants had no foresight. Thus, in his foreknowledge of our lost estate, long before we had an existence, he appointed his beloved Son, whom Joseph typified, to be our Redeemer. In the fulness of time he appeared on earth in "the form of a servant;" and though perfectly holy, he was accused of grievous crimes, treated with the utmost insult, crucified, and laid in the grave; and by these sufferings he paid the ransom of our souls. At the appointed time the bands of death were loosed, and by his resurrection he was fully justified from all which had been laid to his charge: he was then exalted, by the right hand of the Father, to the mediatorial throne: all the treasures of grace and salvation are entirely at his disposal; and perishing sinners come to him, and are relieved from his inexhaustible stores. But with this example in view, we can expect nothing else, than humiliation and hardship, before honour and usefulness on earth, and complete felicity in heaven. We should then prepare for the cross, and for the hatred of the world: we should submit to the will of our God, and wait his time, and commit our all to his disposal: and in the depth of our distress, the case of Joseph also may teach us to hope for speedy and important changes in our circum-

stances, even in this present world. Nor is it improper to observe, that Jesus has power to bind kings and princes at his will; (*Notes, ii. 10—12. cxlix. 7—9. Rev. vi. 12—17;*) and that he alone can teach senators and statesmen true wisdom and sound policy.

*** PRAISE ye the LORD: ^a O give thanks unto the LORD; ^b for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.**

* Heb. *Hallelujah*.
cv. 45.
a c. 4, 5. cvii. 1.
cxviii. 1. cxxxvi.
1. 1 Chr. xvi. 34.
Ezra iii. 11. Jer.
xxxiii. 11. 1 Thea.
v. 18.
b ciii. 17. cxix. 68.
Matt. xix. 17.
Rom. v. 20, 21.

V. 23—45.

As the believer commonly is most prosperous in his soul, when under trials and afflictions; so the church has often flourished most in holiness, and increased in number, under oppression and persecution.—But the image and favour of God are sure to excite the enmity of wicked men; whose hearts will thus be "turned to hate his servants," and to join force with subtlety to destroy them: and that which ungodly counsellors think a *wise political measure*, often proves, on examination, to be a *most detestable project of the devil against the church of Christ*. Yet instruments shall be raised up for her good, suited to her emergencies: and multiplied plagues may be expected by obstinate persecutors, who persist in their rebellion under the gentler strokes of God's correcting rod. The whole creation is ready to rise up in arms against his enemies; and when he gives the word, every thing will concur to render them contemptible and miserable. He will fulfil his largest promises to his people, and make them a terror to those who hate them: and all the benefits conferred on Israel, as a nation, were only shadows of the "spiritual blessings with which he hath blessed us in Christ Jesus." Having redeemed us with his blood, enriched us from his treasures, restored our souls to health and holiness, and set us at liberty from Satan's bondage; he guides and guards us all the way; he satisfies our souls with the Bread of heaven, and with the Water of life from the Rock of salvation, and will bring us safe to our incorruptible inheritance.—But let it never for a moment be forgotten, that the Lord, by all he does for us, intends to teach, incline, and enable us, to "observe his statutes, and keep his laws;" and to shew forth his praise, first here on earth, and then in heaven for ever; and that he "re-deems" his servants "from all iniquity, and purifies them unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

NOTES.

PSALM CVI. V. 1. *Praise ye the Lord.*] *Hallelujah*. (cv. 45.) 'There is little doubt, ... but this is the title of the psalm, ... whereby the author excites them to acknowledge God's bounty to their ungrateful forefathers.' *Bp. Patrick*.—Many commentators affix a very late date to this psalm; supposing it to have been written during the Babylonish captivity, or even so long after, as the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes. (*Note, 47, 48.*) But the concluding verses, on which they ground that opinion, is found for substance in the psalm, which was used when David removed the ark to mount Zion. (*Note, 1 Chr. xvi. 34—*

^c xl. 5. cxxxix. 17, 19. cxiv. 3—12. Job v. 9. xxvi. 14. Rom. xi. 33. Eph. i. 19. iii. 18—21.

2 ^c Who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD? *who* can shew forth ^d all his praise?

^d Neh. ix. 5. ^e i. 1—3. lxxxiv. 11, 12. cxix. 1—3. Mark iii. 35. Luke vi. 47—49. xi. 28. John xiii. 17. xv. 14. Jam. i. 25. Rev. vii. 15. xxii. 14. cxix. 106. Is. lvi. 1, 2. Jer. xxii. 15, 16. Luke xi. 42. John xiv. 21—23.

3 ^e Blessed *are* they that ^f keep judgment, *and* he that ^g doeth righteousness ^h at all times.

4 ⁱ Remember me, O LORD, with the favour *that thou bearest unto* thy people: O ^k visit me with thy salvation;

5 That ^l I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may ^m rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that ⁿ I may glory with thine inheritance.

^g xv. 2. cxix. 44. Is. lxiv. 5. Ez. xviii. 21, 22. Luke i. 74, 75. Acts xxiv. 16. Rom. ii. 7. Gal. vi. 9. Rev. xxii. 14. ^h cxix. 20, 112. Deut. v. 29. xi. 1. ⁱ xxv. 7. cxix. 132. Neh. v. 19. xiii. 14. 22. 31. Luke xxiii. 42. ^k Luke i. 68, 69. Acts xv. 14. 1 cv. 6, 43. Deut. vii. 6. John xv. 16. Acts ix. 15. Eph. i. 4. 2 Thes. ii. 13. Jam. ii. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 9. Rev. xvii. 14. ^m xiv. 7. xlviii. 11. Is. xii. 6. xxxv. 10. lxvi. 10. Joel ii. 23. Zeph. iii. 14. Zech. ix. 9. Phil. iii. 3. ⁿ Is. xlv. 25. Eph. i. 18.

6 ¶ We have ^o sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have done wickedly.

7 ^p Our fathers understood not thy wonders in Egypt: ^q they remembered not ^r the multitude of thy mercies; but ^s provoked *him* at the sea, *even* at the Red sea.

8 Nevertheless ^t he saved them for his name's sake, ^u that he might make his mighty power to be known.

9 He ^v rebuked the Red sea also, and it was dried up: ^w so he led them through the depths as through the wilderness.

^o lxxxviii. 8. Lev. xxvii. 40. Num. xxxii. 14. Ezra ix. 6, 7. Neh. ix. 16. 32—34. Dan. ix. 5—8. Matt. xxiii. 32. Acts vii. 51, 52. ^p Deut. xxix. 4. xxxii. 28, 29. Prov. i. 22. Is. xlv. 18. Mark iv. 12. viii. 17—21. 2 Thes. ii. 10—12. ^q lxxxviii. 42. cv. 5. Deut. xv. 15. Eph. ii. 11. ^r 45. v. 7. li. 1. Is. lxiii. 7. Lam. iii. 32. ^s Ex. xiv. 11, 12. ^t cxliii. 11. Num. xiv. 13—16. Deut. xxxii. 26, 27. Josh. vii. 9. Jer. xiv. 7. 21. Ez. xx. 9. 14. 22. 44. Dan. ix. 17—19. ^u cxi. 6. Ex. ix. 16. xv. 6. Rom. ix. 17. ^v lxvi. 6. lxxxviii. 13, 52, 53. cxiv. 3—7. cxxxvi. 13—16. Ex. xiv. 21, 22. 27—29. Neh. ix. 11. Is. xi. 14—16. Nah. i. 4. Matt. viii. 26. ^w lxxxvii. 19, 20. Is. lxiii. 11—14.

36.)—Indeed this seems to be an appendix to the preceding psalm: for as *that* celebrated the mercies of God to Israel; (*Notes*, cv;) so *this* confesses and deplores the rebellions of Israel against God.—‘The prophet exhorteth the people to praise God for his benefits past, that thereby their minds may be strengthened against all present troubles and despair.’—*He is good*, &c.] *Notes*, cxxxvi. 1—3. *Ezra* iii. 8—11, v. 11. *Jer.* xxxiii. 10, 11, v. 11.

V. 2. ‘When ye glorify the LORD, exalt him as much as ye can: for even yet he will far exceed: and when ye exalt him, put forth all your strength, and be not weary; for ye can never go far enough. Who hath seen him, that he might tell us? and who can magnify him as he is?’ *Ecclesiasticus* xliii. 30, 31. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, *Neh.* ix. 5.)

V. 3. The Israelites had been put in possession of Canaan, by the immediate power of JEHOVAH, “that they might keep his statutes, and observe his laws:” (*Note*, cv. 43—45, v. 45;) and they would have been very happy, if they had thus “kept judgment, and done righteousness at all times;” that is, if they had persevered in attendance on the ordinances of God, and in obedience to his commandments. (*Notes*, i. 1—3. xxxii. 1, 2. lxxxi. 13—15. cxix. 3—5. *Matt.* v. 3—12. *Luke* xi. 27, 28.)—But though Israel, as a nation, had lost much of their prosperity by sin; yet every individual, who thus ordered his conduct, was and would be happy.—No mere man indeed obeys God perfectly; yet every true believer makes this his constant aim: nor shall we ever be perfectly happy till we are perfectly obedient; that is, till fully delivered from sin and all its consequences. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4, 5. The Psalmist well understood the difference between the nation of Israel, and the true Israelites found among them. (*Notes*, lxxiii. 1. *John* i. 47—51. *Rom.* ii. 25—29. ix. 6—9.) He was one of that nation, and shared all its external privileges: but his desire and prayer was, that he might be remembered with the favour or gracious forgiveness and acceptance, shewn to the true people of God, and visited with his salvation; and that he might see and share the blessings, the joy, and the triumphs, on earth and in heaven, of those who are indeed “a chosen generation, a holy nation,” and the Lord’s highly valued

inheritance. (*Note*, 1 *Pet.* ii. 9, 10.)—Many expositors understand these verses merely of the temporal felicity promised to Israel when obedient: but that was merely a shadow of the spiritual and eternal blessings, ensured to the elect of God; and scarcely any passage of the New Testament breathes out a more fervent longing after those spiritual blessings, than this does. “Remember me, O “Lord, with the favour,” which thou hast always shewn “to “thy people,” in whom thou hast delighted from the “foundation of the world, and on whom it is thy good “pleasure to confer a glorious kingdom. “O visit me “with thy salvation,” with which so many patriarchs, “prophets, and kings, have desired to be visited, the salvation of thy Christ...: “that I may see the good of thy “chosen,” their felicity in beholding thy countenance, “and living for ever in thy presence, “that I may rejoice “in the gladness of thy nation,” the unspeakable gladness of those who enter into “the joy of their Lord;” “and “glory with thine inheritance;” singing hallelujahs “before thine everlasting throne, in the Jerusalem which “is above.” *Bp. Horne.* (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, li. 12, 13. cxix. 41, 42, 81, 82. 123. 132. 166. *Gen.* xlix. 18. 1 *Sam.* ii. 1. *Is.* xlix. 5, 6. *Luke* ii. 25—32. iii. 4—6. 1 *Cor.* i. 26—31. *Phil.* iii. 1—7.)

V. 6. ‘We are no better than our forefathers; but ‘have offended after their example, by which we ought to ‘have been amended. We are guilty of many iniquities ‘against one another, and much impiety against thee.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, *Ezra*, ix. 6, 7. *Dan.* ix. 7—10.)

V. 7. The Israelites in general did not so understand the miracles wrought for them in Egypt, as to expect deliverance from the love and power of God; nor were they suitably impressed or affected by what they had heard and seen, when pursued by the Egyptians to the banks of the Red sea: so that they soon provoked the Lord by their unbelief and distrustful murmurs. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Ex.* xiv. 10—12.)

V. 8. ‘He gave them a new deliverance, that the ‘world might not imagine he wanted power to complete ‘what he had begun to do for them.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, *Ex.* xiv. 13—18. *Is.* lxiv. 1—3. *Ez.* xx. 7—9.)

V. 9—11. *Notes*, *Ex.* xiv. 19—31. xv. 1—21. *Is.* li. 9—11. lxiii. 7—14. *Heb.* xi. 29.

10 And ^a he saved them from the hand of him that hated *them*, and ^a redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.

11 And ^b the waters covered their enemies; there was not one of them left.

12 Then ^c believed they his words; they sang his praise.

13 ^d They ^e soon forgot his works; ^e they waited not for his counsel:

14 ^f But ^f lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, ^g and tempted God in the desert.

15 And ^h he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.

16 ¶ They ⁱ envied Moses also in the camp, and Aaron ^k the saint of the LORD.

17 ^l The earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the company of Abiram.

18 And ^m a fire was kindled in their company; the flame burned up the wicked.

19 ¶ They ⁿ made a calf in Horeb, and worshipped the molten image.

20 Thus ^o they changed their glory ^p into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.

21 They ^q forgot ^r God their Saviour, ^r which had done great things in Egypt;

22 ^s Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and ^t terrible things by the Red sea.

23 Therefore ^u he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses ^v his chosen ^w stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy *them*.

24 ¶ Yea, ^x they despised ^y the ^b pleasant land; ^c they believed not his word:

25 But ^d murmured in their tents, and ^e hearkened not unto the voice of the LORD.

26 ^f Therefore he ^g lifted up his hand against them, to overthrow them in the wilderness:

27 To ^h overthrow their seed also among the nations, and ⁱ to scatter them in the lands.

xiv. 22. Heb. iii. 7, 8. 15. f xcv. 11. Num. xiv. 28—35. Deut. i. 34, 35. Heb. iii. 11. g Gen. xiv. 22, 23. Deut. xxxiii. 40—42. Ez. xx. 15. Rev. x. 5, 6. h xlv. 11. Lev. xxvi. 33. Deut. iv. 26, 27. xxxviii. 37. 64, 65. xxxii. 26, 27. Ez. xx. 23.

V. 12—14. The faith of the Israelites was exactly the same, as is represented by “the seed sown upon stony ground,” and widely different from that which springs up in a broken and penitent heart. (Note, Matt. xiii. 20, 21.) They were surprised, gratified, and delighted, by their unexpected deliverance and the destruction of their enemies: and they experienced a mighty flow of natural joy and gratitude, such as may be observed in children when they are humoured. (Notes, Ex. xiv. 26—31.) But there was no humiliation for sin; no abiding apprehensions of the glorious perfections of JEHOVAH; no steady, habitual reliance on his power, wisdom, truth, and love; no submission to his will, or preparation for self-denying obedience: and therefore “in time of temptation they fell away,” having no root in themselves. “They made haste, they forgot his works.” (Marg.) “Within three days, they became impatient again.” Bp. Patrick. And when their wishes were thwarted, they murmured, rebelled, forgot the works of God, would not wait for his counsel; but “lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God” by their unbelief. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xv. 22—24. xvi. xvii. 1—7. 1 Cor. x. 6—12.)

V. 15. Instead of being benefited by the abundance of the quails sent them, the Israelites surfeited through excess, and multitudes died by disease. (Notes, Num. xi. 4—34.)—They “knew not what they asked,” or “what manner of spirit they were of:” and their sensual request was granted as a punishment, and proved injurious both to their health, and to their souls. (Notes, lxxviii. 17—31. 3 John 1—4.)

V. 16—18. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Num. xvi.—Saint of the Lord. (16) Or, “The holy priest of JEHOVAH;” whom he had chosen and sanctified to himself, as the type of our great High Priest. (Note, Deut. xxxiii. 8.)

V. 19—23. (Notes, Ex. xxxii—xxxiv.) ‘All idolaters renounce God to be their glory, when instead of him they worship any creature.’—‘It is to be hoped, that we shall never live to see a time, when the miracles of our redemption shall be forgotten;...and when the people shall solicit their teachers, to fabricate a new philosophical deity for them to worship, instead of the God of their ancestors.’ Bp. Horne.—The place, even Horeb, where the Israelites made and worshipped the calf; and all the preceding miracles of mercy to them, and judgment on their enemies, which they had witnessed, constituted so many highly aggravating circumstances of their base and ungrateful conduct. And by parity of reason, is not the idolatry of professed Christians, especially of such as have access to the oracles of God, proportionably more heinous and inexcusable, than that of poor benighted pagans?—the idolatry of papists, than that of the Chinese?—Moses stood before God, in behalf of Israel, by fervent prayer: but when he stood before Israel, protesting against their wickedness, and executing judgment on the idolaters; he was equally employed for the good of the nation, and his exertions were equally efficacious in preventing their destruction. (Notes, 28—31. Ex. xxxii. 7—14. 25—35. Deut. ix. 2—18. Neh. ix. 7—19. Ez. xvi. 15—22. xx. 11—18.)

V. 24—27. (Notes, Num. xiii. xiv.) ‘He solemnly

¹ Num. xxv. 1—3. 28 ¶ They ¹joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.

² cxv. 4—8. Jer. x. 8—10. 1 Cor. x. 19, 20. 29 Thus they provoked *him* to anger ¹with their inventions: and ^mthe plague brake in upon them.

³ 39. xcix. 8. Deut. xxxii. 16—21. Ec. vii. 29. Rom. i. 21—24. 30 Then ^astood up Phinehas, and executed judgment: and *so* the plague was stayed.

⁴ 1 Kings xviii. 40, 41. Jon. i. 12—15. 31 And ^othat was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.

⁵ Num. xxv. 11—13. Deut. xxiv. 13. Mark xiv. 3—9. 32 ¶ They ^pangered *him* also at the waters of strife, ^qso that it went ill with Moses for their sakes:

⁶ 1 Kings xviii. 40, 41. Jon. i. 12—15. 33 Because ^rthey provoked his spirit,

so that ^she spake unadvisedly with his lips.

34 ¶ They ^tdid not destroy the nations, ^uconcerning whom the LORD commanded them:

35 But ^vwere mingled among the heathen, ^yand learned their works.

36 And ^zthey served their idols; ^awhich were a snare unto them.

37 Yea, ^bthey sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto ^cdevils,

38 And ^dshed innocent blood, *even* the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto

v. 15, &c. xx. 28—32. a Ex. xxiii. 33. Deut. vii. 16. Josh. xxiii. 13. Judg. ii. 3. b Deut. xii. 30, 31. xviii. 10. 2 Kings xvi. 3. xvii. 17. xxi. 6. Is. lvii. 5. Jer. vii. 31. xxxii. 35. Ez. xvi. 20, 21. xx. 26. xxiii. 37. 47. c Lev. xvii. 7. Deut. xxxii. 17. 2 Chr. xi. 15. 1 Cor. x. 20. Rev. ix. 20. d Deut. xxi. 9. 2 Kings xxi. 16. xxiv. 4. Jer. ii. 34.

‘sware, that not one of that wicked generation should ever come there;’ (into Canaan;) ‘but all perish in the wilderness.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (Notes, xcv. 9—11. Num. xxxii. 6—15. Deut. i. 22—36. Heb. iii. 7—19. iv. 1—11. Jude 5—8, v. 5.)—The prophetic threatenings in the twenty-sixth of Leviticus, the twenty-eighth of Deuteronomy, and other parts of the books of Moses, which are fulfilling at this day, seem also to be referred to. ‘Discomfiture and dispersion were also threatened to their posterity, that is, if they should go on in the same spirit of rebellion, and fill up the measure of their fathers’ iniquities; which they have since done, and are accordingly “overthrown among the nations, and scattered among “the lands to this day.”’ *Bp. Horne.* (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Deut. iv. 25—28. xxviii. 65—67. Ez. xx. 5, 6, v. 6. 15. 23—28.)

V. 28—31. (Notes, Num. xxv.) The word (שָׁחַ) rendered “executed judgment,” means also “prayed,” and is so translated in the Book of common prayer: but the conduct of Phinehas, as recorded by Moses, shews that the translation here used is proper. He *interposed*, (for this seems the precise meaning of the word, in this connexion,) not merely by prayer; but as a magistrate, by punishing two most daring and audacious criminals.—The Septuagint render it, “He made atonement.”—‘This act declared his lively faith, and for his faith’s sake was accepted.’ (Notes, 19—23. Deut. iv. 3, 4. Josh. xxii. 17. Hos. ix. 9, 10. Rev. ii. 14—16.)—*Sacrifices of the dead.* (28) Notes, cxv. 3—8. Is. viii. 19. Jer. x. 9, 10. 1 Cor. x. 18—22. The word signifies dead men; and the idols of the gentiles were generally warriors, kings, or lawgivers, whom they deified, when dead, as the papists worship dead saints.

V. 32, 33. (Notes, Num. xx. 2—13. Deut. iii. 23—28.) “The wrath of man” found admission, and ‘that “worketh not the righteousness of God.” Thou, blessed Jesus, art the only perfect pattern of patience and love! O grant to all, but above all to ‘the pastors of thy flock, a “spirit” not easy to be “provoked,” and lips not hasty to “speak unadvisedly.”’ *Bp. Horne.*—‘If so notable a prophet of God escape not punishment, though others pro-

voked him to sin; how much more shall they be subject to God’s judgment, who cause God’s children to ‘sin.’ (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Num. xxvii. 12—17. Deut. i. 37.)

V. 34. God commissioned Israel to execute his righteous sentence of extermination on the Canaanites, who had filled up the measure of their crimes: and, while many in every age declaim against them for the supposed cruelty of their conduct in this respect; they are repeatedly in scripture charged with guilt, for sparing those whom God had doomed to death; and their crime was awfully punished by its consequences. (Notes, Num. xxxi. 2. 14—18. xxxiii. 51—56. Deut. vii. 1—4. Josh. vi. 21. xxiii. 13. Judg. ii. 1—5.)

V. 35—38. Marg. Ref.—Notes, lxxviii. 56—60. 2 Kings xvii. 7—17. Jer. ii. 10—13. 33—37. Ez. xvi. 15—22. xx. 25, 26. xxiii. 39.—Which were a snare, &c. (36) “They were to them for a snare.” The Canaanites, whom the Israelites spared, were a snare unto them, by tempting them to join in their abominable idolatries.—*Sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils.* (37) (Notes, Lev. xx. 2—5. Deut. xxxii. 17.) No instance is recorded, in which the Israelites were guilty of this most horrid crime, till long after the days of David; and this circumstance seems to favour the opinion, that the psalm was composed by some other person, during the captivity. The Israelites, however, in the days of the judges, might imitate the idolaters, among whom they lived, in this, as well as in their other abominations, though it is not expressly recorded. And no allusion is made, in any part of the psalm, to the rebellions and idolatries of the kings of Judah or of Israel, to the golden calves worshipped by the latter, or to the profanations of the temple by the former: yet these are prominent subjects, in the enumeration given by other inspired writers, of the crimes which provoked God to cast off Israel, and to punish Judah by the Babylonish captivity; and would scarcely have been passed over in entire silence, if the psalm had been written after those events.—Indeed, it would be wonderful, in that case, that nothing should be said, either about the temple, or Jerusalem, or any of the kings of Judah, good or bad.

e Num. xxxv. 32. the idols of Canaan: and *the land
 Is. i. 15. xxvi. was polluted with blood.
 21. Ez. vii. 23.
 xxii. 3.
 f Is. xxiv 5, 6. 39 Thus were they 'defiled with their
 lix. 3. Ez. xx. own works, and 'went a whoring with
 15. 20, 31. 43. h their own inventions.
 g Ex. xxxiv. 16. 40 Therefore was 'the wrath of the
 Lev. xvii. 7. xx. LORD kindled against his people, 'in-
 5, 6. Num. xv. somuch that he abhorred 'his own in-
 39. Jer. iii. 1, 2. heritance.
 Ez. xvi. 15, &c.
 xxiii. 3, &c.
 Hos. ix. 1. Rev. xvii. 1—6.
 h 29.
 i lxxviii. 59—62. 41 And 'm he gave them into the
 Judg. ii. 14. 20. hand of the heathen; and 'n they that
 iii. 8. hated them ruled over them.
 k Lev. xx. 23. 42 Their enemies also oppressed
 Deut. xxxii. 19. them, and they were brought into sub-
 Zech. xi. 8. jection under their hand.
 l lxxiv. 1, 2. Deut. ix. 29. 43 ° Many times did he deliver them;
 m Deut. xxxii. 30. but they provoked him 'p with their
 Judg. ii. 14. iii. 8. 29. 33. 48.
 8. 12. iv. 1, 2. vi. 1—6. x. 7. &c. Neh. ix. 27, &c.
 n Deut. xxxviii. 25. 29. 33. 48.
 o Judg. ii. 16—18. 1 Sam. xii. 9—11. Neh. ix. 27, 28.
 p 29. i. l. lxxxii. 12.

V. 39. Notes, Ex. xxxiv. 11—17. Lev. xvii. 3—7. xx. 2—6. Jer. iii. 1—3. Rev. xvii. 1—6.

V. 40—45. The history contained in the book of Judges and in the former part of the first book of Samuel; and especially those parts of it which are referred to in the margin, form a full comment on these verses. (Notes, Lev. xxvi. 11, 12. Deut. xxxii. 19, 20. Zech. xi. 7—9.) 'This is 'an epitome of the history of the Israelites. ...Transgres- 'sions brought on chastisements, chastisements produced 'repentance, and repentance obtained mercy. For their 'last and grand rebellion against the Son of God, and 'their king Messiah, whom they murdered, the sore 'burden of heaven's displeasure hath rested upon the 'nation these seventeen hundred years: but their eyes are 'not yet opened; their hearts have not hitherto relented.' Bp. Horne. (Notes, Lev. xxvi. 40—45. Deut. iv. 29—31. xxx. 1—10. Zech. xii. 9—14.)

V. 46. Had the several nations, into whose hands God successively sold Israel for their sins, determined on extirpating the nation, as they had the Canaanites; there was, in many instances, nothing of external difficulty sufficient to hinder them: but the Lord inclined the hearts of the conquerors to compassionate their slaves and captives, and thus the effects of their vehement resentments were prevented. The Israelites, being pitied, were only impoverished and enslaved, and not destroyed. (Notes, Ezra vi. 22. vii. 27, 28. Jer. xlii. 10—12.)

V. 47, 48. (Note, 1 Chr. xvi. 34—36.) If David did not write this psalm, but it was composed by some prophet during the captivity; the writer took this passage from David's psalm, and applied it to the state of the Jews in his own time.—Indeed the words are very applicable to the present condition of the Jews; and will doubtless be used by them, when the veil shall be taken from their hearts, and they shall turn to the Lord.—Triumph, &c. (47) "Glory in thy praise:" 1 Chr. xvi. 35. The original word is the same in both places.—Blessed be, &c. (48) Notes, xli. 11—13, v. 13. lxxii. 17—19. lxxxix. 52. Neh. ix. 5. Matt. vi. 13.—'Let the great LORD of all the 'world who hath been so gracious unto Israel, as to choose 'them for his own peculiar people, be most heartily

counsel; and were *brought low for their iniquity.

44 Nevertheless, 'he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry;

45 'And he remembered for them his covenant, and 'repented according to 'the multitude of his mercies.

46 "He made them also to be pitied of all those that carried them captives

47 'Save us, O LORD our God, and 'gather us from among the heathen, 'to give thanks unto thy holy name, and to triumph in thy praise.

48 °Blessed be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen.

† Praise ye the LORD.

z cvii. 1—3. 2 Cor. ii. 14. Rev. vii. 10—12. a xli. 13. lxxii. 18, 19. lxxxix. 52
 1 Chr. xxix. 10. 1 Cor. xiv. 16. † Heb. Hallelujah. 1. cv. 45. marg.

Or, impoverished, or weakened.
 Judg. v. 8. vi. 5, 6. 1 Sam. iii. 19—22.
 q Judg. ii. 18. vi. 6—10. x. 10—16. 1 Sam. vii. 8—12. 2 Kings xiv. 26, 27.
 r cv. 8. Lev. xxvi. 40—42. 2 Kings xiii. 23. Luke i. 71, 72.
 s xc. 13. cxxxv. 14. Ex. xxxii. 14. Deut. xxxii. 36. Judg. ii. 18. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16. Hos. xi. 8. Am. vii. 3. 6.
 t li. 1. lxix. 16. Is. lxiii. 7. Lam. iii. 32.
 u 1 Kings viii. 50. Ezra ix. 9. Jer. xv. 11. xlii. 12.
 x xiv. 7. cxxvi. 1—4. 1 Chr. xvi. 35, 36.
 y Jer. xxxii. 37—41. Ez. xxxvii. 24—28. xxxvii. 21—28. xxxix. 25—29.

'blessed and praised. Let all generations bless him, as 'long as the world shall last, and unto all eternity: and 'let all his people concur in these desires, and wish it 'may be so; let them all praise the LORD, and desire that 'he may be ever praised.' Bp. Patrick. This Psalm also concludes with HALLELUJAH.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—27

None of our sins or sufferings should prevent our ascribing glory and praise to the Lord, and thanking him for his undeserved and everlasting goodness and mercy: indeed the more unworthy we are, the more admirable is his kindness, in continuing to us any of our comforts and hopes. "But who can utter the mighty acts of the LORD, "or shew forth all his praise?" This as much exceeds our ability, as it does, to fulfil the whole of his righteous law without defect or failure: yet those, who depend on the Redeemer's righteousness, will copy the example of his persevering obedience, and endeavour, both by word and deed, to shew forth his praises as they are able. These are indeed a happy people; for sin is the only cause of all the misery in the universe: how absurd then is it for men to amuse themselves with the notion of a religion, which they fancy will save and bless them, without rendering them obedient to the will of God!—Multitudes indeed abuse their outward privileges, and many professed Christians run into extravagant sentiments, and inconsistent practices: yet God has a people in every age, who enjoy his favour, and experience the power and comfort of his salvation; whom he has chosen to himself, and to whom he will do good; who are holy and happy under his government and protection; and for whom gladness, and victory, and eternal glory are reserved. Let us pray, earnestly and constantly, to be thus remembered and distinguished, and to participate their privileges and felicity. We shall not be excluded from this favour, though "we "have sinned with our fathers and done very wickedly," if indeed we are truly humbled for our iniquities.—But when man is left to himself, no miracles, mercies, warnings, or judgments, will, deeply and durably, influence

PSALM CVII.

Exhortations to praise God, for redemption from captivity, and guidance in perilous journeys to a safe

his heart to trust and serve the Lord. We have then no right to charge our misery upon the sins of our fathers, seeing we have copied and perhaps exceeded them: rather we should be humbled to reflect how we arise, one generation after another, "an increase of sinful men, to provoke the LORD to anger:" so that, if he did not "save us for his own name's sake," and to the praise of his glorious power and grace, we should all perish without remedy.—In reviewing our past lives, we shall often find that the *timing* of our rebellions has exceedingly aggravated the guilt of them. We have perhaps distrusted the Lord, after having just before experienced his merciful interpositions in our favour. When remarkable deliverances have excited a transient joy and gratitude; we have speedily forgotten all, and relapsed into murmurs and disobedience! Under distress of conscience, we have perhaps been ready to say to the Lord, 'Save our souls, and deal with us in all other things as thou pleasest:' yet, it may be, ere long we have grown impatient of poverty and hardship, have lusted after some worldly indulgence, and tempted instead of trusting Providence; and thus have we provoked God to send "leanness into our souls," or to inflict severe corrections upon us, in order to bring us to a sense of our folly. We cannot but know, that we have often given way to envy, ambition, and self-preference: and instead of sitting down quietly "in the lowest place" of his church, (which is far too good for such vile sinners,) and rejoicing in the gifts and usefulness of his saints and ministers; we have been secretly repining, or openly rivalling or censuring them. So that even the believer will see abundant cause to say, "It is of the Lord's mercies that I am not consumed," after the example of Korah and his company. Often have we, forgetful of the terrors of mount Sinai, and even of the scene exhibited on mount Calvary, and of our marvellous deliverance from the hand of our enemy, been setting up idols in our hearts, and cleaving to some forbidden object: so that if a greater than "Moses had not stood in the breach, to turn away the anger of the LORD;" we should have provoked him to destroy us. Even though we have not entirely disbelieved the word of God, or despised the heavenly inheritance; yet the feebleness of our desires, and the weakness of our faith, and our eagerness about worldly things, have frequently argued a very perverse, ungrateful, and carnal frame of spirit. In short we have put the patience of the Lord himself to trial, and no other could have borne with us; we have brought upon ourselves many rebukes and corrections; we have continual reason to join humiliation with our gratitude: and though the Lord has many a time delivered us, and renewed our comforts, yet we have again provoked him, and have been brought low for our iniquity. Still, however, mercy has prevailed; he has heard our prayers, remembered his covenant, and spared us for his name's sake.

V. 28—48.

If the *real* Christian's review of his past conduct affords

habitation, 1—9: for deliverance from prison, 10—16: for recovery from sickness, 17—22: for preservation when in imminent danger of shipwreck, 23—32: and for the care of his providence over the affairs of men, 33—43.

so much ground for humiliation, the case of *professed* Christians is still worse. A great part of the visible church has forgotten God our Saviour, and turned aside to the worship of molten images, saints, and angels; changing, like Israel, their "glory into the similitude" of their fellow-creatures. Great multitudes seem desirous of discarding the God and Saviour of the Bible, and substituting in his place a *philosophical deity*, not indeed the work of their own hands, but the creature of their own imaginations, and no more a just resemblance of JEHOVAH, than the golden calf was. Among those who do not adopt such sentiments, we find conformity to the world, in its vainest, if not most criminal practices; the indulgence, instead of the mortification, of every carnal lust; nay, an imitation of the lewdness, excesses, extortions, oppressions, and cruelties of the heathen, even to the polluting of the lands where they live, with the blood of great numbers sacrificed to their avarice. And many train up their children in vanity and vice, and in contempt of every thing sacred; as if they meant that they should be devoted to Satan, and were determined to murder their precious souls. While nations professing Christianity are openly and generally guilty of such enormities, no wonder that the wrath of the Lord is kindled against them; and we may expect that, after repeated deliverances, he will bring them very low for their iniquities: and except a general and deep repentance, and "works meet for repentance," intervene, there can be no prospect but of increasing calamities and confusion. It would be well, if those, who fill up the important stations of legislators and magistrates, were inspired with the intrepid zeal of Phinehas, to execute judgment upon daring criminals: this would be "accounted to them for righteousness" by the Judge of the world, however it were blamed by the criminals or their abettors. Every one of us however, should imitate Moses, by "standing in the breach to turn away the wrath" of God from a guilty land; both by our earnest and persevering prayers, and by our zealous endeavours to promote reformation, and the revival of true religion, in our several circles. But it behoves us, in our zeal against sin and sinners, to watch over our own passions and expressions; lest we speak unadvisedly with our lips, and it should go ill with us also for their sakes.—Our general duty is, however, the most pleasant and the safest: and when many are left in any church or nation, who attend to the duties of their several stations; there remains a hope that God will turn away his wrath, and not destroy them. Let us then beseech him to separate his church, and to distinguish his professed people, from the heathen, by his sanctifying grace; and to unite them in love that they may "give thanks unto his holy name, and triumph in his praise." Let us beseech him to bring again into his church the poor dispersed Jews: let us bless his name for our peculiar mercies, and desire that our God may be universally and everlastingly praised; and that all the people of the earth may say, "Amen; Hallelujah."

O ^a Give thanks unto the LORD, for ^b he is ^c good: ^e for his mercy endureth for ever.

2 Let ^d the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he hath redeemed ^e from the hand of the enemy;

3 And ^f gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and ^g from the south.

4 They ^h wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in.

5 ⁱ Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them.

6 Then ^j they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and ^k he delivered them out of their distresses.

7 And ^l he led them forth by the right way, ^m that they might go to a city of habitation.

8 ⁿ Oh, that men would ^o praise the LORD for his goodness, and for ^p his wonderful works to the children of men!

9 For ^q he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.

10 ¶ Such ^r as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, ^s being ^t bound in affliction and iron;

11 Because ^u they rebelled against the words of God, and ^v contemned the counsel of the most High:

12 Therefore ^w he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, ^x and there was none to help.

13 Then ^y they cried unto the LORD

right way, ^m that they might go to a city of habitation.

right way, ^m that they might go to a city of habitation.

NOTES.

PSALM CVII. V. 1—7. (Note, cxxxvi. 1—3.) ‘Eternal mercy is the theme here proposed; and they who have tasted its sweets, are invited to join in setting forth its praises. The members of the Christian church are now, in the most...emphatical sense of the words, “the redeemed of JEHOVAH, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy, and gathered them,” by the gospel, out of all lands.’ *Bp. Horne*.—It is probable that this Psalm was composed by David, if he indeed were the author of the two preceding psalms: as those relate to the Lord’s dealings with Israel; and this calls our attention to his providential care of mankind in general. But, while we primarily notice the *literal* sense; we shall also perceive, that the instances, which are selected, are pictures, or similitudes, of the blessings pertaining to salvation.—There seems in these verses some reference to the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, their wanderings in the desert, and their settlement in Canaan; yet they do not exactly or exclusively apply to these events. The Israelites were not gathered out of the lands, from the east, west, north, and south: but they were redeemed from the power of Pharaoh; and wandered in the wilderness, and hungered and thirsted, and were led far round, yet in a right way. (Notes, Deut. viii. 2—5.) For a long time, they “found no city to dwell in:” (Note, Num. xiv. 27—30:) at length they were settled in a land, where cities were ready prepared for them, and where they were abundantly satisfied with every earthly blessing.—The case of travellers in those countries seems also referred to. A number of people, collected from all quarters, march together through the sandy deserts; where they are liable to be assaulted by robbers and plunderers, and are in danger of losing their way, or of perishing by hunger and thirst. But when they are in trouble, and call upon the Lord, he delivers them from

their enemies and dangers, and guides them, in his providence, to the cities which they mean to inhabit.—The words likewise exactly describe the case of those, whom the Lord has *redeemed* from the bondage of Satan, and collected from all parts of the earth; who pass through the world as a perilous and dreary wilderness: who are often ready to faint through troubles, fears, and temptations; who learn to call upon the Lord in every danger and difficulty, and are guarded, fed, and refreshed, till they at length arrive at that city, which the Lord has prepared for their habitation; where their longing souls will be for ever satisfied with his goodness.—Perhaps the recovery of the Jews from their dispersions was also predicted; as the conclusion of the foregoing Psalm seems peculiarly applicable to their present condition. (*Marg. Ref.*—Note, cvi. 47, 48.)

V. 8, 9. “Let them praise the Lord for his goodness.” The kindness and compassion of God to the sons of fallen Adam, in abundantly supplying their temporal wants, demands the return of admiring praise and thanksgiving: but his mercy, in providing for the spiritual wants of perishing sinners, and thus “satisfying the longing soul, and “filling the hungry soul with goodness,” which shall endure for ever in full perfection, is most astonishing; and to eternity every one of the redeemed, with all his powers, will celebrate his goodness of the Lord, and his wonderful works to the sons of Adam. (Notes, xxxiv. 9, 10. xxxvi. 5—9. civ. 27—30. Luke i. 46—55.) Our translation is not strictly literal; yet it gives the evident sense of the passage; and it has a peculiar animation, as repeated after every instance of the divine goodness and mercy. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10—16. The Psalmist next selected the case of *prisoners delivered from their dreary cells*. We are led to conceive of persons shut up in a dark and unwholesome dungeon, barricadoed on every side by gates of brass and bars

in their trouble, *and* he saved them out of their distresses.

14 He ^a brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.

15 Oh, ^c that *men* would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

16 For ^d he hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder.

17 ¶ ^e Fools, ^f because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.

18 Their soul ^g abhorreth all manner

of meat; and ^h they draw near unto the gates of death.

19 Then ⁱ they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saveth them out of their distresses.

20 He ^k sent his word and ^l healed them, and ^m delivered *them* from their destructions.

21 Oh, ⁿ that *men* would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

22 And let them ^o sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and ^p declare his works with ^q rejoicing

23 ¶ They that ^r go down to the

of iron, and loaded with galling fetters; condemned to die, and hourly expecting to be led to execution. This they are supposed to have merited by their crimes; having both violated the laws of man, and rebelled against the word of God. In this deplorable condition, bowed down with pain and anguish of spirit, they are represented as praying to the Lord, and, by his power over the hearts and affairs of men, marvellously set at liberty. Multitudes, through successive generations, have doubtless experienced such an unmerited and unexpected escape: and the deliverance of the Jews from their abject slavery in Egypt, and their captivity in Babylon, must occur to the mind of the attentive reader, with many particular instances recorded in scripture. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 2 Kings xxv. 27—30. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11—19.*)—But it is also a shadow of the sinner's deliverance from a far worse imprisonment. By rebellion against God, men are brought under the condemnation of his holy law; and Satan, by means of their lusts, has obtained dominion over them, and holds them fast in the most miserable bondage. This the awakened sinner discovers, and becomes sensible of his guilt, misery, and danger: and, having struggled hard, but in vain, for deliverance, he finds there is no help for him but in the mercy and grace of God. For this he seeks by earnest, persevering prayer; and thus he receives liberty and peace. (*Notes, Is. xlix. 9—13. lii. 2, 3. lxi. 1—3. Zech. ix. 11, 12. Luke iv. 16—22. Acts xxvi. 16—18.*)—Let us revert to the poor prisoner before described; if a free pardon be sent him, his chains are soon knocked off; the gates and bars of iron and brass fly open; the jailor has no longer power to detain him; the gloom, horror, and despair of the dungeon are exchanged, for the cheerful light of the sun and the wholesome air; the company of malefactors, the presence of the keeper, the rattling of chains, the expectation of the executioner with the implements of death, and the squalid attire of a prison, are changed for his own house, the society and congratulations of his friends and relatives, and all the comforts of liberty. All this is in a measure the case with the true Christian in this world: but at the resurrection, when the gates of the grave shall be thrown open, and sin and death shall be finally done with, his deliverance and his gratitude will together be perfected. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, 8, 9.*)

V. 17—22. The next case selected is that of *recovery from sickness*, especially when the sickness has been the effect of licentiousness, excess, or iniquity: for though all diseases spring from sin, yet some are more immediately the effect of men's personal transgressions. (*Note, John v. 10—14.*) The righteous providence of God has connected several loathsome and dreadful diseases, with different kinds of excessive or forbidden gratifications; yet men rush forward without regard to consequences: thus, "fools, because of their transgression ... are afflicted." Loss of strength and of appetite are attended with excessive pain, and death presents itself before their affrighted minds: then the most profane will sometimes cry unto the Lord; and though their prayer is often the mere instinctive voice of distress, and only means, "Torment me not:" yet he frequently hears them, and unexpectedly restores their health and strength. (*Notes, Job xxxiii. 19—30.*)—Probably, Christ by his powerful word healed some of this description when he was on earth: and all his miracles were emblematic of his healing the far worse diseases of our souls. We are, as fallen creatures, prone to pride, ambition, envy, malice, covetousness, and sensual lusts: but most men exceedingly increase these fatal distempers by habits of indulgence. The convinced sinner knows that these maladies must terminate in hopeless misery, unless cured; and he finds by experience, that he can increase, but cannot remedy them: he even feels his carnal mind and heart recoil at those things, which should be the nourishment of his soul, and he often apprehends that his destruction is inevitable. But he fervently and importunately cries unto the Lord in this distressing emergency, and by his word and Spirit his soul is gradually restored to health and holiness.—The original is future, "He will save, &c." implying an encouragement to all, in every age and land, who feel their misery, to cry unto God for help; and a call on those who are helped, to bless God for his mercies, and to excite others to seek the same blessings. (*Note, 8, 9.*)—*Sacrifice, &c.* (22) *Marg. Ref.—Notes, l. 22, 23, v. 23. cxvi. 17—19. Heb. xiii. 15, 16.*

V. 23—30. The case of *mariners* is next dwelt on. They transact their business upon the unstable and tempestuous ocean; and there witness scenes, and experience deliverances, of which others can scarcely form a concep-

sea in ships, that do business in great waters ;

24 These see the works of the LORD, and ^rhis wonders in the deep.

25 For ^s he commandeth, and ^traiseth the stormy wind, which ^ulifteth up the waves thereof.

26 They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths ; their soul is melted because of trouble.

27 They reel to and fro, and ^xstagger like a drunken man, ^yand ^zare at their wits' end.

28 Then ^athey cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses.

29 He ^bmaketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.

30 Then are they glad because they

be quiet ; so ^b he bringeth them unto their desired haven.

31 ^cOh, that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* ^dhis wonderful works to the children of men !

32 Let them ^eexalt him also ^fin the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

33 ¶ He ^gturneth rivers into a wilderness, and ^hthe water-springs into dry ground ;

34 ⁱA fruitful land into ^jbarrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

35 He ^kturneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into water-springs.

36 And ^lthere he maketh the hun-

^b John vi. 21.
^c 8. 15. 21. ciii. 2.
cv. 1. Hos. ii. 8.
Jon. i. 16. ii. 9.
Mic. vi. 4. 5.
Rom. i. 20. 21.
2 Tim. iii. 2.
Heb. xiii. 15.
^d lxxi. 17. lxxii.
18. 19. lxxvii. 11.
14. cv. 2. Rev.
xv. 3.
^e xviii. 46. xlvii.
10. xcix. 5. 9.
Ex. xv. 2. Is.
xii. 4. xxv. 1.
^f xxii. 22. 25. xl.
9. 10. cxi. 1.
cxix. 46. Acts
iv. 8—12.
^g 1 Kings xvii. 1
Is. xlii. 19—21
xix. 5—16
xxxiv. 9. 10
xlii. 15. xlv. 27.
1. 2. Ez. xxx. 12.
Joel i. 20. Nah.
i. 4. Zeph. ii. 9.
13.
^h 1 Kings xviii. 5.
Jer. xiv. 3. Am.
iv. 7. 8.
ⁱ Gen. xiii. 10. 13.
xix. 25. Deut.
xxix. 23—28. Is.
xxxii. 13—16.
^j Heb. *saltiness*.
Gen. xiv. 3. Ez.
xlvii. 11.
^k cxiv. 8. Num.
1 cxlvi. 7. Luke i. 53.
Ez. xlvii. 6—12.

tion. When, at the command of that God, whom the winds and waves obey, a storm arises ; their situation becomes most tremendous, and it seems every moment as if the vessel must be swallowed up by the raging billows. In this perilous situation, the most courageous are often dismayed : they are tossed about by the violent motion of the vessel, as if they staggered through drunkenness ; and, being baffled in all their efforts, “all their wisdom is swallowed up,” (*marg.*) or has totally exhausted itself ; and the most skilful and experienced are at a loss what further to do, to escape impending death. But when they call upon the Lord in their distress, they are often rescued, as from the very jaws of destruction, by the ceasing of the storm, or by some unexpected way of escape ; and their terror is succeeded by proportionable gladness, when they arrive safe at their destined and much desired harbour. (*Notes, Jon. i. 4—16. Matt. viii. 23—27. Acts xxvii. 14—44.*)—This too may be a picture or emblem of those terrors and that distress of conscience, which many experience, when they first apply their minds to religion : and of those deep scenes of trouble and temptation, which some, far more than others, pass through, in their subsequent course ; when, like Job, they seem to be set up as marks, at which Satan is permitted to shoot all his fiery darts ; and by every suggestion to fill them with hard thoughts of God, and desperate conclusions concerning themselves. These are, like the mariner, exposed to tempests unknown to others, and are sometimes almost ‘at their wits’ end ;’ their wisdom is swallowed up, and their hearts and hope seem entirely to fail them : yet in answer to their humble and earnest cries, the Lord turns their storms into a calm, and causes their trials to terminate in gladness and praise. (*Notes, Job iii. 1. ix. 14—21. P. O. 22—35.*)—‘The church is a ship ; the world is a sea ; temptations, persecutions, and afflictions are the waves of it ; “the prince of the power of the air,” is the stormy wind which raises them ; and heaven is the only port of rest and security. Often, during the voyage, for our

‘punishment, or our trial, God permitteth us to be thus assaulted. The succession and the violence of our troubles, the elevations and depressions of mind and fortune, ... and our utter inability to help ourselves, are finely represented by the multitude and impetuosity of the waves, the tossings and agitations of the vessel, the confusion, terror, and distress among the sailors. ... With the earnestness of affrighted mariners ... we should cry unto the Lord Jesus in our trouble ; we should as it were awake him, like the disciples, with repetitions of “Lord, save us, we perish.” Then will he arise, and rebuke the authors of our tribulation, saying unto them, “Peace, be still.” ... He will make the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof shall be still : and at length he will bring us, in peace, joy, and gladness, to “our desired haven,” there to exalt him in the congregation of his chosen, and praise him in the great assembly of saints and angels. This is the consummation so devoutly ... requested by the church for all her children, at the time of their baptism, that they ‘being delivered from God’s wrath, may be received into the Ark of Christ’s church ; and being steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally they may come to the land of everlasting life.’”

Bp. Horne.

V. 31, 32. ‘Oh, that they, who are thus unexpectedly preserved, would never forget to make their thankful acknowledgments to the LORD for this singular kindness ; but every where proclaim what wonders he hath done for them ! Let them magnify his power and goodness in the greatest assemblies of the people, especially in his temple. Let them praise him in the supreme court of the kingdom ; that judges and governors may be excited to make him their Trust and Confidence.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, xxii. 22—24. xl. 9, 10. cxix. 46. cxxxviii. 4, 5. Matt. x. 16—18.*)

V. 33—43. The righteous Lord also effects changes, as he pleases, in the face of nature and the affairs of na-

^m 7 Acts xvii. 26. ⁿ 1a. xxxvii. 30. ^{Jer.} xxix. 5. ^{xxxii.} 5. ^{Ez.} xxviii. 26. ^{Am.} ix. 13—15. ^o lxx. 9—13. ^{Gen.} xxvi. 12. ^{Joel} i. 10—12. ^{Hag.} i. 5, 6, 10, 11. ^{ii.} 16—19. ^{Zech.} viii. 12. ^{Acts} xiv. 17. ^{1 Cor.} iii. 7. ^{2 Cor.} ix. 10. ^p cxxviii. 1—6. ^{Gen.} i. 28. ^{ix.} 1. ^{xii.} 2. ^{xvii.} 16, 20. ^{Ex.} i. 7. ^{Deut.} xxviii. 4. ^{11.} xxx. 9. ^{Jer.} xxx. 19. ^{Ez.} xxxvii. 26. ^q cxlv. 13, 14. ^{Gen.} xxx. 43. ^{xxxii.} 9. ^{Ex.} ix. 3—7. ^{xii.} 38. ^{Deut.} vii. 14. ^{Prov.} x. 22. ^r xxx. 6, 7. ^{Gen.} xlv. 11. ^{Ruth} i. 20, 21. ^{1 Sam.} ii. 5—7. ^{2 Kings} iv. 8. ^{viii.} 3. ^{Job} i. 10—17. ^s Ex. i. 13, 14. ^{ii.} 23, 24. ^{Judg.} vi. 3—6. ^{2 Kings} x. 32. ^{xii.} 7, 22. ^{xiv.} 26. ^{2 Chr.} xv. 5, 6. ^{Jer.} li. 33, 34. ^t Job xii. 21. ^{Is.} xxiii. 8, 9. ^u lxxviii. 66. ^{Ex.} viii. 3. ^{17.} 24. ^{Josh.} x. 24—26. ^{Judg.} i. 6, 7. ^{iv.} 21. ^{1 Sam.} v. 9. ^{vi.} 4. ^{1 Kings} xxi. 19. ^{2 Kings} ix. 35—37. ^{Dan.} iv. 33. ^{v.} 5, 6. ^{18—30.} Acts xii. 23. ^{Rev.} xix. 18.

gry to dwell, that they may prepare
a city for habitation;

37 And ⁿ sow the fields, and plant
vineyards, ^o which may yield fruits of
increase.

38 ^p He blesseth them also, so that
they are multiplied greatly; and ^q suf-
fereth not their cattle to decrease.

39 Again, ^r they are minished and
brought low, through ^s oppression, af-
fliction, and sorrow.

40 He ^t poureth ^u contempt upon

princes, and ^x causeth them to wander
in the ^y wilderness, *where there is no*
way.

41 Yet ^z setteth he the poor on high
[†] from affliction, and [‡] maketh *him* fa-
milies like a flock.

42 The [†] righteous shall see *it*, and
rejoice; and all [‡] iniquity shall stop
her mouth.

43 Whoso [†] is wise, and will ob-
serve these *things*, even [‡] they shall
understand the loving-kindness of the
LORD.

x. 11. Rom. iii. 19. c xxviii. 5. lxiv. 9 Is. v. 12. Jer. ix. 12. Dar. x. 12.
Hos. xiv. 9. d l. 23. Jer. ix. 24. Eph. iii. 18, 19.

tions; drying up rivers, and turning well-watered, fertile countries into barren deserts, for the wickedness of the inhabitants. Thus Canaan itself is now remarkable for its sterility. (Note, Deut. xxix. 21—25.)—On the contrary, other regions, which were barren and uncultivated, in the course of his providence become most fruitful and flourishing; where colonies of destitute persons build cities, cultivate the lands, and are blessed and increased exceedingly. (Note, 1—7.)—The casting of the Jews out of the church, and the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles, answer to this picture. The well-watered and fruitful soil is become dry and barren; while the wilderness is filled with pools of water and wells of salvation. (Notes, Is. xxiv. 13—16. xxx. 23—25. xxxii. 15—20. xxxv. 1, 2. 5—7. xli. 17—20. xliii. 14—21. xlv. 3—5. lv. 12, 13.) The gospel flourished for a time exceedingly among the Gentiles: but it has been brought low and minished, in different places, through oppression and persecution, and internal corruptions or divisions. Yet contempt has repeatedly been poured upon persecuting princes; and even upon such as, professing friendship, have attempted to “lord it over God’s heritage;” so that they have been bewildered and infatuated in their counsels, like men who have lost their way: (Notes, 2 Kings iii. 7—14. Is. xxiii. 8, 9:) while the poor and persecuted church of God has been revived from the dust, and again increased and prospered. This will be more eminently the case in future times, when the righteous will see it and rejoice, and all iniquity will be finally silenced. (Notes, Rom. ii. 4—6. iii. 19, 20.) In the mean while, the wise will notice these varied dispensations of Providence, and will learn to walk in those ways, in which the loving-kindness of the Lord may be understood and experienced. (Notes, lxiv. 7—9. Hos. xiv. 9.)—“A truly “wise” person will treasure up in ‘his heart the contents of this most instructive and delightful psalm. By so doing, he will fully “understand” ‘... the weakness and wretchedness of man, and the power ‘and “loving-kindness” of God; who, not for our merits, ‘but for his mercy-sake, dispelleth our ignorance, breaketh ‘off our sins, healeth our infirmities, preserveth us in ‘temptations, placeth us in the church, enricheth us with ‘his grace, sheltereth us from persecution, blesseth us in ‘time, and will crown us in eternity.’ Bp Horne.—Barrenness. (34) “Saltiness.” Marg. (Notes, Gen. xiv. 1—3. Deut. xxix. 21—25. Ez. xlvii. 11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

Wherever we turn our thoughts, we perceive the effects of the Lord’s goodness and mercy, which should excite our grateful praises: but the redeemed alone will unfeignedly thank him even for providential benefits.—The Bible instructs us, and faith will enable us, to perceive the hand of God in those events, which unbelief ascribes to chance, to second causes, or subordinate agents. (Note, Luke x. 30—37, end.) Whatever means or instruments are employed, the Lord is the great Agent. We should therefore mark his operation in the ordinary occurrences of life, and render him thanks for every instance of his kindness, to us and to our connexions.—When we have been preserved or delivered from hostile invasions, and the assaults of robbers and assassins; when we are brought safe home from long or perilous journeys; when provided with things needful for our bodies, placed in convenient habitations, or enjoying domestick comforts; how pleasant and right is it, that we should “praise the LORD for his goodness, “and for his wonderful works” to us, the sinful children of fallen Adam! But alas! we are most apt to forget the hand of God, when every thing corresponds to our wishes: and therefore he brings us into trouble and danger, that we may feel our dependence, and call upon him for deliverance; and that, when our desires are granted, we may either render him our tribute of praise, or be left inexcusable in our neglect.

V. 10—22.

Sin is always to be considered as the source of all our troubles; and we might justly be left to struggle with them, or to sink under them, without help from that God, against whom we have rebelled, and whose counsel we have rejected. But there are many afflictions, which are the immediate consequences of men’s crimes. Such are especially, in most instances, the horrors of a prison, and the prospect of an ignominious death. Yet alas! how many are in this most dreadful situation, brought down with anguish of heart, and having none to help them! And when such persons unexpectedly obtain liberty and all its comforts, how should they praise the Lord for his goodness to them! Yet it is but seldom that their sorrows and terrors are productive of genuine humiliation before God, and fervent prayer unto him: and therefore they com-

PSALM CVIII.

David earnestly praises God, 1—5. He fervently

monly return to their former courses, and perish at last more inexcusable and unpitied.—Thus also infatuated multitudes entail upon themselves months and years of disease and pain, by moments of licentious indulgence: and if, in answer to their cries of distress or prayer of faith, the Lord bring them back from the gates of death, surely they should praise him for his goodness, and sacrifice to him the sacrifices of thanksgiving, with fervency equal to their great unworthiness of such favours, and proportioned to the consequences of dying in such a manner! Yet, while thousands are cured in our hospitals, and by various charities, as well as in other ways, even of diseases contracted by licentiousness and excess; it is to be feared that, a very small number excepted, they generally manifest their ingratitude, by returning to their former excesses; and the event generally illustrates the benevolence as well as wisdom and piety, of fervently exclaiming, “Oh, that men “would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his “wonderful works to the children of men! That they “would offer the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare “his works with rejoicing.” (*Note and P. O. Luke xvii. 11—19.*)

V. 23—32.

The perils, to which seamen are exposed, are not commonly the effect of their own transgressions: but, as they “do their business in great waters,” they see so much of the wonderful works of God, that their too general irreligion forms one of the most lamentable demonstrations of the depravity of the human heart. If we were strangers to these truths and facts, we should expect that those, who had once beheld the storm arise in obedience to the Creator’s will, and had experienced the horrors of the tremendous scene, which baffles all description; with that dismay and astonishment, which must be inseparable from the idea of being every moment liable to be swallowed up by the raging billows, without being able to do any thing to prevent it; who in their extreme distress had cried unto the Lord for help, and had in some marvellous manner been unexpectedly preserved, and restored in peace to their desired haven; we might expect, I say, that they would certainly unite fervent gratitude with their overflowing gladness; and not only employ their tongues, but spend the remnant of their days, to the glory of their great Preserver, “exalting him in the congregation of the people, “and praising him in the assembly of the elders.” This ought uniformly to be the case: but how evident and lamentable is the general and awful reverse!

V. 33—43.

The surprising changes, which are continually taking place in the affairs of nations, families, and individuals; while some are cast down from the summit of prosperity, and others advanced from the depth of adversity; evince our absolute dependence upon God in every thing, and shew that neglect of him, or rebellion against him, are as unreasonable as they are wicked. (*Note, cxiii. 7—9. 1 Sam. ii. 4—8.*) The fertility and populousness of nations depend on his sovereign will; and he effects what

prays for help, and expects great success according to the promises of God to him, 6—13.

* A Song or Psalm of David.

a lxviii. title.

changes he pleases, for the display of his justice, or of his mercy. In his providence, a few poor hungry outcasts have sometimes migrated into a waste howling wilderness, and have there been enabled to build cities, and to cultivate the previously barren desert; and so have become prosperous, and multiplied exceedingly: yet, after a time perhaps, affluence has introduced luxury and impiety; and for their punishment they have been minished and brought low, by oppression and publick calamities. He, who set them up when afflicted and poor, pours contempt upon them when they are become powerful princes, and perhaps reduces them to their former abject state. The righteous, beholding these judgments of God, will rejoice in his just and gracious sovereignty: and thus, from time to time, iniquity receives a check, and infidelity stands confuted: and he that is truly wise will observe these things, and will be encouraged in trusting and waiting for the loving-kindness of the Lord.—But the same persons will see still more of the wisdom, power, and love of God, in his dealings with his church of redeemed sinners, whom he has gathered from the east, the west, the north, and the south, to be unto him a peculiar people. Having redeemed them from the power of the enemy, he guides them through this desolate wilderness to his holy habitation. Having caused them to hunger and thirst after righteousness, when they were ready to faint and perish, he supplied their wants from his abundant stores: having taught them to seek help from him, he will never leave them, till he has fully satisfied their longing souls with his goodness. From bondage, terror, and the borders of despair, he brings them forth to liberty, to confidence, and comfort. He heals their diseases, restores their strength and vigour, and even removes those troubles which they have brought upon themselves by their own folly. He preserves them through the storms of temptation and persecution: he speaks peace, and commands a calm, to their souls, when they are ready to give up all for lost. While they are steering to the haven where they would be, they will be praising the Lord for his goodness, celebrating his wonderful works for them, “sacrificing the sacrifices of thanksgiving, declaring his works “with gladness,” and “exalting him in the congregation “of his people.” At length their souls will arrive at their expected rest; and at the appointed season the brazen gates and iron bars of death will be burst by the power of their redeeming God: but who can describe their joy and gratitude, when “mortality shall thus be swallowed up of life!” —Let us also remember to praise our God, for turning the wilderness, which we Gentiles inhabited, into a fruitful land, and opening for us the wells of salvation. (*Note, Is. xii. 3.*) Let us pray that the Jewish nation, which has been so long a barren desert, may again be watered with his grace, and bring forth the fruits of faith and holiness. Let all the Lord’s ministers and people cultivate their fields and vineyards, their own souls, and those of their families and congregations; that, being blessed exceedingly, the church may yield more abundantly “the fruits of increase.” Let us pray for the revival of religion in those places, where the church is minished and brought low, through oppres-

b lvii. 7—11.

c xxx. 12. xxxiv. 1.
civ. 33. xxxviii.
1. cxlv. 1, 2.
cxlv. 1, 2. Ex.
xv. 1.d xvi. 9. lxxi. 8.
5. 23, 24. cxlv.
21.e xxxiii. 2. lxix.
30. lxxxi. 2.
xcii. 1—4. Judg.
v. 12.f lvii. 8. ciii. 22.
g xxii. 22. 27.
xcvi. 10. cxvii.
1, 2. cxxxviii. 4.
5. Zeph. iii. 14.
20.h xxxvi. 5. lxxxv.
10, 11. lxxxix.
2. 5. ciii. 11. Is.
lv. 9. Mic. vii.
18—20. Eph. ii.
4—7.i viii. 1. xxi. 13.
lvii. 5. 11. cxlviii.
13. 1 Chr. xxix.
10—13.k lxxii. 19. Is. vi.
3. Matt. vi. 9,
10. 13.l lx. 5—12. Deut.
xxxiii. 12. 2 Sam.
xii. 25. Matt. iii.
17. xvii. 5. Rom.
i. 7. Eph. i. 6.
Col. iii. 12.m xxxv. 1—3. liv. 1. xcvi. 1, 2. cxlv. 5—7. Ex. xv. 6. Is. li. 2—11.
n 1 Kings xviii 24. 26. 29. 36, 37. 2 Chr. xxxii. 20—22. Is. lxxv. 24. Jer. xxxiii. 3.
o lxxxix. 35, 36. Am. iv. 2. p xvi. 9—11. 2 Sam. vii. 20, &c. 1 Pet. i. 3. 8
2 Pet. i. 3, 4. q Josh. xvii. 7. xx. 7. xxiv. 1.

O God, ^b my heart is fixed; ^c I will sing
and give praise, even with ^d my glory.

2 ^e Awake, psaltery and harp: ^f I
myself will awake early.

3 I will ^g praise thee, O LORD, among
the people; and I will sing praises unto
thee among the nations.

4 For ^h thy mercy is great above the
heavens; and thy truth *reacheth* unto
the ⁱ clouds.

5 ^j Be thou exalted, O God, above
the heavens; and ^k thy glory above all
the earth.

6 That ^l thy beloved may be deli-
vered; ^m save *with* thy right hand, ⁿ and
answer me.

7 God hath ^o spoken in his holi-
ness; ^p I will rejoice, I will divide ^q She-

chem, and mete out ^r the valley of Suc-
coth.

8 ^s Gilead is mine; Manasseh is
mine; ^t Ephraim also is the strength
of mine head; ^u Judah is my law-
giver;

9 ^v Moab is my wash-pot; over
Edom will ^w I cast out my shoe; ^x over
Philistia will I triumph.

10 Who will bring me into the
strong city? ^y who will lead me into
Edom?

11 *Wilt* not thou, O God, ^z who hast
cast us off? and wilt not thou, O God,
^a go forth with our hosts?

12 ^b Give us help from trouble; ^c for
vain is the help of man.

13 ^d Through God we shall do va-
liantly; for he *it is that* shall ^e tread
down our enemies.

Gen. xxxiii. 17.
Judg. viii. 5, 6.
Josh. xiii. 8—11.
2 Sam. ii. 8, 9
v. 5.
Deut. xxxiii. 17.
1 Sam. xxviii. 2.
u cxxii. 5. Gen.
xlix. 10.
x lx. 8—10. 2 Sam.
viii. 1, 2. John
xiii. 8. 14.
y Ruth iv. 7, 8.
z 2 Sam. xxi. 15—
22. Is. xiv. 29—
32.
a xx. 6—8. lx.
title. Is. lxiii. 1
—6. Jer. xlix. 7
—16. Ob. 3, 4.
b xlii. 9. 1 Sam.
xxix. &c.
c Num. x. 9. Deut.
xx. 3, 4. 1 Sam.
xvii. 26. 36.
2 Chr. xiii. 12.
xiv. 11. xx. 15.
d xx. 1, &c.
e cxlvi. 3—5. Job
ix. 13. Is. xxx.
3—5. xxxi. 3.
Jer. xvii. 5—8.
Lam. iv. 17.
f xviii. 29—34.
cxviii. 6—13.
cxliv. 1. 1 Cor.
xv. 10. Eph. vi.
10—18.
g xviii. 42. lx. 12.
Judg. xv. 8. Is.
xxv. 10. lxiii. 3.
Rom. xvi. 20.

sion, or corrupted with superstition and error: and that God would convert, or pour contempt upon, all those princes or people, who oppose the promulgation of his pure gospel, that they may lose their labour, and be baffled in all their devices; and that he would replenish the poor in spirit and afflicted in circumstances, and increase every one of his people into families, like large flocks of sheep. Then shall the righteous behold and rejoice, and iniquity shall be disgraced and repressed; and the wise observer will more and more understand and admire and adore “the loving-kindness of the LORD.”

NOTES.

PSALM CVIII. V. 1—3. This psalm consists of the latter part of the fifty-seventh psalm, and the latter part of the sixtieth, with no material alteration. The fifty-seventh was composed, when David fled from Saul in the cave; and begins with grievous complaints, which are here omitted. (Notes, lvii. title. 1—6.) The sixtieth was written, after David had for some time reigned over all Israel, and when he was engaged in war with the Syrians and others. (Notes, lx. title. 1—4.) It also begins with complaints of the calamities to which Israel had been exposed; and these likewise are left out. So that this, as a psalm, is more in the strain of confidence, gratitude, and joyful hope, than either of those from which it is taken; and thus more suited to a season of thanksgiving for past mercies, and prayer for further deliverance: and it is probable, it was compiled for that purpose.—*Even with my glory.* (1) My tongue, ‘because it chiefly setteth forth the glory of God.’ (Marg. Ref.—P. O. xvi. Note, xxx. 11, 12.)

V. 4. ‘It is fit that my thankfulness should be as bound-
less as thy mercy, which infinitely transcends all my ex-
pressions, and hath nothing equal to it, but thy faithful-
ness and truth. Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 5. ‘Let all the world see thy judgments, in that,
‘that thou art God over all, and so confess that thou art
‘glorious.’ (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps. lvii. 7—11.)

V. 6—13. ‘Grant my humble petitions, that by thy
‘mighty power accompanying my arms, I may be an in-
‘strument of delivering thy beloved people from their op-
‘pressors.’ Bp. Patrick. The word, rendered “beloved,”
is plural: as is the verb also.—‘As he hath spoken to
‘Samuel concerning me, so he will shew himself constant
‘and holy in his promise; so that these nations following
‘shall be subject to me.’ (Marg. Ref.—Notes, lx. 5—12.
P. O. latter part.)—Nathan also had just before delivered
a very encouraging message from God to David. (2 Sam.
vii. 6—17.)—*Will I triumph.* (9) “Triumph thou over
“me.” lx. 8. marg. An ironical challenge.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We may with great utility select passages from different psalms, to assist our devotions, encourage our expectations, or enliven our gratitude, in our private concerns, or in those of the church and nation.—When the heart is established in faith and love, the tongue being employed in grateful praises will be indeed our *glory*: and every endowment will become honourable and profitable to the possessor, in proportion as it is employed in the service and to the glory of God.—Those, who can sincerely use the Psalmist’s language of adoring praise, may pray with assured faith and hope for all the blessings of salvation; which are secured to them by the faithful promise and covenant of God, and will be effected by his powerful arm, and communicated from his everlasting love and mercy. Let them then expect, “through God, to do valiantly;” and to receive from him help in every trouble, and victory in every conflict; till Satan and every enemy be bruised under their feet. (Notes, Rom. viii. 35—39. 2 Cor. xii. 7—10. Eph. vi. 10—20. Phil. iv. 10—13. 2 Tim. ii. 1, 2.)

‘ Assured that Christ our King,
‘ Will put our foes to flight,
‘ We on the field of battle sing,
‘ And triumph while we fight.’

Newton, Olney Hymns.

PSALM CIX.

David, as the type of Christ, complains of the slanders, deceit, and malice of his enemies, 1—5. He predicts the doom of Judas, by devoting one person, in particular, to destruction, 6—20. He complains of his sufferings, prays for relief, and determines to praise the Lord, 21—31.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

HOLD ^anot thy peace, ^bO God of my praise;

²For ^cthe mouth of the wicked and the mouth ^dof the deceitful ^eare opened against me: they have spoken against me ^fwith a lying tongue.

³They ^gcompassed me about also with words of hatred; and ^h‘fought against me without a cause.

⁴For my love they are my adversaries: ⁱbut I *give myself* unto prayer.

⁵And ^jthey have rewarded me evil for good, ^kand hatred for my love.

⁶¶ ^lSet thou a wicked man over him: ^mand let ⁿSatan stand at his right hand.

⁷When he shall be judged, let him ^obe condemned; ^pand let his prayer become sin.

⁸Let his days be few; and ^qlet another take his ^roffice.

⁹Let ^shis children be fatherless, and his wife a widow.

¹⁰Let ^this children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek *their bread* also out of their desolate places.

¹¹Let ^uthe extortioner catch all that he hath; and ^vlet the stranger spoil his labour.

¹²Let there be ^wnone to extend mercy unto him; neither let there be any ^xto favour his fatherless children.

¹³Let ^yhis posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let ^ztheir name be blotted out.

¹⁴Let ^athe iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and ^blet not the sin of his mother be ^cblotted out.

¹⁵Let them be ^dbefore the LORD continually, that he may ^ecut off the memory of them from the earth.

¹⁶Because that ^fhe remembered not to shew mercy, but ^gpersecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even ^hslay the broken in heart.

a xxxviii. 1. xxxv. 22, 23. lxxxiii. 1. Is. xlii. 14.

b cxviii. 28. Ex. xv. 2. Deut. x. 21. Jer. xvii. 14.

c xxxi. 13, 18. lxiv. 3, 4. cxi. 3. 2 Sam. xv. 3—8. xvii. 1, &c. Prov. xv. 28. Matt. xxvi. 59—62.

* Heb. of deceit. † Heb. have opened themselves.

d cxx. 3. Prov. vi. 17. xii. 19. Jer. ix. 3. 5.

e xvii. 11. xxii. 12. lxxxviii. 17. 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8. Hos. xi. 12.

f xxxv. 7. 20. lix. 3, 4. lxix. 4. 1 Sam. xix. 4, 5. xxvi. 18. 2 Sam. xv. 12. John xv. 24, 25.

g xxxv. 7. 12. xxxviii. 20. 2 Sam. xiii. 39. John x. 32. 2 Cor. xii. 15.

h lv. 16, 17. lxix. 12, 13. 2 Sam. xv. 31, 32. Dan. vi. 10. Luke vi. 11, 12. xxiii. 34.

i xxxv. 12. Gen. xlv. 4. Prov. xvii. 13.

k lv. 12—15. 2 Sam. xv. 12, 31. Mark xiv. 44, 45. Luke vi. 16. xxii. 47, 48. John xiii. 18.

l Matt. xxvii. 4. m Zech. iii. 1. John xiii. 2. 27.

n Or, an adversary. Matt. v. 25.

o Heb. go out guilty, or wicked. Rom. iii. 19. Gal. iii. 10.

p 2 Sam. xv. 7, 8. Prov. xv. 8. xxi. 27. xxviii. 9. Is. i. 15. lxvi. 3. Matt. xxiii. 14.

o iv. 23. Matt. xxvii. 5.

p Acts i. 16—26.

q Or, charge.

r Ex. xxii. 24. Jer. xviii. 21. Lam. v. 3.

s xxxvii. 25. Gen. iv. 12—14. 2 Sam. iii. 29. 2 Kings v. 27. Job xxiv. 8—12. xxx. 3—9. Is. xvi. 2.

t Job v. 5. xviii. 9. xx. 18—20.

u Deut. xxviii. 29. 33. 34. 50, 51. Judg. vi. 3—6.

v Is. xxvii. 11. Luke vi. 38. Jam. ii. 13.

x cxxxvii. 8, 9. Is. xiii. 18. Matt. xxvii. 25. Luke xi. 50, 51.

y cxxxvii. 28. 1 Sam. ii. 31—33. iii. 13. 2 Kings x. 10, 11. Job xviii. 19. Is. xiv. 20—22. Jer. xxii. 30.

z Deut. ix. 14. xxv. 19. xxix. 20. Prov. x. 7.

a Ex. xx. 5. Lev. xxvi. 39. 2 Sam. iii. 29. xxi. 1, 8, 9. Matt. xxiii. 31—36.

b 2 Kings viii. 27. ix. 27. x. 13, 14. xi. 1. 2 Chr. xxii. 3, 4.

c Neh. iv. 5. Jer. xviii. 23.

d h. 9. xc. 8. Deut. xxxii. 34. Jer. ii. 22. Hos. vii. 2. Am. viii. 7.

e 13. xxxiv. 16. Job xviii. 17. Is. lxv. 15.

f 2 Sam. xvii. 1, 2. Matt. v. 7. xviii. 33—35. Jam. ii. 13.

g x. 2. 14. Gen. xlii. 21. Job xix. 2 Sam. xvi. 11, 12.

2, 3, 21, 22. Matt. xxvii. 35—46.

Mark xiv. 33—36.

h xxxiv. 18. lxix. 20—29.

O Lord, “visit all our souls with this salvation,” even with this “favour which thou bearest to thy chosen people!” (Note, cvi. 4, 5.)

NOTES.

PSALM CIX. V. 1. Most expositors suppose that David composed this psalm, when persecuted by Saul, who was rendered more implacable, by the base and malicious calumnies of Doeg and others: but some expressions favour the opinion, that it was written when David fled from Absalom, and that Ahithophel, rather than Doeg, is the typical person principally referred to. (Notes, xli. 9. lxix. 22—28. 2 Sam. xv. 12.)—“The God of my praise;” “whom I am accustomed to praise, and whom I take delight in praising.” (Note, Jer. xvii. 14.)

V. 2—5 David was most basely deceived by his ungrateful and rebellious son, Absalom, whose insinuations also tended to depreciate his character: and the cursings and revilings of Shimei, who charged him, to his face, with being the murderer of Saul and his family, were, no doubt, the echo of calumnies circulated against him among many of his subjects; while other slanders, as malicious and groundless, would be better calculated for different descriptions of men. Thus the minds of the people were alienated from their aged king; and they readily joined Absalom in levying war against him, “without a cause,” or *gratuitously*, when he had done nothing to deserve it, but entirely the contrary. (Note, John xv. 22—25.) His

indulgent affection for Absalom was excessive; he had preferred and honoured Ahithophel, as his counsellor and friend; and he had spent his life in promoting the benefit of his people, and in pouring out his prayers for them: yet he was thus ungratefully used by all parties. (Notes, xxxviii. 19, 20. lxix. 10—12. 2 Sam. xv. 1—6. 10—15. xvi. 5—14.)—David had been very useful to Saul, and to Israel in general; and to some of those in particular, who joined in persecuting him: but he had never shewn that affection for Saul, or that friendship to Doeg, which he had for Absalom and Ahithophel.—In all these respects, however, he was only a type of Christ, the history of whose life and death is the best comment on the passage. (Marg. Ref.) “These things David sang in a spiritual sense, in ‘the person of Christ assaulted by the Jews with all kinds ‘of revilings’ (or blasphemies). Bossuet quoted by Bp. Horne.

V. 6—20. Whether David, when he wrote these verses, thought of Doeg; or of Ahithophel, who being a traitor, more resembled Judas, as he also did in murdering himself; (Notes, 2 Sam. xvii. 23. Matt. xxvii. 3—5;) they are most certainly a prophetick denunciation of the doom, which awaited the enemies of Christ, and Judas in particular: for the apostle has quoted one clause from the passage, with this remarkable introduction; “This scripture ‘must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, ‘by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas, ‘&c.” (8. Notes, Acts i. 16—22.)—The inspired historian gives the exact words from the Septuagint, which trans-

ⁱ li. 4, 5. lix. 12, 13. Ez. xxxv. 6. Matt. vii. 2. 2 Thes. ii. 10, 11. Rev. xvi. 6.

17 As ⁱ he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him.

^k lxxiii. 6. Job xxix. 14. Col. iii. 8. 12. 1 Pet. v. 5.

^l Num. v. 22. 27. Job xx. 12—16. 20—23. Matt. xxvi. 24. xxvii. 3—5. Acts i. 18. 26.

18 As ^k he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment; ^l so let it come ^{*} into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones.

^{*} Heb. *within him*. m 18. 29. xxxv. 26. cxxxiii. 18.

19 Let it be unto him ^m as the garment *which* covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

ⁿ ii. 5, 6. 12. xxv. 8—12. xl. 14, 15. cx. 1. 5, 6. 2 Sam. xvii. 23. xviii. 32. 1 Kings ii. 44. Luke xix. 27. 1 Thes. ii. 15. 16.

20 Let ⁿ this be the reward of mine adversaries from the LORD, and of ^o them that speak evil against my soul.

^o Matt. xi. 19. xii. 24. xxvi. 66, 67. Mark ix. 39. 1 Cor. xii. 3.

21 But ^p do thou for me, O God the Lord, for thy name's sake: because ^q thy mercy is good, deliver thou me.

^p xxxi. 3. lxix. 29. lxxix. 9, 10. cxliii. 11, 12. John xvii. 1. Phil. ii. 8—11.

22 For ^r I am poor and needy, and ^s my heart is wounded within me.

^r xxii. 6. xl. 17. lxxxvi. 1. cii. 17—20. Matt. viii. 20. 2 Cor. viii. 9. 15, 16. cii. 4. 2 Kings iv. 27. Job vi. 4. Is. liii. 3. Luke xxii. 44. John xii. 27.

^q xxxvi. 7—9. lxiii. 3. lxxxvi. 5. 16. s 16. lxxxviii.

lates the whole as an imprecation. Indeed the first verb is the only one, which necessarily requires this construction, being literally rendered, “Set thou;” whereas all the other verbs are in the future and may be rendered as prophecies. Yet the first verb, being imperative, and the passage being so quoted in the Acts from the Septuagint, seem to imply, that sentence was prophetically denounced against the criminal or criminals, and not merely the event foretold.—If David intended not only to predict, but to imprecate, the vengeance of God on apostate Ahithophel and his impenitent foes, as the first word seems to imply; it should be remembered, that “the Spirit of God spake by him;” taking occasion from his circumstances to predict, in this alarming manner, the miseries which would come on the enemies of the Messiah. But, unless we were under the same influence, the example is not suited for our imitation: and we ought by no means to adopt the words with reference to our own enemies. Yet there can be no impropriety in reading or singing the psalm, as the sentence of our Judge on his implacable opposers and blasphemers, for a solemn warning to all who hear it; any more than in reading the latter part of the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew, or the curses contained in the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth, and twenty-ninth chapters of Deuteronomy. (Note, Deut. xxvii. 15.)—We may apply the whole passage to Judas, who ungratefully and basely sold Jesus to his enemies. He was left to become the servant to a most wicked and cruel master, when he hired himself to Caiaphas, as the head of the Sanhedrim, who treated his remorse of conscience with such contempt, as helped to hurry him into desperation; his tempter “Satan” stood at his right hand” as his *accuser*, and urged him to suicide; he has ever since been considered as a guilty wretch by almost every body; he was expressly condemned by the Lord Jesus himself; (Note, Matt. xxvi. 21—24;) his prayers were mere form and hypocrisy, and not the language of true repentance and faith, so that they aggravated his guilt; his days were few, and another was chosen to succeed to his apostleship. (Note, Acts i. 20—26.) Probably he left a widow and fatherless children, on whom infamy and distress were entailed, in the righteous providence of God, till the family was extinct; and thus the sins of his progenitors, which he imitated, but far exceeded, were visited upon him and his descendants, in a remarkable manner. By betraying Christ, he refused his blessing, and avowed that he would not follow him in doing good, preferring a curse and mischief; and he, as it were, clothed himself with malevolence and treachery: the blessing of God would therefore be removed far from him; and his curse would cover and cleave to him as a garment, confine

him as a girdle, enter into his bowels as water, and insinuate into his bones as oil; that is, it would be his only and his everlasting portion.—The verses may also be applied to the Jewish nation; who, having rejected and crucified Christ, were given up to be tyrannized over by one usurper after another, and to be infatuated by Satan in an unheard of manner. Under the divine condemnation, for their obstinate unbelief, their hypocritical religion only added to their guilt, by rendering them more proud, bigotted, and furious in persecuting the Christians. Their civil and ecclesiastical state expired within forty years from the death of Christ, and their peculiar privileges were transferred to the Gentile converts. At the destruction of Jerusalem immense multitudes were slain; their widows and orphans were left to penury and misery; and their posterity have ever since been dispersed as vagabonds, and preyed upon by extortion and oppression, in almost every land: their name has been, as it were, expunged from the records of the church; all the iniquities of the nation, from its origin, were visited on that and the succeeding generations; and the horrible imprecation, “His blood be on us and on our children,” which the enraged persecutors of Christ uttered against themselves and their posterity, has been as awfully fulfilled. (Notes, Deut. xxviii. 15—68. xxix. 18—28. Matt. xxiii. 34—36. xxvii. 24, 25. 1 Thes. ii. 13—16.)—The whole may also be applied to all the enemies of Christ and his church, in every age and nation. (Marg. Ref.)

The extortioner. (11) Or rather *creditor*. ‘Let his creditor (pretending a judgment,) seize on all his estate; and a stranger by that means reap the fruit of all his care and labour.’ Bp. Patrick.

Might slay the broken in heart. (16) Notes, lxix. 22—28, v. 26. Job vi. 14.—‘They’ (the Jews) ‘betrayed and murdered the lowly and afflicted Jesus, whose “heart was “broken” with sorrow for their sins, and with a sense of the punishment due to them. How long will it be ere the brethren of this most innocent and most injured Joseph, “say one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear: “THEREFORE is this distress come upon us!” Gen. xlii. 21.’ Bp. Horne. (Note, Zech. xii. 9—14.)

V. 21. O GOD the Lord.] Or, JEHOVAH my Lord.—For thy name's sake.] ‘As thou art named merciful, and gracious, and long-suffering; so shew thyself in effect.’ (Note, Ex. xxxiv. 5—7.) In all respects glorify thy name, in delivering me.

V. 22—24. David, when driven from his palace and city, and out of Judah; and when compelled to depend

^t cii. 11. cxliv. 4. ¹ Chr. xxix. 15. **23** I am 'gone like the shadow when it declineth: "I am tossed up and down as the locust.

^u cii. 10. Ex. x. 13. 19. ^x xxii. 14. xxxv. 13. 14. lxix. 10. **24** My ^x knees are weak through fasting; and ^y my flesh faileth of fatness.

^y xxxii. 3, 4. ^{xxxviii.} 5—8. ^{cii.} 4, 5. Job xix. 20. **25** I became also ^a a reproach unto them: ^a when they looked upon me they shook their heads.

^a xxxi. 11—13. ^{xxxv.} 15, 16. ^{lxix.} 9—12. 19. ^{20.} Rom. xv. 3. ^{Heb.} xii. 2. xiii. 13. **26** ^b Help me, O LORD my God: O ^c save me according to thy mercy:

^a xxii. 6, 7. Job xvi. 4. Is. xxxvii. 22. Matt. xxvii. 39, 40. **27** That ^d they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, LORD, hast done it.

^b xl. 12, 13. cxix. 86. Heb. v. 7. ^c lvii. 1. lxix. 13. 16. ^d lxiv. 8, 9. cxvi. 2. Ex. viii. 19. Num. xvi. 28—30. 1 Sam. xvii. 46, 47. 1 Kings xviii. 36, 37. Acts ii. 32—36. iv. 16.

^e 17. Num. xxii. 12. xxiii. 20, 23. 2 Sam. xvi. 10. 11. 13. ^f Is. lxxv. 13—16. John xvi. 22. Heb. xii. 2. **28** "Let them curse, but bless thou: when they arise, let them be ashamed; but ^f let thy servant rejoice.

^g 17—19. vi. 10. xxxv. 26. cxxxii. 18. cxi. 9. Jer. xx. 11. Dan. xii. 2. Mic. vii. 10. ^h vii. 17. ix. 1. xxii. 22. 25. lxxi. 22, 23. cviii. 1—3. **29** Let mine adversaries ^g be clothed with shame; and let them cover themselves with their own confusion as with a mantle.

ⁱ xxii. 22—25. cvii. 32. cxi. 1. cxvi. 12—18. cxxxviii. 1. 4. Heb. ii. 12. ^k xvi. 8. lxxiii. 23. cx. 5. cxxi. 5. ^l 16. lxxviii. 5. lxxii. 4. 12, 13. cxi. 12. **30** I will ^h greatly praise the LORD with my mouth; yea, ⁱ I will praise him among the multitude.

^k xvi. 8. lxxiii. 23. cx. 5. cxxi. 5. ^l 16. lxxviii. 5. lxxii. 4. 12, 13. cxi. 12. **31** For ^k he shall stand at the right hand of ^l the poor, ^m to save him from ⁿ those that condemn his soul.

xxii. 22, 23. Ec. v. 8. Is. liv. 17. Acts iv. 10—12. v. 30, 31. ⁿ his soul.

* Heb. the judges of

on a few loyal subjects for sustenance; was at least as poor, as during his persecutions by Saul: and his heart was far more deeply "wounded within him," both in contrition and self-abasement, and by anguish of spirit. (16. Notes, 2 Sam. xv. 24—30. xvi. 1—14. xvii. 27—29.) Being advanced in years, he considered himself as "a shadow that declineth," towards the sun-set: and not having a settled home, but wandering from place to place, according to the tidings brought him of the conspirators; he resembled the locust, which is driven by the wind to east or west, without being able to keep any settled course. (Notes, Ex. x. 13. 19. Joel ii. 18—20.) And besides fasting, in humbling himself before God, and through sorrow of heart, he wanted often suitable provision; and thus he grew feeble and emaciated.—But the poverty and sorrow of the Saviour, "who had not where to lay his head;" and all the events of his life, especially from his fasting in the wilderness, to the close of his sufferings on the cross; are most emphatically described. (Marg. Ref.—Note, 2 Cor. viii. 6—9.)

V. 25. Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxii. 7, 8. xxxi. 10—13. xxxv. 15, 16. Matt. xxvii. 39—44.

V. 26, 27. When God restored David to the throne in peace and honour; his hand was manifest in the surprising change, and his enemies were appalled and silenced. But when Christ was raised from the grave, and exalted to the right hand of the majesty in the heavens, and when the Holy Spirit was in consequence poured out on his apostles and disciples; the power of God was displayed to the conviction of millions, in that and future ages, that the whole was his work, and that he alone had done it. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Matt. xii. 38—40. Acts ii. 33—36. iii. 12—16. iv. 5—12. Heb. ii. 1—4, v. 4.)

V. 28—30. "They will curse, but thou wilt bless. "They shall be ashamed; but thy servant shall rejoice. "Mine adversaries shall be clothed with shame. They "shall cover themselves with their own confusion as with "a mantle. I will greatly praise the LORD, &c." The whole is future in the original: and the language of assured faith and hope, or of perfect foreknowledge, in the depth of distress, is more suited to the case, both of the type and Antitype, as well as more animated, than that of supplication. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps. xxii. 22—24. xl. 13—16. lxix. 29—32.) "They," (the disciples of Jesus) "shall be blessed, and enter by thousands and millions

"into the joy of their Lord," in that day when his crucifiers shall have no "covering," but their own "shame" "and confusion." Bp. Horne.

V. 31. Notes, cx. 5, 6. Prov. xxii. 22, 23. 2 Tim. iv. 16—18

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our incarnate Redeemer willingly became poor, and submitted to pain and suffering, for our sakes, to atone for our sins and effect our salvation: and when we consider, that the gifts, which his hands bestow, were purchased by "his heart being wounded within him," by his "being" "wasted as a shadow, and driven about as a locust" in the wind, and by "his knees being weak with fastings;" we should place the higher value on them, and express the more gratitude to him.—Those wicked men, who spread slanders, and uttered blasphemies against him; who "compassed him about with words of hatred, and fought against him without a cause;" who were his adversaries because of his love to sinners, and rewarded him evil for good; did indeed fulfil the predictions of the scriptures, and the divine decrees: but as they were actuated by the most diabolical enmity to God and holiness, they exposed themselves to the most awful vengeance. (Notes, Acts ii. 22—24. iv. 23—28.) If then we in any measure bear the image and seek the honour of Christ, we must expect to be hated by persons of the same character; and must stand prepared to bear their malice, slanders, treachery, injustice, and ingratitude, with firmness, patience, and meekness; "considering him who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself," (Note, Heb. xii. 2, 3;) and "giving ourselves unto prayer." And if we duly estimate our obligations to the Redeemer, we shall not be reluctant to suffer for his sake and according to his will; whether he be pleased to prove us by poverty, sickness, persecution, or self-denying labours.—In all our trials we should call upon the Lord, as "the God of our praise," in whom we glory, and whom we delight to worship: we should beg of him to deliver us "for his own name's sake," and according to his abundant mercy, that his hand may appear and be glorified.—We need not regard the malicious imprecations of ungodly men: though they curse, he will bless those who trust in him, and they will rejoice when their enemies shall be covered with confusion: for God will plead the cause of those who honour him by their animated praises; he will rebuke Satan, and every

PSALM CX.

A prophecy of the Messiah's kingdom, subjects, priesthood, triumphs, and sufferings as introducing them, 1—7.

A Psalm of David.

accuser, and "save them from those who would condemn their souls."—We must persevere in "blessing those who curse us," and in endeavouring to "overcome evil with good." Yet, in the case of Judas and the unbelieving Jews, the enemies of Christ and his people may read their own doom, if they continue impenitent. No language can express the miseries which are coming upon them, where there will be no remedy, no help, no mercy: for what are all the temporal afflictions, which can befall us or our descendants, compared with the everlasting wrath of God? Indeed enmity against Christ is likely to entail infamy and misery upon a man's family through successive generations: and those, who shew no mercy to the poor, especially to his needy and broken-hearted people, but treat them with insult and cruelty, must expect no mercy from God. Nay, when men reject the salvation of Christ, their very prayers are numbered among their sins. Satan will be permitted to tempt, to tyrannize over, to accuse, and to torment them; and their condemnation and ruin will be inevitable and sudden. In rejecting Christ, they refuse "the blessing, and it will be far from them;" the curse of the broken law is eventually their choice and their portion: all the blasphemous expressions, which they employ against the truths and professors of the gospel, and all the imprecations which they liberally bestow on those who offend or differ from them, will rebound upon themselves, and enhance their condemnation and misery. This will be the reward of all the adversaries of Christ, and of all who revile and hate his people. Let sinners then take warning, and flee for refuge to the great Redeemer: let those, who have employed their tongues in cursing and profaneness, fear and tremble, lest their multiplied imprecations should come upon themselves: let all opposers of the gospel be persuaded to cease from their ruinous attempts: and let all the Lord's poor and afflicted people rejoice in him, and greatly praise his holy name.

NOTES.

PSALM CX. V. 1. David 'speaks of some person, much greater than himself, whom he calls his Lord; so it can be no other but the LORD CHRIST, of whom he here prophesies: not, as he is wont to do elsewhere, with respect to himself, in the first place, as his type and figure; but in plain words, which can belong to none but Christ alone: for no other king but he can be said in any sense to sit at God's right hand; nor was there any priest after the order of Melchizedek, that could be a shadow of him. ...The Jews have taken a great deal of pains to wrest this Psalm to another sense: yet they are so divided in their opinions about it, (speaking inconsistent things, like drunken men, as St. Chrysostom's words are, or rather, says he, like men in the dark, running against

THE ^a LORD said unto my Lord, ^b Sit thou at my right hand, 'until I make thine enemies thy footstool.

2 The LORD shall send ^d the rod of thy strength ^e out of Zion: ^f rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

3. 13. x. 12, 13. d Ex. vii. 19. viii. 5. Mic. vii. 14. Matt. xxviii. 18—20. Acts ii. 34—37. Rom. i. 16. 1 Cor. i. 23, 24. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. 1 Thes. ii. 13. 1 Pet. i. 12. e Is. ii. 3. Ez. xlvii. 1, &c. Mic. iv. 2. f ii. 8, 9. xxii. 28, 29. xlv. 5, 6.

'one another,) that from thence alone we may be satisfied 'they are in the wrong, and have their eyes blinded.' *Bp. Patrick*.—'We are here informed of JEHOVAH's eternal 'and unchangeable decree concerning the kingdom of 'Messiah, its extension, power, and duration. That Messiah should, after his sufferings, be thus exalted, was determined in the divine counsel and covenant, before the 'world began. ...It was addressed by the Father to the 'Son; by JEHOVAH to Messiah, whom David in Spirit 'styleth...my Lord, one that should come after him, as 'his offspring according to the flesh; but one, in dignity of 'person and greatness of power, far superior to him, and 'to every earthly potentate. ...To this person it was said 'by the Father, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make 'thine enemies thy footstool;" in other words, Seeing, 'O my Son Messiah, thou hast "glorified me on the 'earth, and finished the work which I gave thee to do;" '...take now the throne prepared for thee from the foundation of the world: behold, all power is given unto thee; 'enter upon thy mediatorial kingdom, and reign till every 'opposer shall have submitted himself to thee, and sin and 'death shall have felt thy all-conquering arm.' *Bp. Horne*. (Note, 1 Cor. xv. 20—28.) This interpretation is established by multiplied quotations from the Psalm, in the New Testament, with the most express application of it to the kingdom of Christ.—David, speaking by the Holy Spirit, calls the promised Messiah, *his Lord*, though he was to descend from him, according to the flesh: not only because he should hereafter be far superior to him and all the kings of the earth; but because he *then* existed in glory, as the eternal Son of God. (Notes, Matt. xxii. 41—46. Mark xii. 35—37. Luke xx. 41—44. Acts ii. 33—36. Heb. x. 11—18.)

V. 2. In the former verse the royal prophet reported the words of JEHOVAH to the Messiah: but here he addresses the Messiah as present. 'The eternal LORD, who 'hath thus decreed to honour thee, O most mighty Prince, 'will make Zion first of all to feel how powerful thy 'sceptre is, ...and thence extend thy empire over all the 'earth; where...I foretel thou wilt prevail over all idolatry, idolatry, superstition, and impiety, which will set 'themselves against thy authority.' *Bp. Patrick*. (Notes, Rev. xx. 1—6.)—'Go on, victorious Prince; plant the 'standard of thy cross among the thickest ranks of the 'adversary; and, in opposition to both Jew and Gentile, 'tumultuously raging against thee, erect and establish thy 'church throughout the world.' *Bp. Horne*.—the gospel, "preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven," is "the rod," or *sceptre*, of the Redeemer's strength, or authority. This was sent forth from Zion by the apostles and evangelists, who were the instruments of setting up his kingdom; (Notes, Is. ii. 2—5. Ez. xlvii. 1—10. Luke

g xxii. 27, 28. Judg.
v. 2. Acts ii. 41.
Rom. xi. 2—6.
2 Cor. viii. 1—3.
12. 16. Phil. ii.
13. Heb. xiii. 21.
h Acts i. 8. ii. 33.
iv. 30—35. xix.
20. 2 Cor. xiii. 4.
i xcvi. 9. Ez. xliii.
12. Eph. i. 4.
1 Thes. iv. 7.
Tit. ii. 14.

3 Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.

4 The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

Or, more than the womb of the morning: thou shalt have, &c.
Acts iv. 4. xxi. 20. Rev. vii. 9. l xxxix. 34—36. Heb. vi. 13—18. vii. 28. m Num. xxiii. 19. n Gen. xiv. 18—20. Zech. vi. 13. Heb. vi. 20. vii. 1—3. 11. 17. 21. Rev. i. 6.

xxiv. 44—49;) by which he has ever since reigned over an innumerable multitude of subjects, in the midst of the most furious and inveterate enemies; namely, evil spirits and wicked men, who in vain attempt to subvert his throne, or deprive him of his subjects: and thus he will continue to establish and enlarge his kingdom, till it fill the whole earth, and till time shall be no more. (Notes, ii. 7—12. Is. ix. 6, 7. Dan. ii. 44, 45. Matt. xvi. 18. John x. 26—31. Rom. viii. 32—39. Rev. xi. 15—18.)

V. 3. 'The "people" of Christ are those given him by his Father, and gathered to him by the preachers of his word. "The day of his power," is the season of their conversion, when the corruptions of nature can no longer hold out against the prevailing influences of grace; when the heart, will, and affections turn from the world to God; and they make, as the first disciples did, a free and voluntary offering of themselves, and all they have, to their Redeemer. Then it is, that they appear "in the beauties of holiness," adorned with humility, faith, hope, love, and all the graces of the Spirit.' Bp. Horne.—The word rendered "thy youth" may refer to the first publication of the gospel, the early days of the glorified Redeemer's kingdom; when converts, numerous as the drops of dew, which, by a bold metaphor, are said to be produced "from the womb of the morning," "gladly received the word," and willingly yielded themselves to the Lord Jesus. The word, rendered "willing," is literally *voluntary offerings*: it seems to imply the most unreserved cheerfulness, in presenting the oblation; like that which David expresses. (Note, 1 Chr. xxix. 10—19.) The scene exhibited on the day of Pentecost, and just afterwards; when the haughty and selfish crucifiers of Christ, in that "day of his power," not only were made willing by divine grace to accept his salvation, but without the least reluctance, devoted their all, as a free will offering to his service; is a striking illustration of the emblem, or rather a fulfilment of the prophecy. (Notes, Acts ii. 37—47. iv. 32—37. 2 Cor. viii. 1—5.) 'The whole verse... containeth a lively character of the subjects of Christ's spiritual kingdom, who are described by their relation to him as "his people; by their willingness to obey and serve him; by their honourable attire, and splendid robes of holiness;" and by their multitudes, resembling the drops of dew upon the grass.' Bp. Horne.

V. 4. 'The oath of God was the great seal of heaven, designed to intimate the importance of the deed to which it was set, and "to shew the heirs of promise, the immutability of his counsel." ... Oblation, intercession, and benediction are the three branches of the sacerdotal office, which our great High Priest now exerciseth for us.' Bp. Horne.—The Redeemer's kingdom is inseparably

5 The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

6 He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries.

o l. xvi. 8. Mark xvi. 19. Acts ii. 34—36. vii. 55, 56.
p ii. 2—6. 9—12. xlv. 4, 5. lxviii. 14. 30. cxlix. 7—9. Zech. ix. 9, 10. 13—15. Rev. xvii. 12—14. xix. 11—21. xx. 8, 9.
q xxi. 8, 9. Ez. xxxviii. 18, 19. r 1 Sam. ii. 10. Is. ii. 4. xi. 3. xlii. 1. 4. li. 5. Joel iii. 12—16. Mic. iv. 3. John v. 22. 27. Rev. xix. 11. s Is. xxxiv. 2. —8. xliii. 2—4. lxvi. 16, 17. Ez. xxxviii. 21, 22. xxxix. 4. 11—20. Rev. xiv. 20. t lxviii. 21. Gen. iii. 15. Hab. iii. 13. † Or, great.

connected with the performances of his priestly office; to which he was appointed by an irrevocable engagement of the Father, and in which he abides from age to age. In virtue of his atonement and intercession, he employs all his power and authority for the benefit of his redeemed people. But it should be carefully noted, that the two offices of king and priest were incompatible according to the Mosaic law, at least after the appointment of David and his family to the kingdom: and the ancient Jews must have known, if they had not been blinded by prejudice, that a new order and constitution must take place at the coming of the Messiah, who was to be "a Priest upon his throne;" (Note, Zech. vi. 12, 13;) a Priest, not after Aaron's order, which, as David's son, he could not be; but after the order of Melchizedek.—It is observable, that this is the only place, in which Melchizedek is mentioned in the whole Scripture, except in the narrative by Moses; and by the apostle, when proving to the Hebrews that Jesus was the Messiah.—The New Testament dispensation made no alteration, except in those things in which the Old Testament taught all, who understood it and attended to it, to expect an alteration. (Notes, Gen. xiv. 18—20. Heb. v. 7—10. vi. 16—20. vii. 1—10.) 'As Melchizedek, the figure of Christ, was both king and priest; so the effect cannot be accomplished in any king, save only Christ.'—After the order, &c.] Or, "According to my appointment, even that of Melchizedek;" or, "According to my appointment, O Melchizedek."

V. 5, 6. 'By "the Lord," or, My Lord, "at thy right hand,"... the same person must undoubtedly be understood, who is mentioned in the first verse under the same title, אֲדֹנָי, as "sitting at the right hand of JEHOVAH." And the Psalmist, who has hitherto addressed himself to Messiah, or the Son, must be supposed now to make a sudden apostrophe to... the Father: as if he had said, 'This my Lord Messiah, who sitteth at thy right hand, O JEHOVAH, "shall smite through kings in the day of his wrath." The kings of the earth will endeavour to destroy his religion, and put an end to his kingdom: the Neros, the Domitians, the Dioclesians, the Maxentiuses, the Julians, &c. &c. shall stand up, and set themselves in array against him: but "the Lamb shall overcome them," he shall "judge" and punish the "heathen" princes,... and strew the ground with their "carcasses." Bp. Horne.—This will receive a more tremendous completion, when he shall destroy all antichristian powers, and set up his kingdom throughout the earth; as it must evidently appear to any one who attentively compares the various prophetic scriptures referred to in the margin. (Notes, cxlix. 7—9. Is. xxxiv. lxiii. 1—6. Ez. xxxviii. xxxix. Rev. vi. 9—17. xix. 11—21.)

cii. 9. Job xxi
20. Is. lvi. 12.
Jer. xxiii. 15.
Matt. xx. 22.
xxvi. 42. John
xviii. 11.
x Is. liii. 11, 12.
Luke xxiv. 26.
Phil. ii. 7—11.
Heb. ii. 9, 10.
1 Pet. i. 11.
y iii. 3. xxvii. 6.
Jer. lii. 31.
* Heb. *Hallelujah*.
cvi. 1. 48.
a ix. 1. ciii. 1.
cxxxviii. 1.
b xxii. 25. xxxv.
18. xl. 9, 10.
lxxxix. 7. cvii.
32. cviii. 3. cix.
30. cxlix. 1.
1 Chr. xxix. 10
—20. 2 Chr. vi.
3, 4. xx. 26—28.

7 He "shall drink of the brook in the way: "therefore shall he "lift up the head.

PSALM CXI.

The Psalmist praises God for his glorious and gracious works, 1—9; and shews that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, 10.

* **PRAISE** ye the LORD. "I will praise the LORD with *my* whole heart, ^b in the assembly of the upright and *in* the congregation.

V. 7. 'He shall first humble himself to the meanest condition; not living in the state of a king here in this world, but of a way-faring man,...who is content with such provision as he meets withal. For which cause, after the enduring many hardships, even death itself, he shall be highly exalted to his royal and priestly dignity in the heavens.' *Bp. Patrick*.—"In his "way" to glory, he "was to drink deep of the waters of affliction." *Bp. Horne*.—"Drinking of the brook," may however mean the refreshments with which the Saviour was supported, in passing through his sufferings, and beginning his conquests by triumphing over Satan on the cross, and over death by his resurrection. For either the waters of comfort, or the waters of affliction, may be meant: yet the scriptures, referred to in the margin, seem to favour the exposition first given. (*Notes*, Luke xxiv. 25—31. Phil. ii. 5—11, v. 8—11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our ascended Saviour is "King of kings and Lord of lords:" the decree has been accomplished; the Mediator reigns in human nature over all worlds, and shall reign till death, the last enemy, be destroyed by him. His gospel, "the rod of his strength," has reached our land, and we have heard it: and his kingdom is set up amidst opposing foes. But what are we? Has his gospel been "the power of God unto our salvation?" Has his kingdom been set up in our hearts? Are we become his loyal subjects? Once we knew not our need of his salvation, and were not willing that he should "reign over us:" have we then experienced a "day of his power?" Have we been rendered willing to renounce every sin, to turn our backs on an ensnaring world, to rely only on his merits and mercy, and to have him for our Prophet, Priest, and King? And do we desire and long, and constantly pray, to be adorned with the beauties of holiness? Vast multitudes through successive generations have experienced this change; to them the Saviour's sacrifice, intercession, and benediction belong; he is their merciful and faithful High Priest, and their "King of righteousness and peace;" their powerful Protector and Friend; and because he ever lives, they shall live also with him for evermore. Yet, as he passed through sufferings in his way to glory, so must his people: and, having drunk of the bitter waters of death, they too shall lift up their heads, be delivered from Satan, sin, and every foe, and be for ever happy in his presence. But the Saviour's power will be dreadful beyond all expression or conception, to all who oppose, neglect, or pervert his gospel. Many persecuting tyrants have already felt the

2 The 'works of the LORD are great, 'sought out of all them 'that have pleasure therein.

3 His work is 'honourable and glorious; and 'his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 He "hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD is 'gracious and 'full of compassion.

Rom. i. 28. viii. 6. f xix. 1. cxlv. 5. 10—12. 17. Ex. xv. 6, 7. 11. Eph. i. 6—8
iii. 10. Rev. v. 12—14. g ciii. 17. cxix. 142. 144. Is. li. 5, 6. 8. Dan. ix. 24.
h lxxxviii. 4—8. Ex. xii. 26, 27. xiii. 14, 15. Deut. iv. 9. xxxi. 19, &c. Josh. iv. 6, 7
21—24. 1 Cor. xi. 24—26. i lxxxvi. 5. 15. ciii. 8. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Is. lxiii. 7
Mic. vii. 18, 19. Rom. v. 20, 21. Eph. i. 6—8. 1 Tim. i. 14. k lxxxviii. 38. cxii.

c xcii. 5. civ. 24.
cxxxix. 14. Job
v. 9. ix. 10. xxvi.
12—14. xxxviii.
—xli. Is. xl. 12.
Jer. xxxii. 17—
19. Dan. iv. 3.
Eph. i. 19, 20.
ii. 7—10. Rev.
xv. 3.
d lxxxvii. 11, 12.
civ. 24. 34. cvii.
43. cxliii. 5. Job
xxxvii. 7. Ec.
iii. 11. 1 Pet. i.
10—12.
e xcii. 4. Prov.
xvii. 16. xviii.
1, 2. xxiv. 14.
Rom. i. 28. viii. 6. f xix. 1. cxlv. 5. 10—12. 17. Ex. xv. 6, 7. 11. Eph. i. 6—8
iii. 10. Rev. v. 12—14. g ciii. 17. cxix. 142. 144. Is. li. 5, 6. 8. Dan. ix. 24.
h lxxxviii. 4—8. Ex. xii. 26, 27. xiii. 14, 15. Deut. iv. 9. xxxi. 19, &c. Josh. iv. 6, 7
21—24. 1 Cor. xi. 24—26. i lxxxvi. 5. 15. ciii. 8. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Is. lxiii. 7
Mic. vii. 18, 19. Rom. v. 20, 21. Eph. i. 6—8. 1 Tim. i. 14. k lxxxviii. 38. cxii.

weight of his vengeance; many more will yet be made sensible of the madness of provoking his indignation; and his coming to establish his kingdom, and to judge the world, will be attended with the terror and ruin of every enemy. Let us then bow to the sceptre of his grace, and yield ourselves to be his subjects, with all we are and have, as a free will offering, to be employed for his glory; that we may "love his appearing," as the accomplishment of all our desires and expectations.

NOTES.

PSALM CXI. V. 1. This Psalm consists of as many short metres, as there are letters in the Hebrew alphabet, and in their regular order; so that "Hallelujah" could not be a part of the first verse, as that word begins with the fifth letter of the alphabet. It should, therefore, in general be considered as a title to the Psalms which begin with it; pointing out the scope to the reader, and calling on him to prepare his heart for praising God.—The word rendered "assembly," signifies a *secret council*, or *company*. In the Book of common prayer, it is rendered, "Secretly among the faithful, and in the congregation."—"I will make my thankful acknowledgments to the LORD ... with all my heart and soul; and that, not only in the private society of those good men, whom I am more intimately acquainted withal; but in the publick congregation of all his people." *Bp. Patrick*. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2, 3. The works of God, in creation and providence, are grand displays of his power and majesty; and all who take pleasure in meditation on the divine perfections will, as they have opportunity, bestow pains to understand his works. (*Notes*, xcii. 4—7. civ. 34, 35. cvii. 33—43. Hos. xiv. 9.) But especially the work of Redemption is "beauty and glory;" being the display of his everlasting righteousness, in harmony with his mercy, and truth, and wisdom, in pardoning, justifying, and saving sinners. (*Notes*, Is. li. 4—8. Dan. ix. 24.)

V. 4. "He hath appointed a memorial for his wonderful works." This is a literal translation of the clause.—It is probable, that the passover was specially meant; though all the appointed feasts of Israel were memorials of the wonderful works of God for that nation. (*Notes*, Ex. xiii. 8—10. Josh. iv. 3—9. P. O.) Our Redeemer appointed a memorial of his wonderful grace and compassion in dying for our salvation, when he instituted the Lord's supper, saying, "Do this in remembrance of me." (*Notes*, Matt. xxvi. 26—28. 1 Cor. xi. 23—28.)—*Gracious*, &c.] *Marg. Ref.* i. Note, cii. 6—8, v. 8

1 xxxiv. 9, 10. 5 He ¹hath given * meat unto them
xxxvii. 3. Is. that fear him: ^m he will ever be mind-
xxxiii. 16. Matt. ful of his covenant.
vi. 26—33. Luke
xii. 30.

* Heb. prey. 6 He hath ⁿshewed his people the
in lxxxix. 34. cv. power of his works, ^othat he may
8. cvi. 45. Neh. give them the heritage of the hea-
i. 5. Dan. ix. 4. then.
Luke i. 72.
n lxxviii. 12, &c.
cv. 27, &c.
Deut. iv. 32—
38. Josh. iii. 14
—17. vi. 20. x.
13, 14.

o ii. 8. xliv. 2. 7 The ^pworks of his hands *are* ve-
lxxviii. 55. lxxx. rity and judgment: ^qall his command-
8. cv. 44. ments *are* sure.

p lxxxv. 10. 8 ^rThey ^tstand fast for ever and
lxxxix. 14. ever
xcviii. 3. Deut. r Matt.
xxxii. 4. 2 Tim.
ii. 13. Rev. xv. 3, 4.
v. 18. Rom. iii. 31.

q xix. 7. cv. 8. cxix. 86. 151. 160.
† Heb. are established.

ever, and ^sare done in truth and up-
rightness.

9 He ^tsent redemption unto his
people: ^uhe hath commanded his co-
venant for ever: ^vholy and reverend
is his name.

10 The ^yfear of the LORD is the be-
ginning of wisdom: ^za ²good under-
standing have all they that ³do *his com-*
mandments: ^ahis praise endureth for
ever.

Ec. xii. 13. † Or, good success. i. 3. Josh. i. 7, 8. Prov. iii. 4.
2 Tim. iii. 15—17. ‡ Heb. do them. John xiii. 17. Rev. xxii. 14.
21. 23. John v. 44. xii. 43. Rom. ii. 7. 29. 1 Cor. iv. 5. 2 Cor. iv. 17. 1 Pet. i. 7.

xix. 9. cxix. 127,
128. Rom. vii. 12.
t cxxx. 7, 8. Ex.
xv. 13. Deut. xv.
15. Is. xlv. 6
lxiii. 9. Luke i.
68. Eph. i. 7. 14.
Tit. ii. 14. Heb.
ix. 12. 1 Pet. i.
18—20. Rev. v. 9
u 5. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.
1 Chr. xvi. 15. 1a
lv. 3. Jer. xxxiii.
20, 21. Gal. iii. 15—
17. Heb. xiii. 20.
x lxxxix. 7. xcix. 3.
5. 9. Ex. xv. 11.
Deut. xxviii. 58.
Is. vi. 3. Mal. i.
11. ii. 2. Luke i.
49. Rev. iv. 8.
y Job xxviii. 28.
Prov. i. 7. ix. 10.
z Deut. iv. 6.
a Matt. xxv.

V. 5. *Meat.*] *Prey*, (marg.) or a portion. ‘God hath given to his people all that was necessary for them; and will do still even for his covenant’s sake; and in this sense the Hebrew word is taken, *Prov.* xxx. 8. and xxxi. 15.’ —‘He gave them food, even manna, which recalled God’s other wonders to remembrance: whence it was ordered to be preserved in the ark. *Ex.* xvi. 32. It was a figure of the eucharist, which truly is an eternal monument of divine love.’ *Bossuet in Bp. Horne.* I must however observe on this remark of a learned and eloquent popish prelate, that as the manna was only a figure, so the eucharist is no more than a sign of the thing signified, and a pledge to assure the believing communicant of the blessings thus represented to him. Manna prefigured, and the eucharist commemorates, Christ, “the Bread of Life, who came down from heaven,” and died on the cross, that he might give life unto the world. (*Notes, John* vi. 28—58.)

V. 6—8. The power of the works, by which the Lord put Israel in possession of Canaan, was displayed in judgments on his enemies, and in fulfilling his faithful promises to his people, according to those *appointments*, or *decrees*, which he had made sure and established for ever, and which in due time he most punctually accomplished. ‘All his orders of either kind’ (that is, whether of mercy or judgment,) ‘are in pursuance of most righteous decrees.’ *Bp. Patrick.* The word (פְּקֻדִּים) rendered “commandments,” seems in this connexion to mean, the purposes and revelations, which God had made concerning Israel, which were performed when he put them in possession of Canaan: but these were only shadows of his purposes and promises to the true Israel, the church of the redeemed. (*Note, Heb.* xii. 22—25, v. 23.)

V. 9, 10. The Israelites were slaves in Egypt, but God “sent redemption” to them. “He gave Egypt for their ransom,” and rescued them by his almighty arm; according to the covenant which he had established with Abraham, and which could not be disannulled. (*Notes, cxxx. 7, 8. Ex.* xv. 13. *Neh.* ix. 8. *Is.* xliii. 3, 4. *lxiii.* 7—14. *Luke* i. 67—75.) Thus he displayed his holy name, and shewed that, as his enemies had abundant cause to tremble at his power, so his people ought to “serve him with reverence and godly fear.” And indeed this “fear of the LORD is the beginning” or principal part, of true wisdom, and makes way for the attainment of all the rest. (*Notes, cxii.* 1. *Gen.* xxii. 11, 12, v. 12. *Job.* xxviii. 23—28, v. 28. *Prov.* i. 7. *Ec.* xii. 11—14, v. 13.) “The

“fear of God” is the first step to salvation, as it exciteth the sinner to depart from evil, and to do good, to implore pardon, and to sue for grace, to apply to a Saviour for the one, and to a Sanctifier for the other. Religion is the perfection of wisdom, practice the best instructor, and thanksgiving the sweetest recreation.’ *Bp. Horne.*—“A good understanding is to them who practise these things: His praise endureth for ever.”—Those who do these things will praise God for ever; or they will be honoured for ever. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Reverend.* (9) The same word is often rendered *terrible*. (*xlvi.* 2. *lxvi.* 3. 5. *Neh.* i. 5.) One, whom all have cause to fear and reverence with holy awe. (*Notes, xlvii.* 1—3, v. 2. *Heb.* xii. 26—29, v. 29.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Exhortations should always be seconded by example, if we would render them effectual.—In worshipping God, we should be careful to approve our hearts sincere before him, and to have our affections lively. We ought also to be avowed in our grateful praises, and present them in the select companies of upright believers, and in the great congregations which assemble for publick worship: for this has a powerful tendency to make known his glory, and to animate and edify his people.—At the first glance, we may perceive a majesty and greatness in all the works of God; and there is nothing mean or trivial to be any where discovered in them. And if we have any taste for sublimity, grandeur, and beauty, we shall take peculiar pleasure in investigating the works of creation and providence; and in admiring the discoveries, which are made, of the divine wisdom, power, and goodness, in every one of them, the minute as well as the immense. But without a relish for the spiritual excellency of true holiness, we shall not find abiding satisfaction in looking into the greatest and most wonderful of all the works of God: nor shall we deduce profitable conclusions from any of our investigations, or learn from them to love, trust, and serve the Lord, with joy and gratitude; and then, how incapable must we remain of the employment and happiness of heaven! Indeed the administration of his universal kingdom is honourable: “the ministration of condemnation and death itself is glorious; but the ministration of righteousness and of the Spirit exceeds in glory.” (*Note, 2 Cor.* iii. 7—11.) This is the fullest display of all his harmonious attributes, which JEHOVAH has ever made: his everlasting righteousness here

PSALM CXII.

The believer's character, privileges, and final felicity, 1—9. The anguish and despair of the wicked,

* Heb *Hallelujah*. cxi. 1. cxlvii. 1. cxlviii. 11—14. 10. cl. 1. *margins*.
 * See on cxi. 10. —cxv. 7—13. cxxviii. 1. cxlv. 19. Is. 1. 10. Luke i. 50.
 d i. 1, 2. xl. 8. cxix. 16. 35. 47. 48. 70—72. 97. 143. Rom. vii. 22. viii. 6.
 c xxv. 13. xxxvii. 26. cii. 28. Gen. xvii. 7. xxii. 17. 18. Prov. xx. 7. Jer. xxvii. 39. Acts ii. 39.

PRAISE ye the LORD. ^a Blessed is the man *that* feareth the LORD, *that* ^b delighteth greatly in his commandments.

2 ^c His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

shines forth, connected with the exercise of boundless mercy; and being "gracious, and full of compassion," he has *here* "made his wonderful works to be had in remembrance." (Notes, lxxxv. 10—13. Luke ii. 8—14. Eph. ii. 4—10. iii. 9—12. 1 Pet. i. 10—12.) As the Israelites subsisted on the manna, so the great Redeemer has given his flesh for the life of the world; and while he sustains our souls in so wonderful a manner, he will not starve our bodies, or our families.—If the Lord, "being mindful of "his covenant" with Abraham, "shewed his people the "power of his works, that he might give them the heritage of the heathen;" he will shew his true people, who are interested in the covenant of grace, greater things, that he may put them in possession of their heavenly inheritance. The works of his hands are wrought in performance of his promises, or in executing his threatenings; "and are done in verity and judgment." As his holy law is established on an immutable basis; so all his commandments, given for the salvation of his people, are sure, and "stand fast for ever," being "done in truth and uprightness." Having sent his people a redemption of a far nobler nature, than that of Israel out of Egypt; he has ratified his covenant with them for ever, by his irrevocable word. His name is holy and terrible; and as sinners tremble before him, so saints should stand in awe of his infinite Majesty. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of "wisdom." No man is wise who does not fear him, and no man acts wisely except as he is influenced by that fear: this will always lead us to repentance, to faith in Christ, and to watchful and conscientious obedience. Those who act in this manner, are of a good understanding, however poor, unlearned, or despised they may be in the world: and as God will be praised and glorified in and by them for ever, so will they be honoured of him, and commended for their wisdom by their fellow-servants, for ever and ever.

NOTES.

PSALM CXII. V. 1. It should be remarked, that the Septuagint place the word "*Hallelujah*," as the title to this and similar psalms.—"This Psalm is composed after 'the very same manner with the former; and seems intended for a short commentary upon the last verse of it.' Bp. Patrick.—The wise man is happy: "the fear of the "LORD is the beginning of wisdom." Where the true fear of God possesses the heart, the man will love God's com-

3 ^d Wealth and riches *shall be* in his house; ^e and his righteousness endureth for ever.

4 Unto the upright ^f there ariseth light in the darkness: ^g he is gracious, and full of compassion, ^h and righteous.

5 A ⁱ good man ^k sheweth favour and lendeth: ^l he will guide his affairs with

^{*} discretion.

9. Eph. iv. 32. v. 1, 2. 9. Col. iii. 12, 13. h Tit ii. 11, 12. 1 John ii. 29. iii. 7. 10. i Prov. ii. 20. xii. 2. Luke xxiii. 50. Acts xi. 24. Rom. v. 7. k xxxvii. 25, 26. Deut. xv. 7—10. Job xxxi. 16—20. Luke vi. 35. l Prov. xvii. 18. xviii. 9. xxii. 26, 27. xxiv. 27. 30—34. xxvii. 23—27. John vi. 12. Rom. xii. 11. Col. iv. 5. † Heb. judgment. Phil. i. 9.

d Prov. iii. 6. xv. 6. Is. xxxiii. 6. Matt. vi. 33. 2 Cor. vi. 10. Phil. iv. 18, 19. 1 Tim. vi. 6—8. e 9. cxi. 3. 10. Is. xxxii. 17. li. 8. Matt. xxiv. 22—24. f xxxvii. 6. xcvi. 11. Job xi. 17. Is. 1. 10. Mic. vii. 8, 9. Mal. iv. 2. John xii. 46. g cvi. 1. Luke vi. 36. 2 Cor. viii. 8. 1 John ii. 29. iii. 7. 10. k xxxvii. 25, 26. l Prov. xvii. 18. xviii. 9. xxii. 26, 27. xxiv. 27. 30—34. xxvii. 23—27. John vi. 12. Rom. xii. 11. Col. iv. 5. † Heb. judgment. Phil. i. 9.

mandments, greatly delight in obeying them, and only grieve that he "cannot do the things that he would:" and in proportion he will be happy in this world, and he will be perfectly happy in heaven for ever. (Notes, i. 1—3. cxix. 1—6. John iv. 31—34. Rom. vii. 22—25. Gal. v. 16—18, v. 17. 1 John v. 1—3.)

V. 2, 3. It is probable, that Lot thought of enriching his family, when he chose the fertile plains of wicked Sodom; yet the event was very different: but Abraham "feared "the LORD, and delighted greatly in his commandments;" and his descendants were "mighty on earth:" (Notes, Gen. xiii. 8—12. 14. xviii. 18, 19.) And thus it will generally be, in every age, with the posterity of those who imitate the father of the faithful; and their disinterested and liberal conduct shall prove, in the event, a far preferable inheritance laid up for their children, than gold and silver, houses and lands, would have been. (Notes, xxxvii. 25, 26. cxi. 9, 10. Prov. iii. 16, 17. xii. 3. xv. 6. xx. 7. Is. li. 4—8. Matt. vi. 33, 34. Rom. v. 1, 2. viii. 35—39. 1 Cor. iii. 18—23. 2 Cor. vi. 3—10. 1 Tim. iv. 6—10. vi. 6—10.)

V. 4. The upright believer is a follower, or imitator, of his God and Saviour, especially in kindness, and compassion, and equity. (Marg. Ref.) 'The Christian's 'temper is framed after the pattern of his Master; and he 'is ever ready to shew to others, that love and mercy which 'have been shewn to him.' Bp. Horne. In this world, even men of this character may and will have darkness, or affliction; but light, or comfort, and joy, will arise in the midst of it. (Notes, xxxiv. 15—20. xxxvii. 27—38. xcvi. 11. Rom. v. 3—5.)

V. 5. (Marg. Ref.) 'He leads the most comfortable 'life, who...supplies the needs of others; giving to one, 'and lending to another, as occasion serves: and yet 'ordering all his affairs so judiciously, that he doth not 'impair, but rather maintain, the good estate of his own 'family.' Bp. Patrick.—This sentiment, which our translation establishes, is very beautiful and scriptural: yet the original words do not obviously convey it; but rather, that the upright man conducts all his concerns with "judgment," or equity. (Marg.) He is first *just*, then liberal. Each of the interpretations conveys its appropriate instruction. 'He who thus employeth his talents for the benefit 'of mankind, will be able to render a good account to his 'Lord who intrusteth them with him.' Bp. Horne.—Lendeth.] Notes, Deut. xv. 9, 10. Prov. vi. 1—5. Luke vi. 27—38.

^m xv. 5. lxii. 2. 6. **6** ^m Surely he shall not be moved for ever: ⁿ the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.

ⁿ Neh. xiii. 22. **7** He ^o shall not be afraid of evil tidings: ^p his heart is fixed, ^q trusting in the LORD.

^o xxvii. 1—3. **8** ^r His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, ^s until he see *his desire* upon his enemies.

^p lvii. 7. cxviii. 6. ^q lxii. 8. lxiv. 10. cxviii. 8, 9. John xiv. 1. Acts xxvii. 25. ^r xxvii. 14. xxxi. 24. Heb. xiii. 9. ^s lix. 10. xci. 8. xcii. 11. cxviii. 7.

9 ^t He hath ^u dispersed, he hath given to the poor; ^v his righteousness endureth for ever; ^w his horn shall be exalted with honour.

10 The ^x wicked shall see *it*, and be grieved; ^y he shall gnash with his teeth, ^z and melt away: ^a the desire of the wicked shall perish.

^t 2 Cor. ix. 9. ^u Deut. xv. 11. ^v Prov. xi. 24, 25. ^w xix. 17. Ec. xi. 1, 2. 6. Is. xxxii. 8. lviii. 7. 10. Mark xiv. 7. Luke xi. 41. xii. 33. xviii. 22. John xiii. 29. Acts iv. 35. xx. 35. Rom. xii. 13. 2 Cor. viii. 9. ix. 10—15. 1 Tim. vi. 18. Heb. xiii. 16. Jam. ii. 15, 16. 1 John iii. 16—18. ^x See on 3.—Deut. xxiv. 13. Matt. vi. 4. Luke xiv. 12—14. xvi. 9. Heb. vi. 10. ^y lxxv. 10. xcii. 10. 1 Sam. ii. 1. 30. ^z Esth. vi. 11, 12. Is. lxx. 13, 14. Luke xiii. 28. xvi. 23. ^a xxxvii. 12. Matt. xxii. 13. Rev. xvi. 10, 11. ^b lviii. 7, 8. ^c Prov. x. 28. xi. 7. Luke xvi. 24—26.

V. 6. The man, of whom the Psalmist spake, possessed the “things which accompany salvation,” and would therefore most surely be “kept by the power of God through faith,” to the eternal enjoyment of it. (Notes, xxxvii. 23, 24. Heb. vi. 9, 10. 1 Pet. i. 3—5.) “When his work is done, his body will go to its repose in the dust; but the “memorial” of his name and good deeds will be still fresh as the morning breeze, and fragrant as the flower of the spring.” Bp. Horne. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Prov. x. 7. Matt. xxvi. 6—13.)—It is, however, in heaven alone, that all persons of this character will be remembered, and that for ever.

V. 7. Dismaying fear of outward calamities, or even of death and judgment, arises, either from entire unbelief, or from weakness of faith and want of assured hope: and these are frequently the effect of a comparatively negligent and unfruitful conduct. But the character here described is strong in faith and hope, and very diligent and fruitful; and thus exempted from those terrors which distress others. (Notes, xi. 1—5. xxvii. 1—3. lvi. 3, 4. Prov. xviii. 10, 11. xxviii. 1. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. Matt. viii. 23—27.)

V. 8. “No tidings of calamity and destruction can shake his confidence in God; but he will hear the trump of God, and behold the world in flames, rather with joy than with dread; as knowing, by those tokens, that the hour of his redemption is come, when he shall see his enemies, and even death, the last of them, under his feet.” Bp. Horne.—Desire.] Note, xcii. 11.

V. 9. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Prov. xi. 24, 25. Ec. xi. 1—6. Is. lviii. 5—12. 2 Cor. ix. 6—15. Heb. vi. 9, 10.—“He hath dispersed, and given to the poor:” “Dispersed like precious seed, with prudence and discretion, according to the nature of the soil, and in proper season, so as to produce the most plentiful harvest. Therefore “his “righteousness endureth for ever;” its fruits and its good report are lasting among men; and it is never forgotten before God.” Bp. Horne.

V. 10. The word, rendered “grieved,” is literally *enraged*: and it may be easily conceived, how persecutors especially will be filled with rage and madness, when they witness the final triumph, and exalted honour, and complete felicity, of the very persons whom they most implacably hate, connected with the entire and final disappointment of all their hopes, and the blackness of misery and despair. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Matt. viii. 10—12, v. 12. Luke. xiii. 22—30, v. 28.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The blessed Redeemer so delighted in the commandments of the Lord, that it was his meat to obey them per-

fectly, in the midst of temptation and sufferings. (Note, John iv. 31—34.) His true disciples, whom he owns as brethren, share his unsearchable riches and his everlasting righteousness; and, being blessed in him, according to the degree of their faith and grace, they bear his image and tread in his steps. They are taught to fear the Lord, as well as to love and praise him; and they delight greatly in the law of God, though not able perfectly to obey it. Blessings are laid up for them and their posterity; and as much of this world’s possessions as can be profitable to them. In their darkest hours, the light of hope and peace springs up within them, and seasonable relief, from time to time, in answer to their prayers, turns their mourning into joy and thankful praises. From their Lord’s example, they learn to be “gracious and full of compassion,” as well as just in all their dealings: they shew favour, and give or lend to the poor and needy, as occasion requires and ability is afforded; and they are instructed to employ frugality and discretion in their affairs, as means of being enabled to exercise liberality. But as they should not dissipate their substance in needless expense, nor bury their talent in a napkin; so they ought not to give it away at random, but to disperse their bounty, (as the husbandman does his seed,) in that measure and manner, which is likely to produce the most good to mankind. But alas! it must be owned that only some, nay but few, of those, who contend zealously for the doctrines of the gospel, exhibit such a character as is here drawn; especially in imitating the Saviour’s compassionate, self-denying, liberal love: and it is worthy of enquiry, whether the fears, and doubts, and complaints, of which we hear more at present than of “the voice of joy and praise,” and the language of unshaken confidence in God amidst dangers and alarms, do not arise from this source. The Lord deals with such persons, as they do with the poor; he metes to them their own measure: and no wonder they have but little comfort, who do so little to make their brethren comfortable; and but little confidence, who are so deficient in scriptural evidences of conversion. But those, who shew their faith by their works, in the way and degree here described, most certainly have a “righteousness which endureth for ever,” and they shall never be separated from the love of God their Saviour. Envy and detraction may for a time hide their true characters; but “they shall be had in everlasting remembrance.” They need not, and ought not, to be “afraid of evil tidings:” and by steadfastly trusting in the Lord, they rise above terror, when they hear of wars, pestilences, earthquakes, or famines; and even at the approach of death, and in the day of judgment, they shall have confidence. Then they will behold their enemies confounded

PSALM CXIII.

The servants of JEHOVAH are exhorted to praise his glorious majesty, his condescension, and kindness, in his kingdom of providence and grace, 1—9.

* Heb. *Hallelujah*.
cxii. 1.

a xxxiii. 1, 2. ciii.
20, 21. cxxxiv.
1. cxxxv. 1—3.

20. cxlv. 10.
Eph. v. 19, 20.

Rev. xix. 5.

b xli. 13. cvi. 48.

1 Chr. xvi. 36.
xxix. 10—13.

Dan. ii. 20. Eph.
iii. 21. Rev. v.
13.

c lxxii. 11, 17—19.

lxxxvi. 9. Is.
xxiv. 16. xlii. 10

—12. xlix. 13.
lix. 19. Hab. ii.

14. Mal. i. 11.
Rom. xv. 9, 10.

Rev. xi. 15.
d xcvi. 9. xcix. 2.

Is. xl. 15. 17. 22.

* **PRAISE** ye the LORD. * Praise, O ye servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD.

2 ^b Blessed be the name of the LORD from this time forth, and for evermore.

3 From ^c the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, the LORD's name *is* to be praised.

4 The LORD *is* ^d high above all na-

tions, and ^e his glory above the heavens.

5 Who *is* ^f like unto the LORD our God, who [†] dwelleth on high;

6 Who ^g humbleth *himself* to behold *the things that are* in heaven, and ^h in the earth!

7 He ⁱ raiseth up the poor ^k out of the dust, and lifteth ^l the needy out of the dunghill;

8 That ^m he may set *him* with princes, even with the princes of his people.

9 He ⁿ maketh the barren woman to [†] keep house, and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the LORD.

xli. 41. Phil. ii. 8—11. Rev. v. 9, 10. n lxxviii. 6. Gen. xxi. 5—7. xxv. 21. xxx. 22, 23. 1 Sam. ii. 5. Is. liv. 1. Luke i. 13—15. Gal. iv. 27. [†] Heb. *dwelt in an house*.

viii. 1. lvii. 10, 11. 1 Kings viii. 27. Is. lxvi. 1. f lxxxix. 6. 8. Ex. xv. 11. Deut. xxxiii. 26. Is. xl. 18. 25. xlv. 5. Jer. x. 6. g Heb. *exalteth himself to dwell*. h xi. 4. Job iv. 18. xv. 15. Is. vi. 2. i lxxv. 6, 7. cvii. 41. Job v. 11. 15, 16. Ez. xvii. 24. xxi. 26, 27. Luke i. 52, 53. Jam. ii. 5. k xxii. 15. Is. xxvi. 19. Dan. xii. 2, 3. Acts ii. 31—33. Eph. i. 20, 21. 1 Pet. iii. 21, 22. l 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. xxiv. 14. 2 Sam. vii. 8, 9. Job ii. 8. xxxvi. 6, 7. m lxxviii. 13. Gen. xxi. 5—7. xxv. 21. [†] Heb. *dwelt*

and condemned: the fruits and evidences of their faith and love will be produced before men and angels, and their horn shall be exalted with eternal honour. (*Notes, Matt. xxv. 31—40.*) But their felicity will increase the torment of the wicked, who shall “gnash with their teeth and consume away;” while all their desires and expectations shall close in eternal disappointment and despair. Lord, form us by thy grace to the character of thy redeemed people, that we may possess their unspeakable felicity!

NOTES.

PSALM CXIII. V. 1. We are informed by the Jewish writers, that this psalm and the five following, were sung at their feasts, especially after the celebration of the pass-over. (*Note, Matt. xxvi. 30—35, v. 30.*)—“By this often ‘repetition, he stirreth up our cold dulness to praise God.’ (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 2, 3. ‘If God’s glory shine through all the world, and therefore of all ought to be praised; what great condemnation were it to his people, among whom chiefly it ‘shineth, if they should not earnestly extol his name!’ (*Marg. Ref.*)—These verses may be considered as a prophecy of the final prevalence of true religion; when all nations shall unite in the high praises of JEHOVAH, as God our Saviour. (*Note, lxxii. 17—19.*)

V. 4—6. *Notes, lxxxix. 6—12. xcvi. 8, 9. Ex. xv. 11. Is. xl. 18—26. lvii. 15, 16. Jer. x. 6—8. Mic. vii. 18—20.*

V. 7, 8. The advancement of Joseph, of David, and others, from a low condition to the highest authority, seems alluded to; as illustrating the providential dispensations of God, and the methods of his grace. (*Notes, lxxviii. 70—72. cv. 17—22. 1 Sam. ii. 4—8. Ez. xvii. 22—24. Luke i. 46—55. Rev. v. 8—10.*)

V. 9. This verse may be thus rendered, perhaps more literally, “He maketh her who was barren in the family, ‘to sit as a joyful mother of sons.’” The instances of Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, the mother of Sampson, Hannah, the woman of Shunem, and Elizabeth, who were long barren, but were at length made joyful mothers, by the special blessing of God, are supposed to have been emblems of the calling of the Gentiles; when that immense proportion of the earth, which had so long been barren, pro-

duced multitudes of true converts, the sons and daughters of the church, and of the Lord almighty who has espoused her unto himself. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Is. liv. 1—5. Gal. iv. 21—31.*)—The Psalm begins and ends with “Hallelujah.”

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The redeemed servants of the Lord may well sing his praises, when employed in his pleasant service, and enjoying the comfort of his presence and favour. His name shall be blessed from age to age, to the end of time and to eternity: and he will ere long be praised, “from the ‘rising of the sun to the going down of the same.’” His unequalled and infinite majesty becomes the more glorious by his unspeakable condescension. (*Notes, xi. 4, 5. cxxxviii. 6. 2 Cor. viii. 6—9. Phil. ii. 5—11.*) He is not only high above all nations, but his glory is above the very heavens in which he dwells. He humbles himself in noticing the concerns, and in accepting the exalted adorations, of angels and archangels. How vast then must be his condescension, in attending to the interests, and in regarding the worship, of us mean, polluted sinners on earth! How inconceivable his love in assuming our nature, and tabernacling among us, that he might ransom our guilty souls!—In his providence, the Lord sometimes raises men from the most abject to the most honourable stations in society; and it is well when they acquit themselves properly in their new dignities. But this is his constant method in his kingdom of grace. He takes us beggars, debtors, nay, rebels and traitors, from the dust, the dunghill, or the dungeon, to be his favourites, and his children; to be kings and priests unto him: and thus he numbers us with the princes of his chosen people. He gives us all our comforts; which are generally the more welcome, when they have been long delayed, and were no longer expected. Nor should the hint be overlooked, that joyful mothers should cheerfully bear the *confinement* of tending on their beloved children.—But while we bless the Lord, for favouring the Gentile world with the joy of his salvation; let us pray, constantly and fervently, that those lands, which are yet barren, may, by the genial influence of his gospel, become fruitful, and produce numerous converts, who may join with us in praising the Lord for ever: adding

PSALM CXIV.

The powerful presence of God with Israel, when he brought them out of Egypt, and led them through the wilderness into Canaan, admired and adored in exalted strains, 1—8.

WHEN ^a Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from ^b a people of strange language;

2 ^c Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion.

3 The ^d sea saw it, and fled; ^e Jordan was driven back.

4 The ^f mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs.

5 ^g What ailed thee, O thou sea,

that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, *that* thou wast driven back?

6 Ye mountains, *that* ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like lambs?

7 ^h Tremble, thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob;

8 Which ⁱ turned the rock *into* a standing water, the flint into a fountain of waters.

PSALM CXV.

The Psalmist calls on God to vindicate his own honour against the reproaches of idolaters, 1—3. He exposes the vanity of idols and the folly of idolaters, 4—8. He exhorts Israel to trust in the Lord, who will not fail to bless his church, 9—18.

^a Ex. xii. 42. xlii. 3. xx. 2. Deut. xvi. 1. xxvi. 8. Is. xi. 16. ^b lxxxvi. 5. Gen. xlii. 23. ^c Ex. vi. 7. xix. 5. 6. xxv. 8. xxix. 45, 46. Lev. xi. 45. Deut. xxiii. 14. Ez. xxxvii. 26—28. 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17. Rev. xxi. 3. ^d lxxxvii. 16. civ. 7. cvi. 9. Ex. xiv. 21. xv. 8. Is. lxiii. 12. Hab. iii. 8, 15. ^e lxxxiv. 15. Josh. iii. 13—16. Hab. iii. 9. ^f xxix. 6. lxxviii. 16. Ex. xix. 18. xx. 18. Judg. v. 4, 5. Jer. iv. 23, 24. Mic. i. 3, 4. Nah. i. 5. Hab. iii. 6. 2 Pet. iii. 7—11. Rev. xx. 11. ^g Jer. xlvii. 6, 7. Hab. iii. 8.

^h lxxxvii. 18. xcvi. 4, 5. civ. 32. Job ix. 6. xxvi. 11. Is. lxiv. 1—3. Jer. v. 22. ⁱ lxxxviii. 15, 16. cv. 41. Ex. xvii. 6. Num. xx. 11. Deut. viii. 15. Neh. ix. 15. 1 Cor. x. 4.

also our most strenuous endeavours, as we have ability and opportunity, to forward that happy event. (Notes, lxxvii. 6, 7. Matt. vi. 9, 10.)

NOTES.

PSALM CXIV. V. 1, 2. When God brought Israel out of Egypt, he manifested his presence among them, as “his sanctuary” in which he had chosen to reside; and he exercised “dominion” over them, in the most open and explicit manner, giving laws, inflicting punishments on the refractory, and protecting his loyal subjects against all enemies. (Marg. Ref.)

Strange language. (1) ^{יָבִיחַ}. *Ex laas Garbars*. Sept.—The word occurs in no other place in scripture: but the modern Jews use it. (Note, lxxxvi. 1—5, v. 5.)—*Was his sanctuary*. (2) The name of Lord, or God, is not used, but a pronoun without an antecedent is substituted; which abrupt opening seems to express how full the heart of the Psalmist was of his subject, and of the glorious Lord whose works he celebrated. (Note, John xx. 11—17, v. 15.)

V. 3—8. Few passages can any where be found, and probably none except in the oracles of God, which unite so much sublimity and simplicity, as these verses do. They are inexpressibly beautiful, and in the highest style of poetry; and need attention, more than explanation.—The fifth verse is literally; ‘What to thee, O sea, that thou fleddest? &c.’ (Notes, xxix. 3—11. lxxvii. 14—20. xcvi. 11—13. Is. lv. 12, 13. Nah. i. 2—6. Hab. iii. 8—10. Heb. xii. 18—21. Rev. vi. 12—17. xx. 11—15.) The deliverance of Israel, and the visible effects of Omnipotence attending it, may be considered as a figure of the establishment of Christianity, and the fall of opposing powers before it; for which no adequate cause can be assigned, except “that it was of God, and men could not overturn it.” (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xvii. 5, 6. Is. xlii. 14—21.) ‘The composition of this short Psalm is extremely beautiful. It commences with the simplicity of plain narration (1), but rises prodigiously as it proceeds. The inspired Poet, describing the scene, is at once transported to the spot, sees what he relates, and demands the cause

(5): when, suddenly overawed himself by the sense of the present Deity, he joins in calling upon the whole earth to “tremble at the presence of the God of Jacob” (7).’

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When the Lord comes for the salvation of his chosen people, he redeems them from the power of sin and Satan, and separates them from an ungodly world, and its maxims, customs, and language: he forms them to be his temple, and he becomes their King. From that time he stands engaged by promises to make them his peculiar care; he meets them in his ordinances; and causes the whole course of nature, and all the dispensations of his providence, to concur in doing them good. Having, as it were, divided the Red sea, to bring them out of bondage, at their conversion; he will surely divide Jordan, to open them a safe passage to their heavenly inheritance. All things, even death itself, are their’s; (Note, 1 Cor. iii. 18—23, v. 21, 22;) and all nature shall sooner change its settled course, than one of his promises shall fail.—As the Son of God, the Rock of ages, gave himself to death, to open a fountain to wash away their sins, and to supply them with the waters of life and consolation; while they are washing in that fountain and drinking of those waters, they cannot possible think any thing too great to expect from his unfathomable love.—But, if the inanimate creation is represented as trembling at the presence of the Creator, how should sinners fear before their just and holy Governor and Judge His voice from mount Sinai may well alarm those, who have broken that holy law, and yet remain under the curse of it; and they, who neglect the great salvation of the gospel, are liable to another and more terrible condemnation: but none will be so dreadfully punished, as those, who injure the Lord’s chosen people, and try to obstruct them in their pilgrimage. What will be their consternation, when the Judge shall appear, and all the creation shall melt, or vanish, at his presence! Let us therefore now prepare to meet our God, that we may neither be terrified nor “ashamed, but have confidence before him, at his coming.”

NOT ^a unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, ^b for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.

2 ^c Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God?

3 But ^d our God is in the heavens: ^e he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

4 Their ^f idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not:

6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not:

7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat.

8 They that ^g make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.

9 O ^h Israel, ⁱ trust thou in the LORD: he is ^k their Help and their Shield.

10 O ^l house of Aaron, trust in the LORD: he is their Help and their Shield.

11 ^m Ye that fear the LORD, trust in the LORD: he is their Help and their Shield.

12 The LORD ⁿ hath been mindful of us; he will bless us: ^o he will bless the house of Israel; he will bless the house of Aaron.

13 He will ^p bless them that fear the LORD ^q both small ^r and great.

14 The ^s LORD shall increase you more and more, ^t you and your children.

15 Ye are ^u blessed of the LORD, which ^v made heaven and earth.

16 The ^w heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD's: ^x but the earth hath he given to the children of men.

17 The ^y dead praise not the LORD, neither any that ^z go down into silence.

18 But ^{aa} we will bless the LORD from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the LORD.

lxvi. 1. Lam. iii. 66. John xiv. 2. y Gen. i. 28—30. ix. 1—3. Jer. xxvii. 5, 6. z vi. 5. xxx. 9. lxxxviii. 10—12. Is. xxxviii. 18, 19. 17. 1 Sam. ii. 9. b cxlii. 2. cxviii. 17—19. cxlv. 2. 21. Dan. ii. 20. Rev. v. 13.

NOTES.

PSALM CXV. V. 1, 2. 'Because he promised to deliver them, not for their sakes, but for his name; they ground their prayer upon this promise.'—The verses are evidently a prayer for deliverance, though often quoted as a thanksgiving for benefits received; and they may properly be thus applied. God was intreated to help his people; not because they deserved it, or that they might be honoured; but that his name might be glorified, and the blasphemies of his enemies silenced, by the performance of his faithful and merciful engagements to his worshippers. (Notes, lxxiv. 10, 11. 21, 22. lxxix. 8—13. Deut. xxxii. 26, 27. 2 Kings xix. 14—19. Joel ii. 15—17.) Perhaps the psalm was written during Sennacherib's invasion of Judah.

V. 3—7. (Notes, ii. 4—6. Is. xlv. 10, 11. Dan. iv. 34—37. Matt. vi. 9. Eph. i. 9—12.) 'A beautiful contrast is formed between the God of Israel, and the heathen idols. He made every thing; they are themselves made by men: he doeth whatsoever he pleaseth; they can do nothing: he seeth the distresses, heareth the prayers, accepteth the offerings, cometh to the assistance, and effecteth the salvation of his servants; they are blind, deaf, and dumb, senseless, motionless, and impotent.' Bp. Horne. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 8. The makers and worshippers of idols renounce their reason and understanding, and willingly become as stupid as the very objects of their worship: "having eyes they see not, having ears they hear not," &c. 'They are spiritually blind, deaf, dumb, lame, impotent; and when their idols are destroyed, they will perish in like

'manner.' Bp. Horne. (Notes, Is. xlv. 9—20. xlv. 20—22. xlv. 5—9. Jer. x. 3—16. Hab. ii. 18—20.)

V. 9—13. The Israelites in general, and the priests in particular, (who were required to teach the people by example, as well as precept,) were exhorted to trust in the Lord; they were reminded how he had, in all ages, shewn himself "the Help and Shield," the Upholder and Defender, of such as thus relied on him; and assured that he would bless without exception, every one of those who feared him. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, cxviii. 1—4. cxxxv. 15—21.) The proselytes also, from other nations, seem intended by those "who fear the LORD."

V. 14—18. The increase of the church, by the conversion of the Gentiles, as well as the still greater prosperity of Israel, is here predicted. (Marg. Ref.)—There is a peculiar animation in the concluding part of the psalm, when considered not so much as praise for benefits received, as the language of faith and hope in urgent difficulties. (Notes, vi. 5. xxx. 9, 10. cxlvi. 5, 6. Is. xxxviii. 17—20.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We have so entirely forfeited all claim to the favour of God, and so evidently deserved his wrath; that, if blessings be conferred on us, the whole honour of them must be rendered to him, who has glorified all his perfections, and especially his "mercy and truth," in the salvation of his people; in pardoning, sanctifying, upholding, and comforting them from day to day; and in supplying all their wants both temporal and spiritual. In like manner, when conscious unworthiness is ready to extinguish our hopes, we have a never-failing plea, in the same important truths; and we may intreat the Lord to save and bless us, for the

PSALM CXVI.

The Psalmist avows his gratitude to God, who had answered his prayers, and brought him out of deep distress; and resolves to worship and serve him all his days, 1—9. He records his temptation to unbelief,

and his victory over it, 10, 11. He determines to perform his vows, and render thanks to God, in the most publick manner, at the sanctuary, 12—19.

I ^a love the LORD, ^b because he hath heard my voice *and* my supplications.

2 Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, ^c therefore will I call upon him ^d * as long as I live.

3 The ^d sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell ^e gat hold upon me: ^f I found trouble and sorrow.

4 Then ^f called I upon the name of the LORD; ^g O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

2 Chr. xxxiii. 12, 13. Is. xxxvii. 15—20. xxxviii. 1—3. Jon. ii. 2. xxv. 17. xl. 12, 13. cxlii. 4—6. cxliii. 6—9. Luke xviii. 13. xxiii. 42, 43.

lv. 16, 17. lxxxvi. 6, 7. lxxxviii. 1, 2. cxlv. 18, 19. Job xxvii. 10. Luke xviii. 1. Phil. iv. 6. Col. iv. 2. Heb. in my days. xviii. 4—6. lxxxviii. 6, 7. Jon. ii. 2, 3. Mark xiv. 33—36. Luke xxii. 44. Heb. v. 7. Heb. found me. xxxii. 3, 4. lxxxviii. 6. Is. liii. 3, 4. xxii. 1—3. xxx. 7, 8. l. 15. cxviii. 5. cxxx. 1, 2. g vi. 4. xxii. 20.

glory of his mercy and truth, in Jesus Christ, when all our other arguments are silenced. For it can never consist with his honour, that his avowed enemies should finally triumph over those, who profess his truth and call upon his name; and thus be emboldened in impiety and infidelity.—Our God is upon his glorious throne, and “doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth:” and the temporary success of his enemies, and troubles of his people, will assuredly end in the greater good of the latter, and the deeper confusion of the former.—While we reflect upon the stupidity of idolaters with indignation and contempt, let us humbly recollect, that we are the same by nature, and remember to give God the whole glory of making us so differ.—Those who reject the gospel, to rely for salvation on themselves; and those who idolize worldly advantages, which cannot profit them in the hour of death, or in the day of judgment; are as fatally deceived as even the worshippers of idols.—But we are called Christians, and some of us sustain the office of ministers, being the spiritual Israel, and the house of Aaron: let us then remember to act consistently with our character and profession: let us not “lean to our own understanding,” depend on our own righteousness and strength, trust in our own hearts, or rely on uncertain riches and the friendship of the world: but let us trust in the Lord alone, for acceptance, assistance, sustenance, protection, comfort, usefulness, and everlasting happiness. “He hath ever been mindful of his servants, and will bless them; even every one of them, who fear him, both small and great.” He will increase the number of his true ministers and people, and prosper them and their children; for they are indeed “the blessed of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.” The heaven, which belongs to him, he reserves as the peculiar inheritance of his children; the earth he has given indiscriminately to the children of men: and wretched will they be, who have no better portion; for indeed they are but stewards, who will shortly be called to give an account of their stewardship. (Notes, Luke xvi. 1—8. 19—31.) But grace is *our own*, and will never be taken from us. As to the rest, a little will bear the expenses of our pilgrimage: let us then be content, and thankful for our allowance, and moderate in the use of it. Let us communicate of our little to those that have less: and, if any have much intrusted to them, let them *prove* their interest in the true riches, by faithfully improving “the mammon of unrighteousness.” (Note, Luke xvi. 9—13.) As death will terminate our opportunities of praising God on earth; let us now redeem the time, that we may glorify him with our

lips and in our lives. Then we shall shortly join the company before the throne, and assist them in blessing our God; and our bodies will be raised from the silent grave, to join in this delightful work to all eternity: while successive generations shall be raised up on earth, increasing multitudes of whom will be zealously employed, in celebrating the praises of our God, till time shall be no more “Hallelujah, Praise the Lord.”

NOTES.

PSALM CXVI. V. 1. Various are the opinions of learned men, concerning the author of this psalm, and the time when it was composed. But perhaps David wrote it; not when persecuted by Saul, (for the sanctuary was not then at Jerusalem,) but either when delivered from Absalom's rebellion, or after some other sharp trial, between the removal of the ark to Zion and that event. (Notes, xxx. 6—8. xxxviii. 1—10. xli. 1—3.)—In several instances, however, the Chaldee dialect is used in it; which makes this opinion doubtful, and seems to indicate a much later period.—The original of this verse is, “I love, because the LORD hath, &c.” The object of the Psalmist's love and gratitude is not mentioned at first, but may be collected from what follows. The abrupt opening was expressive of a full heart. Some render the clause, ‘I am satisfied,’ or ‘I am well pleased;’ but it seems rather more in the manner of Peter's earnest declaration, “Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.” (Note, John xxi. 15—17.)

V. 2. ‘This love of his, in so readily granting my desires, ... encourages and engages me, ... to the last breath of my life, to expect deliverance from him.’ Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xl. 1—5. lv. 17, 18.)

V. 3. The inward anguish of the Psalmist's mind was equal to his outward sufferings. He seemed to feel at once the agonies of death, and that sense of wrath and remorse of conscience, which have in them something of “the pains of hell.” It is by no means natural to interpret both the expressions of the fear or pain of death; or of death, and the grave in which no pains are felt; (Note, xvi. 8—11;) when so obvious an interpretation offers itself, and one so suited to the feelings of every person, who, in great pain of body and remorse of conscience, has been alarmed with the dread of immediate death. (Notes, xviii. 4, 5. xxxii. 3—5. xl. 11, 12. lxxxvi. 12, 13. 2 Sam. xxii. 5, 6.)

V. 4. The expressive brevity of the prayer here mentioned, is well worth noticing. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, cxlii. 4—6. Luke xviii. 9—14, v. 13. xxiii. 39—43, v. 42.)

h lxxxvi. 5. 15. ciii. 8. cxii. 4. cxv. 1. cxlv. 8. Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7. Neh. ix. 17. 31. Dan. ix. 9. Rom. v. 20, 21. Eph. i. 6—8. ii. 4. Tim. i. 14. Tit. iii. 4—7. cxix. 137. cxlv. 4—7. Ezra ix. 15. Neh. ix. 33. Is. xlv. 21. Dan. ix. 7. 14. Rom. iii. 25, 26. 1 John i. 9. k xix. 7. xxv. 21. Is. xxxv. 8. Matt. xi. 28. q Rom. xvi. 19. 2 Cor. i. 12. xi. 3. Col. iii. 22. l lxxix. 8. cvi. 43. cxlii. 6. m xcv. 11. Jer. vi. 16. xxx. 10. Matt. xi. 28, 29. Heb. iv. 8—10. n xiii. 6. cxix. 17. Hos. ii. 7. o lvi. 13. lxxxvi. 13. p Is. xxv. 8. xxxviii. 5. Rev. vii. 17. xxi. 4. q xxxvii. 24. xciv. 18.

5 ^h Gracious is the LORD, ⁱ and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.

6 The LORD ^k preserveth the simple: ^l I was brought low, and he helped me.

7 Return unto ^m thy rest, O my soul; for the LORD hath ⁿ dealt bountifully with thee.

8 For ^o thou hast delivered my soul from death, ^p mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling.

9 I will ^r walk before the LORD ^s in the land of the living.

10 ^t I believed, ^u therefore have I spoken: ^v I was greatly afflicted:

11 I said ^w in my haste, ^x All men are liars.

12 ^y What shall I render unto the LORD ^z for all his benefits toward me?

13 I will ^a take the cup of salvation, and ^b call upon the name of the LORD.

lxi. 7. Gen. xvii. 1. 1 Kings ii. 4. viii. 25. ix. 4. Luke i. 6. 75. xxvii. 13. Is. liii. 8. t 2 Cor. iv. 13. Heb. xi. 1. u Num. xiv. 6—9. Prov. xxi. 28. 2 Pet. i. 16—21. x 3. y xxxi. 22. 1 Sam. xxvii. 1. z 2 Kings iv. 16. 28. Jer. ix. 4, 5. Rom. iii. 4. a li. 12—14. ciii. 2. Is. vi. 5—8. Rom. xii. 1. Cor. vi. 20. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. b 17. Luke xxii. 2. cv. 1. Is. xii. 4.

17, 18. 20. 1 Cor. x. 16. 21. xi. 25—27.

c 2. cv. 1. Is. xii. 4.

V. 5. (*Marg. Ref.*) “A just God and a Saviour;” righteous in shewing mercy to the guilty, as well as faithful to his promises. (*Notes*, lxxxv. 10—13. Is. xlv. 20—22. Rom. iii. 21—26.)

V. 6. The simple are they, who feel themselves liable to be imposed on by designing foes; who are destitute of wisdom and power to deliver themselves; but who renounce all other dependence, to rely wholly on God, and “in simplicity and godly sincerity” to wait on him to save them. (*Marg. Ref.* k.)—Thus the Psalmist, in his greatest extremity, and lowest dejection, relied on the Lord, and sought his help; and the Lord *saved* and delivered him.

V. 7. To know, trust, love, and delight in God, is the “rest” of rational creatures. (*Note*, xc. 1, 2.) This is forsaken through sin; and hence arises the restlessness of mankind: but the believer has returned to God, through the Saviour, and found, in some measure, “a rest to his soul,” which is the earnest and foretaste of heavenly felicity. (*Notes*, xcv. 9—11. Jer. vi. 16, 17. Matt. xi. 28—30. Heb. iv. 1—11.) Yet this is imperfect, and often interrupted, especially by sin: and when chastenings bring the wanderer from God, to a due sense of his sin and folly, conscious guilt at first generally increases the agitation of his mind: till recollection of the Lord’s former kindness, and the consolations which he vouchsafed, and the hope of recovering them, encourage and allure him to return by repentance, faith, and prayer; and this purpose is strengthened by every token and taste of returning peace and comfort. This seems to have been the Psalmist’s experience. (*Notes*, 1—6. xiii. 5, 6. cxix. 17. Hos. ii. 6, 7.)

Dealt bountifully.] Or “recompensed thee.” He hath graciously recompensed thy confidence in him, and as it were said, “According to thy faith be it unto thee.”

V. 8, 9. Rescued by special grace from death and ruin, comforted from distressing sorrow, and recovered and upheld after grievous falls, the Psalmist determined to walk, as in the sight of God, “in the land of the living.” (*Marg. Ref.*) The original word is plural, *lands*; so that the land of Canaan cannot exclusively be intended: but rather the Psalmist meant to say, that he would walk before God, while he lived here; and expected at last to enjoy his presence in heaven, and serve him for ever and ever. (*Notes*, xxiii. 5, 6. xxvii. 13. lvi. 13. lxxiii. 23—28. cxlvi. 2.) “I will walk before the LORD,” as one under his inspection, “in the land of the living,” or amongst the redeemed in the church; until the time come for me to depart hence, and to be numbered with the saints in glory everlasting.” *Bp. Horne.*

V. 10, 11. “I believed, and therefore I spoke;” that is, ‘I called on God under my distresses, in expectation of help from him alone. But I was so discouraged and afflicted, that in the hurry of my mind, I could place no reliance on any man; but thought even those deceivers, in whom before I had the greatest confidence.’—Some expositors, supposing that David wrote the psalm, and that during the life of Saul, or very soon after his death, conclude, that he referred to Samuel especially, who had anointed him to the kingdom, as if he had deceived him with vain hopes. Or, on the supposition that David was the writer, and a later date be assigned, (*Note*, 1,) it may be thought that he intended Nathan, by whom he had been assured that Solomon should succeed him. (*Notes*, 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. xii. 24, 25.) He may however, most naturally be supposed to refer to Ahithophel’s treachery, Absalom’s rebellion, and the revolt of Israel; which so astonished and afflicted him, that he was ready hastily to suspect every one about him: though the event proved, that he had many faithful and zealous friends. But whoever wrote the Psalm, or on whatever occasion; the Psalmist’s faith in God’s mercy and truth, amidst his fears and suspicions concerning men, remained unshaken, and fully gained the victory. (*Note*, 2 Cor. iv. 13—18.)—The literal rendering is, “I believed, and therefore I will speak:” but the apostle quotes the passage, from the Septuagint, as relating to the past.

V. 12. Some render this verse thus; “What shall I render unto the LORD? All his benefits overcome me!” ‘I am so overwhelmed with his abundant goodness, that I am lost in wonder, and know not how to express my gratitude.’ (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 13. ‘I will call all my friends together to rejoice with me; and taking the cup, which we call *the cup of deliverance*, (because when blessed and set apart, we are wont to commemorate the blessings we have received,) I will magnify the power, goodness, and faithfulness of God my Saviour before all the company; and will drink myself, and then give it to them, that they may praise his name together with me.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—It seems to have been customary among the Jews thus to take the cup of deliverances, when celebrating their solemn feasts, as well as when offering sacrifices of thanksgivings for peculiar mercies: and it is thought that our Saviour, complying with this custom at his last passover, thence took occasion to institute the Lord’s supper; which has ever since been to Christians “the cup of salvation,” and a memorial of his immeasurable love, in giving himself to death for

^d 18. xxii. 25. lvi.
12. lxxvi. 13—15.
Jon. i. 16. ii. 9.
Nah. i. 15. Matt.
v. 33.
^e xxxvii. 32, 33.
lxxii. 14. 1 Sam.
xxv. 29. Job v.
26. Luke xvi. 22.
Rev. i. 18. xiv. 13.
^f lxxxvi. 16. cxliii.
12. John xii. 26.
Acts xxvii. 23.
Jam. i. 1.
^g lxxxvi. 16.
^h cxvii. 14—16.
2 Chr. xxxiii.
11—13. Is. lxi.
1. Rom. vi. 22.

14 I will ^d pay my vows unto the
LORD now in the presence of all his
people.

15 ^e Precious in the sight of the
LORD is the death of his saints.

16 O LORD, ^f truly I am thy servant;
I am thy servant, and ^g the son of
thine handmaid: ^h thou hast loosed my
bonds.

17 I will offer to thee ⁱ the sacrifice
of thanksgiving, and will ^k call upon
the name of the LORD.

18 I will ^l pay my vows unto the
LORD now in the presence of all his
people,

19 In ^m the courts of the LORD's
house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusa-
lem. Praise ye the LORD.

their sins; an outward sign of their receiving him, by
faith, as their Salvation, and a seal and 'pledge to assure
' them thereof;' as well as a grateful acknowledgment of
the inestimable benefits of which they partake through his
atoning sacrifice. (Notes, Matt. xxvi. 26—29. Luke xxii.
14—20. 1 Cor. x. 14—17. xi. 17—34.)

V. 14. Notes, 17—19. xxii. 25. lxxvi. 13—15. lxxvi.
11, 12.

V. 15. The Lord accounts the death of his saints a very
important event. He will not allow their enemies to cut
them off before his appointed time. The circumstances of
their death are regulated by infinite wisdom and love, for
their final benefit: that solemn season often proves a pre-
cious opportunity to the survivors, and tends greatly to the
honour of God; and it always issues in their complete fel-
icity. (Notes, lxxii. 14. Luke xvi. 22, 23. Acts xviii.
9—11. xxiii. 11. xxvii. 20—26.)—The word rendered
"saints," may either mean those who obtain mercy from
God, or such as have been taught by him to shew mercy.
(Note, xxx. 4.) Our Lord seems to have had it in view,
when he said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall ob-
tain mercy." (Note, Matt. v. 7.)

V. 16. (Note, lxxxvi. 16.) 'The recent deliverance,
which I have experienced, lays me under new and
stronger obligations, to serve thee, with all the power and
influence which I possess; and I thus avow my purpose of
so doing.' (Marg. Ref.)

V. 17—19. "Calling on the name of the LORD"
sometimes means, celebrating his praises, and acknow-
ledging his mercies, as well as prayer and supplication.
(Notes, 1 Chr. xvi. 8, 9. Is. xii. 4—6.) The Psalmist, when
calling on God for deliverance during his distress, had
solemnly vowed to make the most publick acknowledg-
ments of his goodness, when his prayer should be an-
swered. And now he brought his thank-offerings to the
sanctuary, and there in the presence of all Israel blessed
and praised the Lord; calling on all the congregation, to
join him in this reasonable service. (13, 14. Note, cxviii.
19—24.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—9.

We should not only be satisfied and *delighted*, when
"the LORD hath heard our voice and our supplications;"
but should love him on that account, as well as for his
own essential excellences, and all his innumerable benefits.
But we are never so greatly affected with his condescension
and kindness, as when he has *relieved* us out of extreme
distress.—The poor sinner, when awakened to a sense of
his state and character, recollects that he must shortly die,
and fears lest he should sink under the righteous and ever-
lasting wrath of God; then "the sorrows of death and the

"pains of hell get hold of him, and he finds trouble and
"sorrow." But let those persons, who are thus distressed
and alarmed, without delay, and with all earnestness,
"call upon the LORD," and say, "O LORD, I beseech
"thee, deliver my soul:" and they will find him most
gracious, and true to his promise, and will learn how his
perfect justice harmonizes with his abounding mercy: for
he is as ready to teach the simple, and uphold the feeble, and
defend the poor, who trust in him; as he is to pardon the
guilty, and sanctify the unholy: and, having raised them
up from this low estate, they will learn to love him and
"call upon him as long as they live." His ways are not
as our ways: he pardons criminals, and relieves the in-
digent, that they may be encouraged to come again and
again, and may learn to love prayer; for "he delighteth
"in the prayer of the upright." Let then those "who
"labour, and are heavy laden, come to him that they may
"find rest to their souls." Let believers keep close to
their rest; and if they be at all drawn from it, let them
make haste to return, remembering how "bountifully the
"LORD hath dealt with them."—Having "delivered our
"souls from death, our eyes from tears, and our feet from
"falling," we should deem ourselves bound "to walk be-
"fore him," and as in his presence. But when we shall
enter the heavenly rest, our deliverance from sin and sor-
row will be complete; our tears will be finally wiped away,
and our feet will no more slip; but we shall behold the
glory of God, and walk in his presence, "in the land of
"the living, with inconceivable delight." (Notes, Is. xxv.
6—8. Rev. vii. 13—17. xxi. 22—27.)

V. 10—19.

When we are discomposed by temptations, we had in
general better keep silence if possible, for we are apt to
speak unadvisedly: (Notes, xxxix. 1—4. 9, 10:) and our
conviction of man's deceitfulness may sometimes lead us,
before we are aware, to impeach the divine veracity, and
to treat even those as "liars," who would encourage us
from the promises of God. But true faith will at length
prevail in every conflict; and, being humbled for our dis-
trust of his sacred word, we shall experience his faithful-
ness.—What shall the redeemed sinner, when his heart is
full of joy and gratitude,—or what shall any of us, who
have been delivered from urgent trouble and distress,—
"render unto the LORD for all his benefits towards us?"
We cannot in any way profit him, or offer him any thing
which he has not first given unto us; and our best is un-
worthy of his acceptance: yet we ought to devote ourselves
and all we have to his service and glory. (Note, 1 Chr. xxix.
10—19.)—While we enjoy the comfort of his salvation in
our secret communion with him, we should also make an

PSALM CXVII.

A prophetical call to all nations to praise God for his mercy and truth, 1, 2.

^a **O** ^a PRAISE the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.
^b 2 For ^c his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

^a lxxvi. 1. 4. lxxvii. 3. lxxxvi. 9. Is. xxiv. 15, 16. xlii. 10—12. Rom. xv. 11. Rev. xv. 4. b cxlvi. 11—14. cl. 6. Rev. v. 9 vii. 9, 10. c lxxxv. 10. lxxxix. 1. c. 4. 5. Mic. vii. 20. Luke i. 54, 55. Rom. xv. 8, 9.

PSALM CXVIII.

The Psalmist exhorts all orders of men in Israel to praise God, 1—4. He shews by his own experience

open profession of our faith and love; and avow our dependence on him and obligations to him, by taking “the cup of salvation,” and remembering the bleeding love of our divine Saviour, in the ordinance which he has instituted for that purpose: thus joining ourselves to him and to his people, and with them calling upon his name, that we may be enabled by his grace to walk consistently with our profession. In this way every sinner, who has found peace and deliverance through the blood of Christ, should “pay his vows in the presence of all his people.” Thus every true son of the church, whose bonds have been loosed, and who is become the servant of God, should frequently offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving, as well as join in other parts of his solemn worship. (Note, xl. 1—5.) And every believer, when he has received any recent mercy, should express his gratitude, by attending on this memorial of that precious blood-shedding which has purchased all our mercies; and should avow his purpose of devoting his future life, to the service of the God of his salvation. Such are the true saints of God, in whose lives and deaths he will be glorified: no enemy or event can deduct from their appointed period on earth; much less shall any destroy their souls. But when the measure of their trials and services is accomplished, their God and Saviour will remove them, in the best manner, to that new Jerusalem, where they will pay their vows with all the redeemed, and offer eternal sacrifices of exalted praise and thanksgiving, “to him who loved them, and washed them from their sins in his precious blood:” and their bodies also shall at length be raised incorruptible to join the sacred worship, and share that glorious felicity. Let us then “give diligence to make our calling and election sure;” let us trust the Lord in the path of duty; let us fear no danger, and decline no difficulty, in his service; and let us learn to consider the day of our death, as the period of our labours and conflicts, and as our entrance into rest, and glory, and felicity.

NOTES

PSALM CXVII. V. 1. ‘This Psalm, like the hundred and tenth, seems to be altogether prophetical, of the joy that all the world should conceive, at the coming of the Messiah to give salvation, first to the Jews, and then to all other nations, according to his faithful promise. St. Paul applies the first words of it to this business, Rom.

how good it is to trust in the Lord, 5—18. In blessing him for deliverance and advancement, and calling on the people to join in his triumphant praises, he predicts the coming and the kingdom of the Messiah, 19—29.

O Give thanks unto the LORD: for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.

2 Let ^b Israel now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

3 Let ^c the house of Aaron now say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

4 Let ^d them now that fear the LORD say, that his mercy endureth for ever.

^a 29. cvi. 1. cvii. 1. cxxxv. 1. 1 Chr. xvi. 8. 34. Jer. xxxiii. 11.

^b cxv. 9—11. cxxxv. 19, 20. cxlv. 10. cxlvii. 19, 20. Gal. vi. 16. Heb. xiii. 15. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.

^c cxxxiv. 1—3. 1 Pet. ii. 5. Rev. i. 6. iv. 7—11. v. 8—10.

^d xxii. 23. Rev. xix. 5.

‘xv. 11; and some of the Hebrews justify his application.’ Bp. Patrick. (Note, Rom. xv. 8—13.)

V. 2. God promised to Abraham, that in Christ “his Seed, all nations should be blessed:” he confirmed that promise, when he sent the Saviour, raised him from the dead, exalted him at his right hand, and called the Gentiles into the church: but a still more literal and extensive accomplishment of it will take place at the Millennium. (Notes, xxii. 27, 28. Jer. xvi. 19—21, v. 19. Dan. ii. 34, 35, 44, 45. Rev. xi. 15—18. xx. 1—6.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We belong to that very company or innumerable multitude, whom the Holy Spirit here addresses; and he calls on every one of us to join our Hallelujahs with those of his ancient people: and “therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard.” The very circumstance that we sinners of the Gentiles are become the professed worshippers of the true God, by means of the gospel of Christ, that “Seed of Abraham, in whom “all nations shall be blessed,” (Notes, Gen. xii. 1—3. xlix. 10. Gal. iii. 15—18. 26—29,) is a sufficient demonstration, that the Scriptures are divinely inspired; that the mercy of God has prevailed; and that he is ever mindful of his promise; and faithful to it even to a thousand generations.—But let us take care, that none of us “receive this grace of God in vain:” let us seek the fulfilment to us, personally, of those promises which ensure the believer’s eternal salvation: and while we make it our business to glorify our God, in word and deed; let us still pray, and endeavour as we can, that all the nations of the earth may “shew forth his praises, for having called them “out of darkness into the marvellous light” of his blessed gospel.

NOTES.

PSALM CXVIII. V. 1—4. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, cxv. 9—13. cxxxvi. 1—3.) David is thought to have composed this psalm, after his advancement to the throne, and his victories over his enemies round about: and probably it was sung by the priests, Levites, and congregation of Israel, with David at the head of them, as they marched up to the tabernacle to render publick thanks for these benefits.—David, rejected of Saul and the people, in the appointed time obtained the kingdom. ... Under his person in all

^e xviii. 6. xl. 1—3. lxxxvii. 2. cvii. 13. 19. cxvi. 3. 4. cxx. 1. cxxx. 1, 2. Gen. xxxii. 7. 9—11. 1 Sam. xxx. 6—8. Mark xiv. 34—36. **5** I ^e called upon the LORD ^{*} in distress: the LORD answered me, and ^f set me in a large place.

^g xlvii. 1—3. xlvii. 1. 11. lvi. 4. 9. 11. cxlvi. 5. Jer. xx. 11. Mic. vii. 8—10. Rom. viii. 31. Heb. xiii. 6. **6** ^g The LORD is [†] on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?

^h xlvii. 1—3. xlvii. 1. 11. lvi. 4. 9. 11. cxlvi. 5. Jer. xx. 11. Mic. vii. 8—10. Rom. viii. 31. Heb. xiii. 6. **7** The LORD ^h taketh my part with them that help me: ⁱ therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.

[†] Heb. for me. ^h liv. 4. lv. 18. 1 Chr. xii. 18. **8** It is ^k better to trust in the LORD, than to put confidence in man.

ⁱ liv. 7. lix. 10. xcii. 11. xcii. 8. k xl. 4. lxii. 8, 9. Jer. xvii. 5—7. Mic. vii. 5—7. **9** It is better to trust in the LORD, than to put confidence in princes.

xxx. 2, 3. 15—17. xxxi. 1. 8. xxxvi. 6. 7. Ez. xxix. 7.

‘this was Christ lively set forth, who should be of his people rejected.—Because God, by creating David king, shewed his mercy towards his afflicted church; the prophet doth not only himself thank God, but exhorteth all the people to do the same.’—‘Let the children of Israel, who have had such long experience of his love, and now see his promises fulfilled,...confess and thankfully acknowledge, that his kindness continues to all generations. Let the priests and the Levites,...and let all the devout worshippers of the Lord, of whatsoever nation they be,...confess now most thankfully, that there is no end of his kindness.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—The effects also of the mercy and grace of God, in the everlasting salvation and felicity of his redeemed people, seem especially intended.

V. 5. ‘We are here taught, that the more that troubles oppress us, the more ought we to be instant in prayer.’—“The LORD heard” (or answered) “me by enlargement.” When the Israelites, being straitened by the Canaanites, were enabled to drive them away and possess their inheritance; the Lord heard them, as he did Jabez; and “enlarged their coast.” (*Note*, 1 Chr. iv. 9, 10. P. O.)—David brought out of the cave, and made king over all Israel; Christ freed from the grave, and made “Head over all things to his church;” the slave of sin made free, and become the servant of God; and the believer “delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God;” are instances illustrative of the Psalmist’s meaning, to which many others might be added. (*Notes*, xxxi. 7, 8. 2 Sam. xxii. 20.)

V. 6. “JEHOVAH for me;” (*marg.*) that is, a Protector. (*Notes*, 7. xxvii. 1—3. xlv. 1—3. 7. lvi. 3, 4. Is. viii. 9—15. Rom. viii. 28—31.)

V. 7. David had for a long time but few and feeble helpers; but the Lord almighty aided, prospered, and increased them; till his cause was become triumphant: and as this had been the case, he trusted that it would be the case in all his future dangers and conflicts. (*Notes*, 1 Sam. xiv. 6—10, v. 6. 2 Kings vi. 15—17. 2 Chr. xxxii. 6—8. Rom. viii. 28—31, v. 31. 2 Cor. i. 8—11.) How few helpers, and how feeble, had the Lord Jesus, on the morning of his resurrection! but the Lord was with them, and his cause triumphed, and does triumph, and will still more triumph, till “all kings fall down before him, all nations do him service.”

See my desire, &c.] The Septuagint render this very

^m 2 Sam. v. viii. x. Zech. xii. 3. xiv. 1—3. Rev. xix. 19—21. xx. 8, 9. **10** All nations compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD will I [†] destroy them.

ⁿ xxii. 12—16. lxxxviii. 17. 1 Sam. xxiii. 26. 1 Chr. xix. 10. **11** They ⁿ compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about: but in the name of the LORD I will destroy them.

^o Deut. i. 44. p lxxxiii. 14, 15. Ec. vii. 6. Is. xxvii. 4. Nah. i. 10. q viii. 9. xx. 1. 5. 1 Sam. xvii. 45. 1 Chr. xiv. 10, 11. 14—16. 2 Chr. xiv. 11, 12. xvi. 7—9. xx. 17—22. xxxii. 7, 8. **12** They compassed me about ^o like bees; they are ^p quenched as the fire of thorns: for ^q in the name of the Lord I will ^r destroy them.

^r xviii. 17, 18. lvi. 1—3. 1 Sam. xx. 3. xxv. 29. 2 Sam. xvii. 1—3. Matt. iv. 1—11. Heb. ii. 14. **13** ^r Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall: but the LORD helped me.

properly “I shall look upon mine enemies.” “I shall meet them with boldness, look them in the face without fear; and witness either their submission or destruction.” (*Notes*, liv. 7. lix. 10. xcii. 11.)

V. 8, 9. The unfaithfulness, changeableness, weakness, and mortal nature of men, however distinguished, render all reliance on them vain and insecure: and the Lord’s jealousy for his own honour induces him to punish those, who are guilty of this idolatrous confidence, and to encourage such as betake themselves to him in danger and distress; so that experience proves, that it is far better to seek to the Lord in trouble, and rely on him, than to confide in any man, or number of men, or the most powerful princes. (*Notes*, lxii. 8—10. cxlvi. 3—6. Is. ii. 22. xxxi. 1—5. Jer. xvii. 5—8. Dan. vi. 12—23.)

V. 10—12. The several nations bordering on Canaan confederated against David, and compassed him about, like swarms of bees, as if they would sting him to death. But, depending on the assistance of the Lord, and going forth to battle in his name, he gained repeated and decisive victories over them: so that their rage terminated, like the fire kindled among thorns; which is vehement, and makes a great blaze and noise, and consumes the thorns, and then is extinguished without much effect. (*Notes*, xx. 6—8. lxxxiii. 13—18. Deut. i. 39—44, v. 44. 2 Sam. v. 17—24. viii. 1—14. x. 8—14. 18. xxii. 5—20.) Every victory David gained, was an earnest of further success; and he trusted that, by the help of the Lord, he should be able to destroy all his enemies.—Thus the Redeemer, personally, and in his church, has been opposed by all the nations of the earth; but destruction from the Lord is the inevitable consequence of persisting in that opposition, however numerous and formidable the opponents may appear. (*Notes*, ii. xxi. 8—12. xxii. 16—21. xlv. 3—5. lxix. 22—28. cx. 5, 6. Rev. xix. 11—21.)

V. 13. Perhaps Saul was meant, as that enemy who had thrust sore at David that he might fall. (*Marg. Ref.*)—When Satan tempted Christ, and when he afterwards prevailed to have him crucified, and assailed him with all his power in that “hour of darkness;” he thrust sore at the church, to destroy her at once in the person of her Representative. (*Notes*, Gen. iii. 14, 15. Matt. iv. 1—11. P. O. 1—11. Note, xxvi. 36—39. P. O. 36—46. Notes, Luke xxii. 47—53. Heb. ii. 16—18. iv. 14—16. v. 7—10.) The believer has often occasion to use the words with applica-

^a xviii. 2. ^{Ex.} 14 The LORD ^s is my Strength and Song, and is become my Salvation.

^t xxx. 11, 12. ^{xxxii.} 11. ^{xxxiii.} 1. ^{cxix.} 54. ^{111.} Deut. xii. 12. ^{Is.} li. 11. ^{lxxv.} 13. ^{Acts} ii. 46, 47. ^{xvi.} 34. ^{Rev.} xviii. 20. ^{xix.} 4—5. ^{xliv.} 3. ^{xliv.} 4. ^{lx.} 12. ^{lxxxix.} 13. ^{xviii.} 1. ^{Is.} li. 9, 10. ^x ^{Ex.} xv. 6. ^{Acts} ii. 32—36. ^y ^{vi.} 5. ^{Is.} xxxviii. 6—20. ^{Hab.} i. 12. ^{John} xi. 4. ^{Rom.} xiv. 7—9. ^z ^{xl.} 5. ^{10.} lxxi. 17, 18. ^{cvi.} 22. ^{cxix.} 13. ^{cxlv.} 4. ^{Jer.} li. 10. ^a ^{lxvi.} 10—12. ^{xciv.} 12. ^{13.} 2 Sam. xii. 10. ^{xiii.} xvi. ^{Job} v. 17, 18. ^{xxxiii.} 16—30. ^{Prov.} iii. 11, 12. ^{Jon} ii. 6. ^{1 Cor.} xi. 32. ^{2 Cor.} i. 9—11. ^{Heb.} xii. 10, 11. ^b ^{Is.} xxvi. 2.

15 The ^v voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: ^u the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

16 The ^x right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly.

17 I shall not ^v die, but live, and ^z declare the works of the LORD.

18 The LORD hath ^a chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death.

19 ^b Open to me the gates of right-

eousness: ^c I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD:

20 This ^d gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter.

21 I ^e will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, ^f and art become my Salvation.

22 ^g The Stone which the builders refused, is become ^h the Head-stone of the corner.

23 This is ^{*} the LORD's doing; ⁱ it is marvellous in our eyes.

24 This is ^k the day which the LORD hath made; ^l we will rejoice and be glad in it.

^{Matt.} xxviii. 1—8. ^{John} xx. 19, 20. ^{Acts} xx. 7. ^{Rev.} i. 10. ^{viii.} 66. ^{2 Chr.} xx. 26—28. ^{Neh.} viii. 10. ^{Is.} lviii. 13.

^{ix.} 13, 14. ^{lxvi.} 13—15. ^{xcv.} 2. ^{c.} 4. ^{cxvi.} 18. ¹⁹ ^{Is.} xxxviii. 20, 22. ^d ^{xxiv.} 3, 4. ^{7.} 9. ^{Is.} xxvi. 2. ^{xxxv.} 8—10. ^{Rev.} xxi. 24—27. ^{xxii.} 14, 15. ^e ^{xxii.} 23, 24. ^{lxix.} 33, 34. ^{cxvi.} 1. ^f ^{14.} ^{Ex.} xv. 2. ^{Is.} xii. 2. ^{xliv.} 8. ^g ^{Matt.} xxi. 42. ^{Mark} xii. 10, 11. ^{Luke} xx. 17. ^{Acts} iv. 11. ^{Eph.} ii. 20—22. ^{1 Pet.} ii. 4—8. ^h ^{Zech.} iv. 7. ^{* Heb.} ^{from the} ^{LORD.} ^{Acts} ii. 32—36. ^{iii.} 14. ^{15.} v. 31, 32. ^{Eph.} i. 19—22. ⁱ ^{Job} v. 9. ^{Acts} iv. 13. ^{xiii.} 41. ^k ^{Zech.} iii. 9. ^l ^{lxxxiv.} 10. ^{1 King}

tion to his own experience, and the temptations with which his enemy assails him, that he may fall into sin, and disgrace the cause of God, as well as greatly distress himself; nay, that he may fall into destruction: but the Lord has hitherto helped him.

V. 14. 'In that he was delivered, it came not of himself, nor of the power of man, but only of God's favour: therefore he will praise him.' (Notes, *Ex.* xv. 2. *Is.* xii. 2.)—The name JAH, used in the texts referred to, (the former of which is exactly the same as this verse,) occurs many times in the Psalm. (Note, *lxviii.* 4.)

V. 15, 16. David's deliverance from Saul, and his exaltation to the throne, were typical of Christ's resurrection and ascension: (Note, ii. 1—6:) and on the Lord's day, when his resurrection is especially commemorated, the dwellings of true believers, as well as the places in which they assemble for public worship all over the earth, resound with the voice of joyful and thankful praises; because "the right hand of the LORD hath done valiantly, and is exalted." (Notes, 19—24. *Ex.* xv. 3—6. *Acts* ii. 33—36.)—But rejoicing belongs to the righteous at all times; it becomes them, and them alone: and indeed almost universally, the voice of thankful and holy joy is heard in their dwellings, though often mean and poorly supplied; while murmurs, discontent, and complaints of various kinds, are heard in the habitations of their more prosperous and wealthy neighbours. (Notes, *xxxiii.* 1. *xcvii.* 11, 12. *Phil.* iv. 4—7.)

V. 17, 18. The triumph of David over his persecutors was an earnest of further mercies and continued protection; that he might "declare the works of the LORD." He had been sharply chastened and tried: yet he "was not given over to death;" but preserved to be a highly honoured instrument of glorifying God, and promoting Israel's prosperity.—Christ, having suffered unknown agonies, when "the chastisement of our peace was upon him;" was not "given over unto death," but rose from the dead, and said to his servant John, "I am he, that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore; and have the keys of death and of hell." (Notes, *xxii.* 22—24. *Is.* liii. 4—6. 9—12. *Acts* ii. 22—24. *Rom.* xiv. 7—9. *Rev.* i. 2—20.) By his gospel he declares the works of the LORD throughout the earth; and "because

"he liveth," all his true disciples "shall live also." (Notes, *John* xiv. 18—20. *Col.* iii. 1—4.)

V. 19—24. David, preserved from death, triumphant over his enemies, and now going up to the temple to offer his thank-offerings, attended by the thousands of Israel, seems here to call upon the porters and other Levites, to open the gates of the sanctuary for his admission. These are called "the gates of righteousness;" because of the characters of those who offered acceptable worship in the courts of God, and because of the nature of the services there performed. Those who were within seem to have sung responsively, "This is the gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter:" and then the whole company, perhaps in parts, sang the following verses. (Note, 1—4.)—David's advancement to the throne, notwithstanding the opposition which had long been made to it, was referred to: but the whole passage is evidently a prediction of Christ. When he arose from the grave, he ascended into heaven, as the Fore-runner of all his redeemed people; and he demanded the opening of those gates of righteousness, that he and they might enter in, and praise the Lord. (Notes, *xxiv.* 7—10. *P. O.*) The ministering angels may be considered, as opening the gates of heaven, into which the righteous alone can enter; and then the whole church in chorus celebrates the praises of God, for having heard their prayers, and "become their Salvation." The Redeemer doubtless is also that "Stone, which the builders rejected," and would have thrown aside as worthless among the rubbish; but which, by the mighty power of God, and to the astonishment of the apostles and disciples, became the chief Corner-stone, supporting the whole spiritual temple, and uniting the several parts of it into one building, "an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Notes, *Matt.* xxi. 40—44. *Luke* xx. 9—18. *Acts* iv. 5—12. *Eph.* ii. 19—22. *1 Pet.* ii. 7, 8.)—And as the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees of old refused this Foundation-stone of the church; so many of the wise and learned, and professedly religious, of every age and nation ever since, have rejected it, and numbers of them have long endeavoured to substitute some other in its place. But, by the marvellous interposition of the Lord, their attempts have been frustrated, and proved ruinous to themselves and their adherents alone.—The

^m xx. 2. ^{xxii.} 21. ^{lxix.} i. 13. 25 ^m Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, ⁿ send now prosperity.

^o Matt. xxi. 9. ^{xxiii.} 39. ^{Mark} xi. 9, 10. ^{Luke} xix. 38. ^{John} xii. 13. 26 ^o Blessed *be* he that cometh in the name of the LORD: ^p we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.

^q I Kings xviii. 21, 39. 27 ^q God *is* the LORD, which hath shewed us light: ^r bind the sacrifice

^p cxxxiv. 3. ^{Num.} vi. 23—26. ^s li. 18, 19. ^{1 Kings} viii. 63, 64. ^{1 Chr.} xxix. 21. ^{Heb.} xiii. 15.

with cords, *even* unto 'the horns of the altar.

28 Thou *art* "my God, and I will praise thee: *thou art* my God, I will exalt thee.

29 O ^x give thanks unto the LORD; ^x 1. ciii. 17. ^{Ezra} iii. 11. ^{Is.} lxiii. 7. for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

day of thanksgiving also, which David and Israel celebrated, was but a shadow of that blessed day which saw the Redeemer rise from the dead: that was indeed "the day, which the LORD had made," for his people to rejoice in; and it has ever since been commemorated every week in the Christian church, and in most parts has had a more solemn annual commemoration. (*Notes*, 15, 16. *John* xx. 19—23. *Acts* xx. 7—12. *1 Cor.* xvi. 1, 2. *Heb.* xiii. 20, 21. *Rev.* i. 9—11.) The twenty-second and twenty-third verses are quoted six times in the New Testament, and expressly applied to Christ; nay, many of the Jewish Rabbies acknowledge this to be a prediction of the Messiah.

V. 25, 26. The word rendered, "Save now," is "Hosanna;" which seems equivalent to our modern congratulatory prayer on the accession of a monarch to the throne, "God save the king."—It is evident that the Jews had this passage in mind, when they said before Christ, at his entrance into Jerusalem, "Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest." They meant to welcome him as the promised Messiah: but they totally misunderstood the nature of his kingdom and salvation. (*Notes*, *Matt.* xxi. 8—11. *Mark* xi. 1—11, v. 10. *Luke* xix. 28—40.) And our Lord himself also referred to this prophecy, when he said to the priests and rulers, "Ye shall not see me henceforth; till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (*Note*, *Matt.* xxiii. 37—39. *P. O.* 34—39.)—The priests from the sanctuary seem to have answered David and his company, in the latter clause, "We have blessed you out of the house of the LORD."

V. 27—29. The whole congregation, having now met in the courts of the sanctuary, joined in solemn sacrifices and ardent praises; which were typical of the joy and praise of the church, on earth and in heaven, on account of the Redeemer's exaltation. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 1—4. cxxxvi. 1—3.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—18.

Whether the believer reviews his past experience, or traces back his comforts to the everlasting goodness and mercy of God; or whether he looks forward, and anticipates, in lively hope, those future blessings, which are secured to him by the promises of the new covenant; he will be sure to find abundant cause for joy and praise: and when thus excited to rejoice in God and celebrate his praises with lively gratitude, he will desire to animate others in their several stations, to unite in this delightful work: and this always was, and always will be, the substance of the redeemed sinner's grateful song, "The LORD is good, because his mercy endureth for ever." No poor sinner, in deep distress, ever yet called earnestly upon him, who was

not afterwards enabled to say, "The LORD answered me," with enlargement of heart, hopes, and prospects: and every answer to our prayers is an evidence that he is on our side; and then we need not "fear what man can do unto us." Whether few or many help us, if he take part with them, those who hate us will be treated as enemies. If indeed we allow, (and who can doubt it?) that it is far "better to trust in the LORD, than to put confidence even in princes;" we should take care to act consistently with our judgment: we should not pay court to the rich and powerful, as if they could make us happy or miserable; but, without any undue compliances, we should conscientiously do our duty to them and to all men, and trust in the Lord alone to accept and bless us. We may indeed be compassed with enemies, and be disquieted by their malice: but "in the name of the LORD" we shall be delivered from them, and rendered victorious over them all, and their rage will only effect their own destruction. Even when Satan thrusts sore at us, that we may fall into sin or misery; yet, trusting in our almighty Friend, we may make head against him and his legions: for "the LORD is the Strength and Song" of every believer, "and is become his Salvation." As we need not dread the rage of the ungodly, so we should not envy their carnal, vain, and vanishing mirth. For the voice of rational rejoicing, and of salvation, is in the tabernacles of the righteous; while they enjoy the Lord's love, are safe under the protection of his powerful and valiant right hand, and are employed in praising his name. With peace of conscience, and "joy in the Holy Ghost," and liberty to "cast all their cares upon him, who careth for them;" they possess a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance. Their bodies indeed must drop into the grave; yet they shall not die eternally; but live, and "declare the works of the LORD:" and though he chasten them for their good, repeatedly and sharply; yet he will not "give them over unto death" eternal, nor leave their bodies in the grave for ever; but will bring them forth, immortal and incorruptible, that "death may be swallowed up in victory."

V. 19—29.

Renewed mercies and deliverances send believers again and again, to the courts of the Lord, that they may enter in and praise his name: and at last, delivered from death and every evil, they will enter the gates of heaven to praise him for evermore.—He has generally chosen and honoured those, whom man despised; he has done good to his people by some, of whom it was said, "How shall these men save us?" And none are more apt to mistake, and mislead others, in these matters, than those who by prescription are deemed, and deem themselves, "builders" in Zion.—We should not then be discouraged, by

PSALM CXIX.

This Psalm contains a miscellaneous collection of wise maxims, pious ejaculations, holy purposes, gracious experiences, &c. which cannot with ease and simplicity be arranged under any particular heads: there frequently being little connexion between one sentence and another; and the whole being, as Mr.

Henry remarks, 'rather a chest of gold rings, than a chain of gold links.'

ALEPH.

BLESSED are the *undefiled in the way, who ^bwalk in the law of the LORD.

i. 47. Acts xxiv. 16. 2 Cor. i. 12. Tit. ii. 11, 12. Luke i. 6. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2.

b Ez. xi. 20. Hos. xiv. 9.

a i. 1—3. xxxii. 1, 2. cxii. 1. cxxxviii. 1 Matt. v. 3—12. Luke xi. 28. John xiii. 17. Jam. i. 25. Rev. xxii. 14.

* Or, perfect, or sincere. 2 Kings xx. 3. 2 Chr. xxxi. 20, 21. Job i. 1. 8. John

contempt and neglect, from "occupying with our talent, "till the Lord come:" but attend to our proper work, whatever acceptance it may meet with from man, and desire no more than to be approved by God. "Every good gift is from him," and the glory of every good work belongs to him: and when beneficial changes are brought about, which "are marvellous in our eyes," we should acknowledge it to be his doing.—Gracious deliverances give occasion to days of joy and gladness: such are days, "which the LORD hath made," and we should remember to rejoice in a holy manner; for carnal mirth and sensual indulgence, when we are rejoicing in the goodness of God, are like offering his corn and wine to Baal. (Note, Hos. ii. 8, 9.) Our thanksgivings on earth must always be accompanied with prayers for further mercies, and the continuance of our prosperity; our Hallelujahs, with Hosannas.—We should ever pray for those, who "come in the name of the LORD," and who evidently, in their proper station, act by his authority and for his glory: and the blessings of his servants, out of his sanctuary, should be much valued by the greatest of princes, as highly conducive to their prosperity.—All our success should animate us to abound in spiritual sacrifices to the Lord, who gives us light and comfort. If he is our God, our Portion, and Salvation, the Object of our cordial worship, and the Lord of our choice, we shall render him willing obedience, and exalt him in every way, to the extent of our abilities and opportunities: and thus we shall here begin, and for ever continue, to give thanks to him who is "good, and whose mercy endureth for ever."—In all these things our Redeemer is the grand Pattern and Exemplar of his people. Delivered from great distress, which he endured in our behalf; placed upon a glorious throne, according to his confidence in his heavenly Father, and in answer to his fervent prayers; having overcome every enemy, which compassed him about, or "thrust sore at him that he might fall;" and ever living to declare "the works of the LORD;" he has opened the gates of righteousness to all his people; he has become our Way of access to his Father's presence, and the Foundation of our hopes and of our souls; and he has shewn us the way to conquer, by patience, faith, and prayer. Contemned by the builders, he is become the Foundation and the Corner-stone of the whole church: and his resurrection, ascension, and exaltation were marvellous in the eyes of numbers, who acknowledged and rejoiced in them as the Lord's doing. When he left the grave, a glorious day commenced, which knows no night; our "Sun of righteousness" arose to set no more: and our weekly commemoration of that great event, on the Lord's day, is the earnest of our celebrating an eternal sabbath in heaven to his glory, and, if duly employed, a most blessed preparation for it. Let us then welcome the return of this "day which the LORD hath made,

"and rejoice and be glad in it:" let us beseech him to send prosperity to the preaching of his Gospel, and by it to save the souls of men, adding multitudes every day, and especially every Lord's day, to the number of the saved ones: let us welcome those, who come as ambassadors in the name of Christ; as an evidence, that we welcome him to our hearts, and shall welcome him when he comes to judgment: and let us join our prayers for those who belong to the Redeemer, and every act of love to them, with our spiritual sacrifices of praise to him, our Lord, our God, our Saviour, and our Portion.

NOTES.

PSALM CXIX. V. 1. It is generally allowed, that David composed this highly instructive Psalm: and it is most probable, that he committed to writing, in a detached manner, the several reflections, maxims, and ejaculations, contained in it, as they occurred to his mind, amidst the varied scenes of his eventful life; and that, towards the close of it, he collected them into order, for the benefit of his people, and that of the church in every age.—The psalm consists of twenty-two sections, (each containing eight verses,) according to the number of the letters in the Hebrew alphabet: and every verse in each section, in the original, begins with that letter which stands as the title of it. It may be supposed that this arrangement was formed, principally, to assist the memory of the reader.—The psalm may be considered in a special manner as the touchstone of genuine experience: and as far as any man's views, desires, purposes, and affections, coincide with those of the Psalmist, he may be sure, that they come from the influence of the sanctifying Spirit; but no further. The reader's thoughts indeed will frequently be led to the Saviour himself; because he was perfectly, what believers are in a measure: and their conformity to him is the evidence of their interest in his divine righteousness.—The word of God, under different terms, according to the several parts of which it is composed, is mentioned in almost every verse. He meditated 'on the excellence of God's laws, 'and the happiness of those that kept them, and the comfort they were to him in his affliction, which he found to be so sweet and so great, that he begs of God little else, 'but that he might be more and more in love with them; 'which were already so much his delight, that he mentions 'them under one name or other in every verse of the 'Psalm, none excepted but one, v. 122.' Bp. Patrick. Sometimes, indeed, the connexion will lead the attentive reader to think more of one part than of others: but in general "the oracles of God," as then extant, are intended; and it is probable, that the word was commonly selected, which best suited the metrical arrangement. Six or seven distinct words are used in the first section of eight verses, viz. Law, testimonies, precepts, statutes, commandments,

c 22. 146. xxv. 10. cv. 45. Deut. vi. 17. 1 Kings ii. 3. Ez. xxxvi. 27. John xiv. 23. d 10. Deut. iv. 29. 2 Chr. xxxi. 21. Jer. xxix. 13. e 1 John iii. 9. v. 18. f Deut. iv. 1. 9. v. 29—33. vi. 17. xii. 32. xxviii. 1. &c. xxx. 16. Josh. i. 7. Jer. vii. 23. Matt. xxviii. 20. John xiv. 15. 21. Phil. iv. 8. 9. 1 John v. 3. g 32. 36. 44. 45. 131. 159. 173. li. 10. Jer. xxxi. 33. Rom. vii. 22—24. 2 Thes. iii. 5. Heb. xiii. 21.

2 Blessed *are* they that ^c keep his testimonies, *and that* ^d seek him with the whole heart.

3 They also ^e do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.

4 Thou hast ^f commanded *us* to keep thy precepts diligently.

5 Oh, that ^g my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!

judgments, and ways. Most or all of these terms have been already explained; but in some instances, it will be necessary again to consider them, along with the context. (*Notes*, xix. 7—11. xxv. 10. xciii. 5. *Ex.* xxi. 1. *Deut.* vi. 1. xxxii. 3, 4. *Neh.* ix. 13, 14.)—As the pardoning mercy of God in Christ is the only source of a sinner's happiness; so the actual enjoyment of that happiness is inseparably connected with devoted obedience, and in great measure consists in it. (*Notes*, i. 1—3. xxxii. 1, 2. lxxxiv. 4, 5. xciv. 12—14. cvi. 3. *Matt.* v. 1—12. *Rev.* xxii. 14, 15.)—The word, rendered “undefiled,” means *perfect*, or *upright*, and marks the sound character, the true believer, who sincerely embraces the salvation of God, and conscientiously walks according to his commandments, in his habitual conduct. (*Note*, *Job* i. 1.)

V. 2, 3. The “testimonies” of God are the declarations of his truth and will, however attested; whether by express declarations, or by instituted ordinances, as pledges of his love to his upright worshippers: and those who credit his word, and attend on his ordinances, and thus seek him with an *undivided* heart, are happy, and shall be happy. (*Notes*, 129. *Is.* viii. 20. 1 *John* v. 9—13.) “*Assuredly* they practise no iniquity; they walk in his ways.” They walk in wisdom, and “her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.” (*Note*, *Prov.* iii. 16, 17.) “They will not be tempted to do an evil action, though it were to gain the greatest good in the world.” *Bp. Patrick*. “Enroll us, O Lord, in the happy number of these thy servants; pardon our offences; give us a new nature, averse from sin, and inclined to sanctity; and guard us, that the wicked one touch us not.” *Bp. Horne*.

V. 4. What then does God command us, but diligently to do those very things, in which true happiness is to be found? What does he forbid us, but to make ourselves and others miserable? (*Marg. Ref.* f.)

V. 5. “David acknowledgeth his imperfection, desiring God to reform it, that his life might be conformable to God's word.” (*Notes*, xix. 7—14.)—“The faithful soul, enraptured with the contemplation of that blessedness, which is the consequence of serving God, but conscious, at the same time, of an inability to attain it, sighs after the refreshing and strengthening influences of divine grace. She beholdeth her Saviour afar off; she beholdeth the beauty and glorious majesty of his heavenly kingdom; she beholdeth the way which leads to it; but she hath not power to walk therein. This consideration causeth her to groan earnestly within herself, ... and at length to breathe forth a wish, that the Spirit of truth and love would fix and establish her in a holy course of thinking, speaking, and acting upon all occasions; and would prevent her from turning aside out of it, to the

6 Then ^h shall I not be ashamed, when ⁱ I have respect unto all thy commandments.

7 I will ^k praise thee with uprightness of heart, ^l when I shall have learned ^m thy righteous judgments.

8 ⁿ I will keep thy statutes: ^o O forsake me not utterly.

of thy righteousness. 138. m 16. 106. 115. *Josh.* xxiv. 15. 176. xxxviii. 21, 22. li. 11. Phil. iv. 13.

h 31. 80. *Job* xxi. 26. *Dan* xii. 2. 3. 1 *John* ii. 28 iii. 20, 21. i 128. *John* xv. 14. *Jam.* ii. 10, 11. k 171. ix. 1. lxxxvi. 12, 13. 1 *Chr.* xxxix. 13—17. l 12. 18. 19. 27. 33. 34. 64. 73. 124. xxv. 4, 5. 8—10. cxliii. 10. Is. xlviii. 17. *John* vi. 45. * *Heb. judgments* n 116, 117.

‘right hand or to the left.’ *Bp. Horne*.—The sudden transition, from the preceding reflections to this fervent ejaculation, is very beautiful: and in what respect does this differ from that experience, which St. Paul enlarges upon in the seventh of Romans? (*Notes* and *P. O. Rom.* vii. 13—25.)

V. 6. “All the commandments have the same Author, and the same sanction. He who thinketh to atone for one, by the observation of another, ... is a hypocrite, and, unless he repent, will be brought to shame, if not before men here, yet before men and angels hereafter.” *Bp. Horne*.—Notwithstanding manifold imperfections, that man will never be thus put to shame, who unreservedly has respect to all God's commandments, as the rule of his conduct, and humbly repents of every deviation from them. (*Notes*, 31. 128. *Jam.* ii. 8—13. 1 *John* ii. 26—29. iii. 18—24.)

V. 7. “The scriptures are styled God's “righteous judgments,” as containing an account of his decrees and determinations concerning us, with a history of cases and precedents, entered upon record for our admonition. By these we are to form our opinion, and regulate our conduct: and when we shall have so learned these, as to walk according to them, we shall praise God with an upright heart.” *Bp. Horne*. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 171.)

V. 8. “He refuseth not to be tried with temptations; but he feareth to faint, if God succour not his infirmity in time.” “It is my leading desire and fixed purpose to keep thy statutes, O do not leave me without help, to be overcome by temptation, or to sink under discouragement.” (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 106. 114—117. 176. li. 10—13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

It is the will of God that we should wisely seek our own happiness: our self-love indeed should be properly directed and subordinated; but it cannot and ought not to be extirpated.—Experience, as well as the sacred Scriptures, testifies, that “blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD.” Had sin never existed, misery had been unknown: and now that the way of pardon and reconciliation has been opened by the Lord Jesus Christ, we re-ascend to felicity, in proportion as we are renewed to holiness: and it is our highest privilege on earth to commune with God, and bear his image; to attend on his ordinances, rely on his promises, and, avoiding all iniquity, to “walk in his ways.” Believers are indeed not exposed to the condemning sentence of the law: yet the Lord “hath commanded them to keep his precepts diligently;” and their obligations to obedience are increased in proportion to the mercies which they have

BETH.

o xxxv. 7. xxxiv.
 1. Job i. 5. xiii.
 26. Prov. i. 4. 10.
 iv. 1. 10—17. v.
 7. &c. vi. 20. &c.
 vii. 7. &c. Ec.
 xi. 9. 10. xii. 1.
 Luke xv. 13. &c.
 2 Tim. ii. 22.
 Tit. ii. 4—6.

p 11. 97—105. i.
 1—3. xix. 7—11.
 lxxviii. 4—8.
 Deut. vi. 6—9.
 xviii. 18—20. Josh. i. 7. John xv. 3. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. Jam. i. 21—25. q 2. 34.
 58. 69. lxxviii. 37. 1 Sam. vii. 3. 2 Chr. xv. 15. Jer. iii. 10. Hos. x. 2. Zeph. i. 5, 6.
 Matt. vi. 24. Col. iii. 22. 1 John ii. 15. r 21. 118. 133. 176. xxiii. 3. cxxv. 5.
 cxliii. 8—10. Prov. ii. 13. xxi. 16. Is. xxxv. 8. Ez. xxxiv. 6. 2 Pet. ii. 15—22.

9 Wherewithal ° shall a young man
 cleanse his way? ° by taking heed
 thereto according to thy word.

10 With ° my whole heart have I
 sought thee: ° O let me not wander
 from thy commandments.

received. This grateful obedience also corresponds to the dispositions of their renewed hearts. The genuine disciple could not rely on the righteousness of Christ for justification, did he not see that excellency and beauty in it, which make him long to transcribe it in his own conduct, and to have his soul cast into the very mould of it. (Note, lxxxv. 10—13.) His heart consents to every precept of the holy law that it is good: he would not have one of them repealed, mitigated, or altered; (Notes, 128. Rom. vii. 7—12;) he only grieves that he no more comes up to this perfect standard, and, with many a sigh, he says to the Lord, “Oh, that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!” He knows, that if a man respects only some of the commandments, and expects by one instance of obedience to purchase an indulgence for disobedience in another, his hypocrisy will be detected by his partiality; and that if he be not made ashamed in this world, everlasting contempt will be his portion. (Note, Dan. xii. 2, 3.) Therefore he desires to “have respect unto all God’s commandments.” And as he could have no confidence before the mercy-seat now, so he could not hope to stand with confidence before the judgment-seat at last, if he allowed himself to despise or violate one of them. This man therefore will not only pray to be directed, and enabled to obey as far as he knows the will of God; but to be taught it, in all those things which have hitherto been concealed from him: and he is disposed “with uprightness of heart,” to praise the Lord for every new discovery which he makes in his righteous judgments. His desire and purpose are to keep the statutes of God, and his dependence is upon him to enable him, and comfort him in so doing. The Lord may, indeed, and often will, leave such a servant to feel his own weakness, when struggling with difficulties and temptations; yet he will hear his prayer, when he earnestly intreats him that he would not utterly and finally forsake him. (Note, 2 Cor. xii. 7—10.)

NOTES.

V. 9. Many maxims and rules have been laid down, for regulating the manners, and forming the principles, of young persons: but a constant attention to their conduct, and an habitual comparison of their opinions, words, tempers, affections, and actions, with the sacred scriptures, so as to aim daily at nearer and nearer conformity, is of itself sufficient; and without this, all else is totally inadequate. We may suppose that David made this inquiry for his own use, in the dangerous and important season of youth; and then published it in his old age for the benefit of others. (Notes, xxxiv. 11—14. Ec. xi. 3, 10. xii. 1. 1 Tim. v. 11—16, v. 16. 2 Tim. ii. 20—22. iii. 14—17.)—He

11 ° Thy word have I hid in mine
 heart, ° that I might not sin against
 thee.

12 ° Blessed art thou, O LORD:
 ° teach me thy statutes.

13 With my lips have ° I declared
 all the judgments of thy mouth.

14 I have ° rejoiced in the way of

1 John ii. 27. y 46. 172. xxxiv. 11. xxxvii. 30. xl. 9, 10. lxxi. 15—18. cxviii. 17.
 Matt. x. 27. xii. 34, 35. Acts iv. 20. z 47. 72. 77. 111. 127. 162. xix. 9, 10. cxii. 1.
 Job xxiii. 12. Jer. xv. 16. Matt. xiii. 44. Acts ii. 41—47.

97. xxxvii. 31.
 xl. 8. Job xxii.
 22. Prov. ii. 1.
 10, 11. Is. li. 7.
 Jer. xv. 16. Luke
 ii. 19. 51. Col.
 iii. 16.

t xix. 13.
 u 1 Tim. i. 11. vi.
 15.

x 26. 27. 33. 64.
 66. 68. 71, 72.
 108. 124, 125.
 135. xxv. 4, 5.
 lxxxvi. 11. cxliii.

10. Luke xxiv.
 45. John xiv. 26.
 15—18. cxviii. 17.

‘who became Man for our salvation, passed through this
 ‘state of youth undefiled, that he might, as it were, re-
 ‘claim and consecrate it anew to God. Let every young
 ‘man often meditate on this circumstance.’ Bp. Horne.

V. 10. Notes, 2, 3. 34. lxxviii. 36, 37. 2 Chr. xv. 12—
 15. Jer. iii. 6—11. xxix. 11—14.—O let, &c.] Literally,
 “Do not cause me to wander from thy commandments.”
 —The Psalmist was conscious that God might justly re-
 ject his imperfect services; and that both the will and
 power of obeying, as well as pardon and acceptance,
 were to be sought from his free mercy and grace. (Marg.
 Ref.—Notes, 36. cxli. 3, 4. cxliii. 8—12. Phil. ii. 12, 13.)
 ‘O preserve us from error, in principles, and in practice.’
 Bp. Horne.

V. 11. David treasured up the truths, promises, pre-
 cepts, and instructions of the sacred oracles, in his me-
 mory; and endeavoured to form his judgment, to direct
 his conscience, and to regulate his affections, according to
 them: and having thus lodged them in his heart, they
 were securely hidden from every enemy, nor could he be
 robbed of them. Thus he used the Scriptures as his an-
 tidote against the contagion of temptation and sin. (Marg.
 Ref.—Note, Col. iii. 16, 17.) ‘From the “heart are the
 “issues of life,” the thoughts, the words, and the ac-
 ‘tions: when God ruleth the heart by his word and Spirit,
 ‘these become his subjects; then “the kingdom of heaven
 ‘“is within us,” and all is obedience, peace, and love.’
 Bp. Horne. (Note, Prov. iv. 23.)

V. 12. ‘Thou art perfectly holy and perfectly happy;
 O teach me thy statutes, that I may be partaker of thy
 holiness and happiness.’ (Notes, 26. 68. 124, 125. cxliii.
 10. 1 Tim. i. 8—11. 1 John ii. 26—29. iii. 1—3. iv.
 9—12.)

V. 13. (Note, 46.) “Out of the abundance of the
 ‘heart the mouth speaketh;” and the stream will al-
 ‘ways shew the nature of the fountain. When we make
 ‘the Scriptures the subject of our conversation, we glorify
 ‘God, we edify our neighbours, and we improve ourselves.’
 Bp. Horne. (Note, Deut. vi. 7—9.)—Judgments.] This
 word seems to mean the decisions formed and made by
 the infinite wisdom and justice of God, whether they con-
 cern truths, facts, duties, or persons. By these decisions
 we ought to judge, and by them we shall be judged.
 (Notes, 66. 175. xcvii. 2 Neh. ix. 13. Ez. xx. 11. Rom.
 ii. 1—6.)

V. 14. ‘Truth and holiness afford to the sincere be-
 ‘liever a pleasure more exquisite, as well as more solid
 ‘and enduring, than that which a miser feels at the acqui-
 ‘sition of his darling wealth. ... The true riches we may
 ‘always acquire, and surely as much as the heaven is
 ‘higher than the earth, so much are heavenly joys above

^a 23. 48. 78. 97. thy testimonies, as *much as* in all riches.

^b 6. 117. 15 I will ^a meditate in thy precepts, and ^b have respect unto thy ways.

^d 11. 83. 93. 109. 16 I will ^c delight myself in thy statutes: ^d I will not forget thy word.

GIMEL.

^f 17 ^e Deal bountifully with thy servant, *that* ^f I may live, and keep thy word.

^{*} 18 ^{*} Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold ^g wondrous things out of thy law.

^g 19 I *am* ^h a stranger in the earth:

ⁱ hide not thy commandments from me.

20 My ^k soul breaketh for the longing *that it hath* unto thy judgments ^l at all times.

21 Thou hast ^m rebuked the proud *that are* ⁿ cursed, which do err from thy commandments.

22 ^o Remove from me reproach and contempt; ^p for I have kept thy testimonies.

23 ^q Princes also did sit *and* speak ^r against me; *but* ^r thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.

ⁱ 10. Job xxxix. 17. Is. lxiii. 17. Luke ix. 45. xxiv. 45. ^k 40. 131. 174. xlii. 1. lxiii. 1. lxxxiv. 2. Prov. xiii. 12. Cant. v. 8. Rev. iii. 15, 16. ^l cvi. 3. Job xxiii. 11, 12. xxvii. 10. Prov. xvii. 17. ^m 78. cxxxviii. 6. Ex. x. 3. xviii. 11. Job xl. 11, 12. Is. ii. 11, 12. x. 12. Ez. xxviii. 2—10. Dan. iv. 37. v. 22—24. Mal. iv. 1. Luke xiv. 11. xviii. 14. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5. ⁿ 10. 118. Deut. xxvii. 15—26. xxviii. 15. xxx. 19. Neh. ix. 16. 29. Is. xlii. 24. xliii. 28. Jer. xlv. 9—11. 16. 28, 29. Gal. iii. 13. ^o 39. 42. xxxix. 8. xlii. 10. lxix. 9—11. 19, 20. cxliii. 3, 4. 1 Sam. xxv. 10. 39. 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8. Job xvi. 20. xix. 2, 3. Heb. xiii. 13. p xxxvii. 3. 6. 1 Pet. ii. 20. iii. 16, 17. iv. 14—16. q ii. 1, 2. 1 Sam. xx. 31. xxii. 7—13. Luke xxii. 66. xxiii. 1, 2, 10, 11. r 15.

‘earthly, in kind, degree, and duration.’ Bp. Horne.—*As much as, &c.*] Or, *As in all riches.* ‘Thy testimonies are to me, what all riches are to worldly men, and far better.’ (Notes, 46—48. 97. 106. 111. 127, 128. 162. iv. 6—8. lxiii. 5, 6. Job xxiii. 8—12. Jer. xv. 15—18. Acts ii. 41—47. 1 Pet. i. 8, 9.)

V. 15. ‘Meditation is that exercise of the mind, where- by it recalls a known truth, as some kinds of creatures ‘do their food, to be ruminated upon, until the nutri- tious parts are extracted, and fitted for the purposes of ‘life.’ Bp. Horne. (Notes, 6. 23. 147, 148. i. 1—3. Jam. i. 22—25.)

V. 16. Notes, 14. 93. 176. Prov. ii. 10, 11.

V. 17. “Recompense thy servant; I will live and keep ‘thy word.” Or, “Confer a favour on thy servant, that ‘I may live and keep thy word.” The verse may be un- derstood either way.—‘He sheweth that we ought not to ‘desire to live, but to serve God.’—If the Lord commu- nicate to us spiritual life abundantly, we shall be propor- tionably obedient to his word; and this will be both an additional obligation conferred on us, and a gracious re- compense of our imperfect services hitherto. (Notes, 132, 133. xiii. 5, 6. cxvi. 7—9.)

V. 18. “Reveal,” (*marg.*) or *unveil* “mine eyes, &c.” (Note, 2 Cor. iii. 12—16.)—The *moral* law of God shewed the Israelites their need of a Saviour; and it also displays the holiness of God, the nature of heavenly happiness in conformity to him, and the believer’s path through this evil world. (Note, Ex. xx. 1.) But under the *ceremonial* law, the wonders of redeeming love were veiled. Be- lievers among the Israelites well knew, that the external institutions of the law typified some deep and spiritual mysteries: and they understood them, in proportion to their degree of divine illumination, and as far as it was necessary for their support, comfort, and direction in the path of life; yet probably with much less distinctness, than real Christians now do. (Notes, Matt. xiii. 16, 17. Luke x. 23, 24. 1 Pet. i. 10—12.) But under every dis- pensation, the veil of prejudice, pride, and carnal affec- tions, must be removed from the heart of fallen man, or he will never understand the nature and glory of divine truth.—If the word of God be the instruction, the Spirit

of God must be the Teacher. For this divine teaching the Psalmist prayed, that he might be enabled to see more and more of those wonderful works and perfections of God, of which even his present imperfect discoveries filled his soul with devout admiration, adoration, and holy joy. (Notes, Is. xxix. 9—12. 17—19. Matt. x. 24—26. xiii. 10, 11. xvi. 17. Luke xxiv. 44—49. John vi. 41—46. Acts xvi. 13—15. xxvi. 16—18. 2 Cor. iv. 3—6. Eph. i. 15—23.)

V. 19—21. These verses contain arguments, with which the Psalmist enforced his plea for divine teaching. Being a stranger on earth, and journeying to his eternal home, he knew that he should lose his way, if the testi- monies and commandments of God were unknown to him, or mistaken by him. (Notes, 54—56. xxxix. 12. Gen. xlvii. 9. Heb. xi. 13—16. 1 Pet. ii. 11.) He had been led to desire the knowledge of the truths and precepts of revelation, with such intenseness, that his soul was con- stantly ready to break, or faint, when at any time he dreaded being left in ignorance, or bewildered in error. (Notes, 40. 131. lxxxiv. 1, 2. Prov. xiii. 12.) And he was sensible that the proud, the obstinately impenitent sinner, remained under the wrath and curse of God, and would meet with severe rebukes here, as well as misery here- after; and therefore he earnestly deprecated the doom of such wicked men. (*Marg. Ref.*) ‘This disposition is not ‘a transient fit; but it is constant and uniform “at all ‘“times.”’ Bp. Horne.—‘Seeing man’s life in this world ‘is but a passage, what should become of him, if thy word ‘were not his guide?’

V. 22. ‘Remove from me that disgrace and shame, ‘unto which they expose me as a traitor to my king and ‘country; for I am not guilty of any such wickedness, but ‘carefully observe thy testimonies.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 39—42. vii. 3—11. xxv. 2, 3. xxxix. 7, 8. cxliii. 3, 4.)

V. 23. Saul and his courtiers, sitting in council, and speaking all manner of evil falsely against David, and con- spiring together to take away his life; while he was pray- ing, and meditating on the word of God, that he might learn and practise his duty towards them and all men, and might find comfort from the precious promises; were a type of the Jewish sanhedrim, consulting together to put Jesus

* 16. 77. 92. 143. 162. Job xxvii.
 10. Jer. vi. 10.
 † 97—100. 104, 105.
 xix. 11. Deut. xvii. 18—20. Josh. i. 8. Prov. vi. 20—23. Is. viii. 20. Col. iii. 16. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17.
 * Heb. *men of my counsel.*

24 Thy ^s testimonies also *are* my
 delight, ^t and ^{*} my counsellors.

to death; while employed through the day in healing and teaching the people, and doing all manner of good to all who were willing to receive benefit by him; and spending the hours of the night, or part of them, in prayer and supplication. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, 15.*)

V. 24. The Psalmist not only found his joy and comfort in the sure testimonies of God, but he made them his counsellors, or ‘the men of his counsel;’ (*marg.*) and closely adhered to their decisions, as princes do to the unanimous opinion of their most approved advisers. (*Notes, 14. 105.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 9—24.

The season of youth is peculiarly dangerous and important: the comfort and usefulness of future life in general greatly depend on our conduct, when the passions are most strong, and we are most destitute of knowledge and experience: and the hopes of the church and of society, for a succession of useful members, are placed upon the rising generation. Every one ought, therefore, to contribute all that is in his power, to preserve young persons from the fatal effects of their own head-strong passions, of an ensnaring world, and of artful seducers; that they may not early contract bad habits, and form ruinous connexions. And when young persons are convinced of the desirableness of having their way made and preserved pure from the pollution of sin; their general rule is, to take heed to it according to the precepts, cautions, and encouragements of the word of God. Thus David from his youth sought the Lord with his whole heart; and in answer to his prayers he was not left to “wander from his commandments:” he deposited the sacred scriptures in his inmost soul, and was by them kept from sinning against God. Let every youthful reader copy this example; yea, let us all be thus followers of him, and of the Lord Jesus.—As God is both perfectly holy and perfectly happy, and as his blessedness is the result of his infinite excellency; how absurd must it be to expect happiness by being contrary to him, and rebelling against him! Rather let this be our plea with him to teach us his statutes, that, being partakers of his holiness, we may also participate his blessedness: and then we may, with propriety and efficacy, “declare the judgments of his mouth,” for the instruction of others also. (*Notes, xxxvii. 29—31. l. 16—21.*) For the experienced believer finds far greater joy in the ways of his testimonies, than wealth can confer: and these are the only joys and riches, which are universally attainable by all who covet and seek them. But then we must frequently meditate upon the precepts of our God, reduce our knowledge to practice, and have respect to all his ways: and if we be careful not to forget any part of his word, we shall soon delight ourselves in his ordinances and commandments.—The Lord deals very bountifully with all his servants; who, being delivered from the wrath to come, and raised from the death of sin, find true life and enjoyment in keeping his word: but they need more and more mercies, and long for still more complete divine illumination. Every dis-

DALETH.

25 My ^u soul cleaveth unto the dust:

u xxii. 15. xlv.
 25. Is. lxxv. 25.
 Matt. xvi. 23
 Rom. vii. 22—
 24. Phil. iii. 19
 Col. iii. 2.

covery, which they make of the wondrous things revealed in the scriptures, increases their earnest desire of having the eyes of their understanding opened to clearer perceptions of divine truths: and every lively emotion of love and gratitude makes them long and pray for more fervent affections. As perfect knowledge and love are reserved for their portion in heaven, they feel themselves “strangers on earth:” they fear missing their way, even in part, lest they should lose the solace of walking with God, by erring from his commandments. Their anxiety on this account often interrupts their enjoyment, and makes them “groan, being burdened:” especially, if darkness and temptation so oppress their minds, as to render them afraid of having their portion with the proud and impenitent, whom God resists. This is the reproach which they most dread; though the contempt and calumny of men are sometimes very distressing to their minds, and excite prayers for the removal of them. But when either princes or peasants speak against them; as the servants of God, they would be occupied in meditation on the scriptures, not only because “their delight is in his testimonies,” but because they desire from thence to be counselled how to behave; in order that by well doing they may put to silence those, who would falsely accuse them: and in every trouble and perplexity, they make them their “delight and their counsellors.” Such are the desires, purposes, and experiences of the true Christian, in proportion to his degree of knowledge and grace. May the Lord help us to look in this glass, that we may know what we are; and that we may be directed, in exercising repentance of sin and faith in Christ, and ‘in amending our lives, according to his holy word.’ And may we learn to avoid all altercation with our revilers; who cannot injure us, except they interrupt our devotions, or ruffle our tempers, or induce us to sin against God.

NOTES.

V. 25. Many understand this verse, merely as a complaint on account of deep affliction, and peril of death, and as a prayer for the preservation of life. (*Marg. Ref.*) Yet it is evident that the Psalmist was conscious, that, compared with his better judgment and the perfect standard of duty, his affections were exceedingly apt to cleave to worldly objects, which are but dust; and that he prayed for enlivening grace to render him more spiritually-minded. (*Notes, Matt. xvi. 21—23, v. 23. 1 Cor. iii. 1—3. Col. iii. 1—4.*) The word rendered “quicken me,” signifies, ‘cause me to live:’ and may mean either, *preserve my life, give me life, or let me have more abundant life*; or, according to a mode of expression, peculiar to our language, Let me be *lively*; let me “have life more abundantly.” (*Notes, 37. 40. 88. 93. 159. lxxi. 20, 21. John x. 10—13. Rom. viii. 1, 2.*) As the preservation of David’s life from Saul’s persecution was engaged for by special promise; so quickening grace in answer to prayer is promised in every part of scripture, or at least such prayers accord to the spirit of the whole sacred volume.

quicken thou me ¹ according to thy word.

26 I have ² declared my ways, and thou heardest me: ³ teach me thy statutes.

27 Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: ⁴ so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.

28 My ⁵ soul ⁶ melteth for heaviness: ⁷ strengthen thou me according unto thy word.

29 ⁸ Remove from me the way of

lying; and ⁹ grant me thy law graciously.

30 I have ¹⁰ chosen the way of truth: ¹¹ thy judgments have I laid *before me*.

31 I have ¹² stuck unto thy testimonies: O LORD, ¹³ put me not to shame.

32 I will ¹⁴ run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt ¹⁵ enlarge my heart.

HE.

33 ¹⁶ Teach me, O LORD, the way of thy statutes; and ¹⁷ I shall keep it *unto the end*.

¹ Heb. droppeth. ² xxvii. 14. xxix. 11. Deut. xxxiii. 25. Is. xl. 29. 31. Zech. x. 12. Eph. iii. 16. Phil. iv. 13. ³ 37. 104. 128. 163. cxli. 3, 4. Prov. xxx. 8. Is. xlv. 20. Jer. xvi. 19. Jon. ii. 8. Eph. iv. 22—25. 1 John i. 8. ii. 4. Rev. xxii. 15.

⁴ 2 Cor. iii. 17. vi. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 16. ⁵ n 12. 26, 27. Is. liv. 13. John vi. 45. ⁶ Matt. x. 22. xxiv. 13. 1 Cor. i. 7, 8. Phil. i. 6. 1 John ii. 19, 20, 27. Rev. ii. 26.

V. 26. (*Marg. Ref.*) “We should freely and ingenuously declare to God in prayer our sins, our temptations, our sorrows, and our undertakings: it argues love, confidence, and sincerity so to do; it is a means of acquainting us with our own state, of which generally we are ignorant; and it will not fail to procure those aids from above, of which we stand in need. God will hear us; he will pardon our offences, strengthen us in our trials, dispel our grief, and “prosper the work of our hands upon us.” *Bp. Horne*.—It is worthy of special notice, how often, and in what varied connexions, David, in this Psalm, prays to be taught the statutes of God; though he seems to have been more intimately acquainted with the sacred oracles, as then extant, than almost any other man was: but he knew, that divine teaching alone could enable him rightly to understand the scriptures, and to apply general rules to all the variety of particular cases, which occurred in the course of his life. (*Note*, 12.)

V. 27. *Marg. Ref.*—13. *Notes*, lxxi. 16—18.

V. 28. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Heaviness*.] David’s heaviness might in part arise from his outward trials: but he seems to have spoken as one distressed in mind, because he got no more ground against sin, and as needing strength to resist temptation. “Lift me up according to thy word.” Let us not marvel, if sin bring us to the knowledge of sorrow, since he who “knew no sin,” was yet, on our account, so intimately “acquainted with grief.” In the garden, his soul melted for heaviness. ... Our transgressions deserve an eternity of sorrow: let us not therefore repine at any portion of it, that may fall to our share in time.—No, blessed Jesu, let us suffer with thee, as both a means and a pledge of our future glorification with thee. Only “strengthen us, according to” the promises “in thy word.” *Bp. Horne*.

V. 29, 30. “The way of lying,” and “the way of truth,” are here opposed to each other. “The way of truth” means, that true way which God has revealed, by which we may come to him and walk with him. The “way of lying” means, therefore, all those false ways, by which men deceive themselves and others, or are deceived by Satan and his instruments. False doctrine, hypocrisy, and whatever is contrary to the faith and holiness of the gospel, are intended by the way of lying. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 104. 128. cxli. 3, 4.)—The sound of the words in-

deed has led many to suppose, that David had been habitually addicted to the sin of lying, from which he prayed to be delivered; and some instances are mentioned in which he shamefully deviated from truth. But though a believer may fall into any sin, he cannot habitually practise any one, knowing it to be so; and the original by no means admits of this lax interpretation.—“Grant me thy law graciously,” is a prayer, that God would *in mercy* write his law in the Psalmist’s heart, and enable him to obey it; which he would consider a special instance of undeserved favour or grace.—Having “chosen the way of truth,” he laid the judgments of God before him for hourly direction and admonition.

V. 31. The word, rendered “stuck,” is the same as is before translated, “cleaveth:” (*Note*, 25 :) and the conflict between grace cleaving to the Lord’s testimonies, and the remainder of in-dwelling sin “cleaving to the dust,” is best understood by those who “delight in the law of God after the inward man, but find another law in their members warring against the law of their mind,” so that they “cannot do the things that they would.” (*Notes*, 1—5. *Rom.* vii. 13—25. *Gal.* v. 16—18.)—The Psalmist, however, adhered to the testimonies of God so closely, notwithstanding this inward conflict, that neither temptations nor persecutions could induce him to draw back. So also did the apostle, and so do all that “delight in the law of God.” (*Note*, *Acts* xi. 23, 24.) “Hitherto I have kept my resolution, and never started from thy testimonies. Preserve me, good Lord, that I may not hereafter disgrace myself, by doing any thing contrary to them.” *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 32. “I will run the way of thy commandments; for thou wilt enlarge my heart.” This is the most literal rendering. “By this he sheweth, that we can neither choose good, cleave to God’s word, nor run forward in his way, except he make our hearts large to receive grace, and willing to obey.” (*Notes*, 45. *Cant.* i. 4. *Luke* i. 46—55. *John* vi. 41—46. viii. 30—36.)

V. 33. Those, who are taught by the Lord “the way of his statutes,” will keep it to the end: and the reason why so many draw back is intimated; namely, they have only been taught by men. (*Note*, 1 *John* ii. 18, 19.)—“He sheweth that he cannot follow on to the end, except God teach him oft times, and lead him forward.”

p 73. cxi. 10. Job
xxviii. 29. Prov.
n. 5, 6. John vii.
17. Jam. i. 5.
iii. 13—18.
q Matt. v. 19. vii.
24. Jam. i. 25.
ii. 8—12. iv. 11.
r 10. 58. 69.
s 27. 36. 173. Ez.
xxxvi. 26, 27.
Phil. ii. 13. Heb.
xiii. 21.
t xxiii. 3. Prov. iii.
17. iv. 11. 18.
viii. 20. Is. ii. 3.
xlviii. 17.
u 16. Is. lviii. 13.
14. Rom. vii. 22.
1 John v. 3.
x li. 10. cxli. 4.
1 Kings viii. 58.
Jer. xxxii. 39.
Ez. xi. 19, 20.
y x. 3. Ex. xviii.
21. Ez. xxxiii.
31. Hab. ii. 9.
Mark vii. 22. Luke xii. 15. xvi. 14. Eph. v. 3. Col. iii. 5. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. 17. Heb.
xiii. 5. 2 Pet. ii. 3, 14. * Heb. *Make to pass.* z Num. xv. 39. Josh. vii.
21. 2 Sam. xi. 2. Job xxxi. 1. Prov. iv. 25. xxiii. 5. Is. xxxiii. 15. Matt. v. 28.
1 John ii. 16. a 25. 40. b 49. 2 Sam. vii. 25—29. c ciii. 11. 13. 17.
cxlv. 19. cxlvii. 11. Jer. xxxii. 39—41.

34 ^p Give me understanding, and ^q I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall ^r observe it with *my* whole heart.

35 ^s Make me to go in ^t the path of thy commandments; ^u for therein do I delight.

36 ^v Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, ^w and not to covetousness.

37 ^x Turn ^y away mine eyes from beholding vanity; ^z and ^a quicken thou me in thy way.

38 ^b Stablish thy word unto thy servant, ^c who *is devoted* to thy fear.

39 ^d Turn away my reproach which I fear; ^e for thy judgments *are* good.

40 Behold, ^f I have longed after thy precepts: ^g quicken me in thy righteousness.

VAU.

41 ^h Let thy mercies come also unto me, O LORD, *even* thy salvation, according to thy word.

42 ⁱ So shall I ^j have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me; ^k for I trust in thy word.

43 And ^l take not the word of truth ^m in a thing. 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8. xix. 18—20. k 49. 74. 81. lvi. 4, 10, 11. lxxxix. 19, &c. 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. 1 Chr. xxviii. 3—6. Acts xxvii. 25. 14, 15. lxxi. 17, 18. Eph. i. 13. Jam. i. 18.

V. 34. ‘Much “understanding” is needful, in order to ‘the observation of the law; that we may know what is ‘commanded, and what is forbidden, and how far; that we ‘may avoid the snares laid for us in the way of duty; that ‘we may respect things according to their due rank and ‘worth; that we may do good works in their proper time, ‘place, and manner; above all, that the affections may be ‘directed by the judgment, and not the judgment by the ‘affections.’ *Bp. Horne.* “With my whole heart,” ‘not only ‘in outward conversation, but also with inward affection.’ (Notes, 10. Prov. ii. 1—6. Phil. i. 9—11. Jam. iii. 13—18.)

V. 35. *Delight.* ‘Happy the soul, that can say to ‘God, “Therein do I delight.”’ *Bp. Horne.* The character, described in the seventh of Romans, says, “I delight in the law of God, after the inward man;” and the longings and prayers of the man after God’s own heart, continually remind us of the struggles and complaints, spoken of in that well known portion of holy writ. (Notes, 5. Rom. vii. 9—25.)

V. 36. In proportion as the heart is *inclined* by divine grace, to “the testimonies of God;” to ‘desire what he ‘promises, and love what he commands,’ the inclination, or propensity, to covetousness must be mortified: and when the Lord leaves a man to himself, his heart will of course be inclined to evil, and idolatrously to seek happiness in worldly things. (Notes, Ex. xx. 3. 17. 1 Kings xxi. 1—7. P. O.—Notes, Rom. vii. 7, 8. 1 John ii. 15—17.)— ‘Hereby meaning all other vices, because that covetousness is the root of all evil.’ (Note, 1 Tim. vi. 6—10.)— ‘Incline my heart always to seek its contentment in thy ‘testimonies; and suffer it not to be drawn away by the ‘desire of worldly goods, which, having no measure, is ‘never satisfied.’ *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 37. ‘Help me to overlook those worldly honours ‘and fading beauties, which we are apt to behold with too ‘much admiration; and with lively affections and vigorous ‘endeavours, to persist in the pursuit of thy favour, in the ‘way thou hast set before me.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—The eyes seem put for all the senses, which are the inlets of temptation to the heart, and through which every kind of concupiscence is excited. (Notes, Gen. iii. 6. Josh. vii. 21. 2 Sam. xi. 1—5. Job xxxi. 1—4. 24—28. Prov. iv. 24, 25. xxiii. 4, 5. Matt. v. 27, 28.)

V. 38. The promises given in the word of God, especially relate to the preservation and sanctification of the true believer. David, being conscious that he was the Lord’s servant, and greatly afraid of offending or forsaking him, prayed to have these promises *stablished*, or performed, to his soul; that the effects of the deceitfulness of his heart, and of the force of temptation, might be prevented. (Notes, 49. 2 Sam. vii. 26—29.)

V. 39. ‘Let me not fall to thy dishonour; but let my ‘heart still delight in thy gracious word.’—The excellency of the judgments, decisions, maxims, and precepts of the sacred word, aggravates the guilt and disgrace of acting contrary to them; and this seems to have been the reproach of which David was especially afraid. (Notes, 22. 2 Sam. xii. 14. Matt. xviii. 7—9. 1 Tim. iii. 7. Tit. ii. 7, 8. 1 Pet. iv. 12—16.)

V. 40. Notes, 5. 19—21.

‘Doth not my heart thy precepts love,
‘And long to see thy face?
‘And yet how slow my spirits move,
‘Without enlivening grace!’

Watts.

V. 41, 42. ‘He sheweth that God’s mercy and love is ‘the first cause of our salvation.—By trusting in God’s ‘word he assureth himself to be able to confute the slanders of his adversaries.’—When David was driven away by Absalom, Shimei loaded him with reproaches; as if God had rejected him for his crimes, and as if his confidence in God had been presumptuous. (Note, 2 Sam. xvi. 5—14.)—When Christ was nailed to the cross, the chief priests reviled him, saying, “He trusted in God: let ‘him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, “I am the Son of God.” (Note, Matt. xxvii. 39—44.) But the restoration of David to his throne, and the resurrection of Christ from the dead, furnished a sufficient answer to these reproaches: and the complete salvation of true believers will for ever silence and put to shame all those, who have derided and slandered them, during their trials and difficulties. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 38. 76, 77. 132. cvi. 4, 5.)

V. 43. When David was left in uncertainty and distress about his personal concerns, his confidence in discoursing upon the truths of the scriptures, and the faithfulness of God to his promises, was abated: he therefore prayed that

utterly out of my mouth; ^m for I have hoped in thy judgments.

44 So shall I ^a keep thy law continually, for ever and ever.

45 And ^o I will walk ^{*} at liberty; ^r for I seek thy precepts.

46 I will ^a speak of thy testimonies

also before kings, and ^r will not be ashamed.

47 And ^{*} I will delight myself in thy commandments, ^t which I have loved.

48 My ^u hands also will I lift up ^x unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and ^y I will meditate in thy statutes.

John xiii. 17. xv 14. Jam. i. 22—25.

Mark viii. 38.
Rom. i. 16.
Phil. i. 20. 2 Tim.
i. 8. 16. 1 Pet.
iv. 14—16.
1 John ii. 28.
16. 24. cxii. 1.
John iv. 34. Phil.
ii. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 21.
48. 97. 127. 140.
167. 174. xix. 7
—10. Job xxiii.
11. 12. Rom.
vii. 12. 16. 22.
u x. 12. Ez. xlv.
12. Mic. v. 9.
x Matt. vii. 21.
y 15. i. 2.

he might not be so far discouraged, as to be entirely put to silence on these favourite topics; (*Notes*, 46. li. 12—15. lxxi. 17, 18;) seeing he had avowed his hope, that God would decide for him and against his enemies, according to his perfect wisdom, justice, and truth. (*Notes*, iii. 3—8.)

V. 44. The language of this verse is peculiarly emphatical.—Perfect obedience will constitute a large proportion of heavenly happiness to all eternity, and the nearer we approach to it on earth, the more we anticipate the felicity of heaven. (*Notes*, John viii. 30—36. 2 Pet. ii. 18, 19. Rev. vii. 13—17. xxii. 2—5, v. 3.)

V. 45. “I will walk about with enlargement.” (*Marg.*) As a man who, when confined in a prison, could only walk about in its contracted precincts; but, being liberated, he walks at large, and goes to whatever place he pleases. (*Notes*, 32. 2 Sam. xxii. 20.) The service of God is perfect freedom; every deviation is proportionable slavery to sin and Satan.—‘It is not liberty, no, nor a kingdom ‘that I seek, so much as better advantages to fulfil thy ‘precepts.’ *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 46. David, before his accession to the throne, was often in the presence of Saul, and of Achish king of Gath, and afterwards he became a companion of kings: but he was determined in no case to conceal his religion, or to be ashamed of speaking his whole mind before them on that most interesting subject. ‘If he,’ (the servant of God,) ‘walketh at liberty,’ he will speak of God’s testimonies, ‘with due reverence to the person and authority of his ‘prince, but as one who is neither afraid nor “ashamed,” ‘to declare the whole counsel of heaven to any being upon ‘earth.’ *Bp. Horne.* (*Notes*, cxxxviii. 1. Matt. x. 16—20. xiv. 3—5. Acts xxiv. 24—27. xxv. 23. xxvi. 1—29.)

V. 47. (16. *Notes*, 24. 103. 140. cxii. 1.) ‘He who ‘would preach boldly to others, must himself delight in ‘the practice of what he preacheth. If there be in us a ‘new nature, it will love the commandments of God, as ‘being congenial to it.’ *Bp. Horne.*

V. 48. To “lift up the hands” implies earnestness and encouragement in any business: thus David purposed to take courage, and be very earnest in keeping God’s commandments. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 15. i. 1—3.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 25—48.

While “the children of this world” cleave wholly to the dust of the earth as their portion, and are neither alarmed nor humbled on that account; “the children of light” are often greatly burdened, because of the remains of carnal affections in their hearts. Their judgment and choice lead them to “seek those things which are above:” yet they feel that their souls often grovel here on earth; and while

others perhaps think that they are soaring to the very heavens in faith and love, they are complaining before God, that “their souls cleave to the dust;” and beseeching him to enliven their affections, and invigorate their endeavours, that they may rise superior to worldly cares and interests, and be more entirely taken up about the infinitely important concerns of eternity. And his word encourages these good desires which he has planted in our hearts; and by his grace he will answer them.—The experienced believer communes with God in the confidence of faith and love: he unreservedly declares before him all his ways, and all the difficulties and perplexities with which he meets; nay, he confesses before him, without desiring to conceal or palliate any thing, all the sins of his life and of his heart; and the consciousness of this being his habitual practice, encourages his hope of pardon and assistance from his heavenly Father. When we indeed heartily desire to obey the precepts of our God, we may be sure that he will hear our prayers to be made acquainted with them: and with all our external advantages we still need this divine teaching; for otherwise our natural pride, self-love, and love of sin, together with our contracted prejudices, will close our minds against the truth, and involve us in error and uncertainty.—Those who most delight in serving God, and in speaking of his wondrous works, may for a season be in great heaviness, and their souls be even “melted within “them” through manifold temptations: but they will pray, and the Lord will hear; and he has promised that “as their day is, so shall their strength be.”—Having chosen the way of truth, and laid the scriptures before us as our rule, we may pray in faith to be kept at a distance from all false doctrine and hypocrisy, and to be graciously led into a fuller knowledge of the divine will: and sincerity in our hearts, towards God, will best preserve us from all dissimulation in our dealings with men. When we have entered upon this course of life, we must persevere in it: and the Lord will never suffer those to be put to shame, who “have stuck to his testimonies,” stedfastly professing his truth, and doing his will, without being moved by the frowns or smiles of the world to turn aside from him.—But though the believer habitually travels the way to heaven; yet he is often grieved to find that he gets on no faster: and he still prays to be set at liberty from every remainder of the bondage of sin, “that he may run “the way of God’s commandments with an enlarged “heart.” He desires to proceed with increasing speed, even unto the end; he wants knowledge in order to practise; he measures the degree of men’s wisdom by that of their piety and obedience to God; he prays to be made ‘of ‘good understanding in the way of godliness;’ and to be inclined and enabled to walk in it, not only because it is the path of duty, but because he delights in it. Yet he

ZAIN.

^a cv. ii. 47. cvi. 4.
45. Gen. viii. 1.
xxxii. 9. Job
vii. 7. Is. lxii. 6.

^a Marg.
43. 21. 147. lxxi.
14. 2 Sam. v. 2.
vii. 25. Rom. xv.
13.

^b xxvii. 13. xxviii.
7. xlii. 8. 11.
xciv. 19. Jer.
xv. 16. Rom. v.
3—5. xv. 4. Heb.
vi. 17—19. xii.
11, 12.

^c 25. Ez. xxxvii.
10. John vi. 63. Jam. i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 3. ii. 2.
Luke xvi. 14, 15. xxii. 35.

49 ^a Remember the word unto thy servant, ^a upon which thou hast caused me to hope.

50 ^b This is my comfort in my affliction: ^c for thy word hath quickened me.

51 The ^d proud have had me greatly

d 21. 69. cxliii. 3, 4. Jer. xx. 7.

still feels his heart capable of entertaining an inordinate desire after worldly things, and of coveting wealth by which they may all be purchased. Against these emotions of covetousness he watches; and he prays unto his God not to permit his heart to be in any degree inclined to it. He knows that all below is vanity and vexation of spirit; but he fears lest through the outward senses concupiscence should be excited in his heart: and therefore he intreats the Lord to “turn away his eyes” from vanity, and to close all his senses against every object, which can pollute his imagination, or kindle forbidden desires in his heart; or which might cause him to loiter in that way, in which he would be quickened, and not retarded. He therefore pleads the promises of God, and desires that they may be confirmed and fulfilled to him; as one who would devote himself to the fear and worship of his name: and he prays to be delivered from the reproach of hypocrisy or apostasy, or a disgraceful walk, which he more dreads than the contempt of men.—Knowing that all the judgments of God are just and good, he above all things dreads falling under his rebuke or condemnation; and to be assured of escaping them, he longs after his precepts, and to make progress in his righteousness. But when he has done all, he feels himself to be a poor sinful creature: his only dependence still is upon the rich mercies of God; and he desires the salvation which is promised in his word. Every present deliverance from sin and trouble serves to silence the reproaches of his calumniators: and he knows that when his salvation shall be completed, every accuser will be answered, and every aspersion wiped from his character. (Note, Is. liv. 15—17.) In the mean time he wants encouragement and assistance in speaking the word of truth, concerning the happiness of God’s people, and his righteous judgments, for the quickening of some, and the conviction of others, with whom he converses. He has no conception of final happiness, or of perfect liberty, but in keeping the divine “law continually, even for ever and “ever:” and therefore he now seeks out God’s precepts, that he may obey them; in order that on earth he may, as much as possible, anticipate the liberty and felicity of heaven. (Note, 1 John iii. 1—3.) Should such a believer be called, either by the duties of his station, or by persecution, to stand before kings; he will neither be ashamed nor afraid to speak concerning the testimonies of God, with all plainness and simplicity: but how wonderful it is, that such a glorious subject should expose a man to shame and contempt; and that especially, it should so often be disgracefully excluded from the courts of kings, nay almost from their chapels. (Notes, Am. vii. 12, 13. P. O. 10—17.) If bonds and imprisonment should be the consequence; he will find delight in those commandments

in derision: ^e yet have I not declined from thy law.

52 I ^f remembered thy judgments of old, O LORD; and have comforted myself.

53 ^g Horror hath taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law.

Luke xix. 41, 42. Rom. ix. 1—3. 2 Cor. xii. 21. Phil. iii. 18.

^e 31. 157. xlii. 18.
Job xxiii. 11. Is.
xlii. 4. Acts xx.
23, 24. Heb. xii.
1—3.
^f lxxvii. 5. 11, 12.
cv. 5. cxliii. 5.
Ex. xiv. 29, 30.
Num. xvi. 3.
&c. Deut. i. 35.
36. iv. 3, 4. 2 Pet.
ii. 4—9.
^g 136. 158. Ezra
ix. 3. 14. x. 6.
Jer. xiii. 17.
Dan. iv. 19.
Hab. iii. 16.

which he has loved: and in every case, he will seek his pleasure, not from the indulgence of sensual appetites, or malignant passions, or ambition, or avarice, but in diligently studying and obeying the commandments of his God. Something of this mind which was in Christ is in every true disciple: but very few of them have arrived at that maturity of judgment, and vigour of holy affections, which David possessed. Our evidence, however, that we are the people of God is exactly proportionable. All is defective in our judgment and affections, which comes short of this; all false and delusive in our supposed experience, which runs counter to it.

NOTES.

V. 49. The Psalmist may perhaps here especially mean, the promise of the kingdom over Israel to himself and his posterity, which God had made to him, when he thought of no such thing; and thus raised in him expectations, which subsequent events threatened to frustrate.—But the same plea is good, as to any expectation which is clearly grounded on the word of God:—“Remember, O Lord, that thou hast given this promise, and encouraged my hope in it: and, whatever appearances may be, I must wait and pray for the accomplishment of it: for thou wilt never disappoint the expectation, which thy own word hath excited.” (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. xxxii. 9—12.)

V. 50—53. Some render these verses in connexion, as follows: “This is my comfort in my affliction: that thy “word quickens” or enlivens “me; that, while the proud “exceedingly deride me, I do not decline from thy law; “that I remember thy righteous judgments of old, and “thence encourage myself; that the tempest arises against “me from the wicked, who forsake thy law.”—The effect of the sacred word in animating the Psalmist’s hope, zeal, and diligence; his consciousness of adhering to the commands of God, though “filled with the contempt of the “scornful;” his meditation on the righteous judgments of God on his enemies, and his interpositions in behalf of his servants in former ages; and the evidently wicked character of his furious persecutors, combined to encourage his hope of a happy event to his distresses. (Notes, lxxvii. 5—13. xciv. 19—21. Rom. v. 3—5.)—Or, the “horror” which he felt, when he reflected on the doom that awaited the wicked, was “a testimony of his conscience,” that he was actuated by a spirit of love, and not of revenge; and thus proved a source of comfort to him. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 136. 157, 158. Rom. ix. 1—3.)—“A true servant “of God believeth the promises, and practiseth the precepts of his blessed Master. The haughty infidel will “scoff at him, for one part of his conduct; the insolent “worldling will ridicule him for the other: but neither will

^h lxxxix. 1. ci. 1. Gen. xlvii. 9. Heb. xi. 13—16. **54** ^b Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.

ⁱ xlii. 8. lxxiii. 6. cxxxix. 18. Gen. xxxii. 24—28. Job xxxv. 9, 10. Is. xxvi. 9. Luke vi. 12. Acts xvi. 25. **55** I have remembered thy name, O LORD, ^k in the night, and have ^k kept thy law.

^k 17. 34. John xiv. 21. xv. 10. **56** This I had, ^l because I kept thy precepts.

CHETH.

^m xvi. 5. lxxiii. 26. cxlii. 5. Jer. x. 16. Lam. iii. 24. **57** *Thou art* ^m my Portion, O LORD: ⁿ I have said that I would keep thy words.

ⁿ 106. 115. lxxvi. 14. Deut. xxvii. 17, 18. Josh. xxiv. 15. 18. 21. 24—27. Neh. x. 29. &c. **58** ^o I intreated thy ^{*} favour with *my* whole heart: ^p be merciful unto me according to thy word.

^o 10. iv. 6. li. 1—3. lxxxvi. 1—3. Hos. vii. 14. **59** I ^q thought on my ways, and ^r turned my feet unto thy testimonies.

^r Deut. iv. 30, 31. Jer. viii. 4—6. xxxi. 18, 19. Ez. xxxiii. 14—16. 19. Joel ii. 13. 2 Cor. xii. 21.

60 I ^s made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.

61 ^t The [†] bands of the wicked have robbed me; ^u but I have not forgotten thy law.

62 At ^x midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee, because of ^y thy righteous judgments.

63 I *am* ^z a companion of all *them* that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.

64 The ^a earth, O LORD, is full of thy mercy: ^b teach me thy statutes.

^z 79. 115. xvi. 3. ci. 6. cxlii. 7. Prov. xiii. 20. Mal. iii. 16—18. 2 Cor. vi. 14—17. 1 John i. 3. iii. 14. ^a xxxiii. 5. civ. 13. cxlv. 9. ^b 12. 26. xxvii. 11. Is. ii. 3. xlviii. 17, 18. Matt. xi. 29.

^s xcv. 7, 8. Ezra x. 6—8. Prov. xxvii. 1. Ec. ix. 10. Gal. i. 16. ^t 95. iii. 1. 1 Sam. xxx. 3—5. Job i. 17. Hos. vi. 9. [†] Or, companies. ^u 176. 1 Sam. xxiv. 9—11. xxvi. 9—11. Prov. xxiv. 29. Rom. xii. 17—21. ^x 147. 164. xlii. 8. Mark i. 35. Acts xvi. 25. ^y 7. 75. 106. 137. xix. 9. Deut. iv. 8. Rom. vii. 12. ^z 79. 115. xvi. 3. ci. 6. cxlii. 7. Prov. xiii. 20. Mal. iii. 16—18. 2 Cor. vi. 14—17. 1 John i. 3. Is. ii. 3. xlviii. 17, 18. Matt. xi. 29.

‘induce him to disbelieve, or to disobey. ... The consequence of a due meditation on God’s judgments, will be a compassion for the wicked on whom those judgments ... fall; so that instead of feeling for ourselves, on account of the injuries they do us, we shall feel for them, who are thereby drawing down vengeance and destruction on their own heads. “Daughters of Jerusalem,” said the blessed Jesus, when led to be crucified, “weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.” *Luke xxiii. 28.* Bp. Horne.—“I have called to mind, O LORD, how, in all foregoing ages, thou hast suffered good men to fall into calamities, thereby to render them at last the more illustrious: and with this consideration also I comforted myself.” Bp. Patrick.

V. 54—56. The Psalmist in these verses still seems to be pointing out the sources of his consolation.—In his wanderings from place to place like a weary pilgrim, wherever he pitched his tent, he solaced himself, by composing and singing hymns and psalms, in praise of the statutes and ordinances of God. (Notes, 19—21. Heb. xi. 8—10. 13—16.) He meditated on the divine perfections, when others were asleep; and thus was confirmed in his purposes of obeying the divine law: and indeed all his supports, and the cheerful composure of his mind under his dangers and calamities, were a gracious recompence of his obedient regard to the word of God. ‘Thy precepts ... make those so happy that obey them; that I ascribe this sweet composure of mind, and cheerfulness of spirit, under all my grievous afflictions, to my strict observance of them.’ Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 165. xix. 7—11. 2 Sam. xxii. 21—28.)

V. 57—63. In the former section, the Psalmist stated the chief sources of his consolation: in this, he expresses his full confidence, that God was his “Portion;” and ‘the reason of this hope that was in him.’ (Note, 1 Pet. iii. 13—16.) He had formed and avowed his purpose of adhering to the words of God, keeping them as his valued treasure, and observing them in his habitual conduct. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 106. 114—117.) He had earnestly, from his inmost soul, sought the favour of God, and the mercy promised in his word. (Notes, 41, 42. 76. cvi. 4, 5.) He had thought on his ways, in order that he might repent of all his sins, and do works meet for repentance;

forsaking every evil course, and turning his feet into the paths of truth and holiness.—Having “come to himself,” and “considered his ways;” he made no delay to comply with the dictates of his conscience, in obeying God’s commandments. (Marg. Ref.—Note, Ez. xviii. 28.) And when the wicked laid snares for him, robbed him, or persecuted him; he was not, by this unmerited ill usage, so discomposed as to forget the law of God; but still made it the rule of his conduct. Nay, his distresses and dangers rendered him the more earnest in his religion: and every interposition of God for his deliverance and the confusion of his persecutors; and the recollection of the Lord’s righteous judgments of old, excited in him such lively gratitude, that he often arose even in the middle of the night to bless and thank his God. (Notes, 147, 148. 164. Mark i. 35—39.) At the same time, he chose for his companions, not the most wealthy, ingenious, or valiant, but the most pious persons whom he knew; and, while hated by the wicked, he was welcomed, with affection and reciprocal regard, by all who feared God and kept his precepts. (Note, xvi. 2, 3.) He could appeal to the Searcher of hearts for the truth of all this; and therefore he could not doubt, that the Lord was “his Portion,” and his everlasting Felicity.—It is exceedingly desirable to be habitually disposed to bless God in all circumstances; for there is no situation on earth, in which a sinner has not cause to be thankful, much more a believer. We are not indeed required to arise at midnight to give thanks to our God; but if we are by any means kept from sleep, it will prove a comfortable and profitable employment: and when we consider for what wicked purposes multitudes are awake at that hour; we shall feel some shame to be more reluctant to retrench from our sleep, in order to serve our God, than they are in serving their “diverse lusts and passions.” (Notes, Acts xvi. 25—28.)—*The wicked have robbed me.* (61) ‘The apostle tells us of some, who not only bore patiently but even “took joyfully the spoiling of their goods:” the reason he assigns for so extraordinary a behaviour deserves to be noted and remembered; “knowing that they had in heaven a better, and an enduring substance.” Heb. x. 34.’ Bp. Horne.

V. 64. (Notes, civ. 13. cxlv. 9—13.) As the Lord has

TETH.

c 17. xlii. 6. xvi.
6, 6. xviii. 35.
xxiii. 5, 6. xxx.
11. cxvi. 7.
1 Chr. xxix. 14.
d 34. lxxii. 1, 2.
1 Kings iii. 9.
28. Prov. ii. 1—
9. viii. 20. Is. xi.
2—4. Matt. xiii.
11. Phil. i. 9.
Jam. iii. 13—18.
e 128. 160. 172.
Neh. ix. 13, 14.
f 176. lxxiii. 5.
&c. Deut. xxxii.
15. 2 Sam. x. 19.
xi. 2, &c. 2 Chr.
xxxiii. 9—13.
Prov. i. 32. Jer.
xxii. 21.
g 71. 75. Jer. xxxi. 18, 19. Hos. ii. 6, 7. v. 15. vi. 1. Heb. xii. 10, 11. Rev. iii. 19.
h lxxxvi. 5. cvi. 1. cxlv. 7—9. Ex. xxxiii. 18, 19. xxxiv. 6, 7. Is. lxiii. 7. Matt.
v. 45. xix. 17. Mark x. 18. Luke xviii. 19. i 12. xxv. 8, 9.

65 Thou hast ^cdealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.

66 ^dTeach me good judgment and knowledge: for ^eI have believed thy commandments.

67 ^fBefore I was afflicted I went astray; ^gbut now have I kept thy word.

68 Thou art ^hgood, and doest good: ⁱteach me thy statutes.

69 The ^kproud have forged a lie against me; ^lbut ^mI will keep thy precepts ⁿwith my whole heart.

70 Their ^oheart is as fat as grease; ^pbut I delight in thy law.

71 It is ^qgood for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.

72 The law of thy mouth is ^rbetter unto me than thousands of gold and silver.

k xxxv. 11. cix. 2.
3. Job xlii. 4.
Jer. xlii. 2, 3.
Matt. v. 11, 12.
xxvi. 59. &c.
Acts xxiv. 5. 13.
1 51. 157.
m 34. 58. Matt. vi.
24. Jam. i. 8.
n xvii. 10. lxxiii.
7. Is. vi. 10.
Acts xxviii. 27.
o 16. 35. xl. 8.
Rom. vii. 22.
p 67. xciv. 12, 13.
Is. xxvii. 9.
1 Cor. xi. 32.
q 14. 111. 127. 162.
xix. 10. Prov.
iii. 14. 5. viii.
10, 11. 19. xvi.
16. Matt. xiii.
44—46.

filled the earth, notwithstanding the wickedness of its inhabitants, with his goodness and undeserved bounty; so this may encourage those, who long and pray to be taught his statutes, that they may observe and do them, to expect a gracious answer to their requests. 'The knowledge of God's word is a singular token of his favour.' (Notes, 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. John xvii. 1—3. Gal. iv. 8—11.)

V. 65. (Notes, xlii. 5, 6. xxiii. 5, 6. cxxxviii. 2, 3. 2 Cor. i. 8—11.) Recollecting, and thankfully acknowledging the mercies of God to us in times past, should always accompany our prayers; and this will increase our confidence as to the future.

V. 66. This verse may literally be rendered, "Teach me goodness, judgment, and knowledge; for I have believed thy commandments."—"Thou hast shewn great kindness to me, O Lord, teach me to imitate thy goodness."—"The word ^{דעת}, which is here translated "judgment," signifies bodily taste, and that faculty in the mind which answers to it; the faculty of discerning, distinguishing, and judging rightly of things moral and spiritual; as the palate doth of meats, their different flavours and qualities. Without this taste, or discretion, we mistake falsehood for truth in our studies, and wrong for right in our practice; superstition and enthusiasm may pass with us for religion, or else licentiousness may intrude itself upon us under the name and notion of liberty: in a word, our learning and knowledge prove useless, if not prejudicial to us. A sound mind, therefore, should, above all things, be desired of God in our prayers.' Bp. Horne. (Notes, Job xii. 11, 12. xxxiv. 1—4. 1 Cor. ii. 14—16. Phil. i. 9—11. Heb. v. 11.—14.)—David had believed the divine authority and excellency of the holy law, and that it was worthy of all obedience; being the rule of happiness, as well as of duty. (Notes, 128. Neh. ix. 13.)

V. 67. 'The use of God's rods is to call us home to God. ... He confesseth, that before he was chastened, he was rebellious, as man by nature is.' (Marg. Ref.—71. Notes, 75. lxxiii. 5—9. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 9—19. Job v. 17. Jer. xxxi. 18—20. Heb. xii. 4—13.)

V. 68. 'Thou art kind, O Lord, and in thy kindness teach me thy statutes.' Sept. 'Thou art, in thy own nature, kind and good, ... who designest our good, even when thou afflictest us: take what methods thou pleasest with me, only teach me effectually to do as thou wouldest have me.' Bp. Patrick.—The Psalmist seems to say, 'Thou art so good, that I shall consider the sharpest afflictions as sent in kindness, in order to teach me thy statutes.' (Marg.

Ref.—Notes, xciv. 12—14. 2 Sam. xxii. 36. Prov. xxvii. 6. P. O. Matt. xiv. 22—36.)

V. 69. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 23. 157, 158.) The proud and ungodly will invent plausible lies, and propagate calumnies, artfully devised against the humble servants of God: but "patient continuance in well doing" is the most convincing refutation of them. (Notes, 2 Sam. xxiv. 8—22.)

V. 70. The fat in animals is supposed to be without feeling. That insensibility of heart to God's promises, threatenings, and judgments, and to the concerns of other men, which results from indulged luxury, lust, or avarice, is aptly described by this similitude. (Note, Is. vi. 9, 10.)—"Their heart is indurate and hardened; puffed up with prosperity and vain estimation of themselves."—"The word of God is 'the "delight" of temperate and holy persons, who gladly fly from large companies, full tables, costly meats, and rich wines, to enjoy in private the more exalted pleasures of abstinence, meditation, and prayer.' Bp. Horne. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 71. Notes, 67. 75, 76. Rom. v. 3—5. 1 Cor. xi. 29—34. 2 Cor. i. 1—7. iv. 13—18. Jam. i. 2—4.

V. 72. (Marg. Ref. q.—Notes, 14. 111. xix. 7—11. Prov. viii. 18. xvi. 16. xxiii. 23. Ec. vii. 11, 12. Matt. xiii. 44—46. Phil. iii. 8—11.) 'Blessed are they, who seek in the Scriptures the true riches; who traffick for the spiritual gains of celestial wisdom: "for surely the merchandise of" "it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold." Prov. iii. 14.' Bp. Horne.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 49—72.

The Lord himself teaches and enables his servants to rely on his word: yet he often delays to answer their expectations, in order to excite their desires, to exercise their faith, to prove their sincerity, and to perfect their patience. This leads them by prayer to remind him of his promises, and humbly to plead for the accomplishment of them. Thus they often find the sweetest comforts when they are most afflicted: for as the sacred word was the instrument, by which they were "quickened when dead in trespasses and sins;" so the Comforter revives and cheers them, when they are ready to faint under trials, by giving them cordials from the same unfailing resource.—Infidels, Pharisees, covetous men, libertines, and all the sons of pride and rebellion, will deride as visionaries and enthusiasts those, who thus speak of communion with God and joy in him: but we must not on that account "decline from his word." (Note, 1 John i. 3, 4.) The remembrance of his

c. 3. cxxxviii. 8.
cxxxix. 14—16
Job x. 8—11.
34. 125. 144. 169.
1 Chr. xxii. 12.
2 Chr. ii. 12. Job
xxxii. 8. 2 Tim. ii. 7. 1 John v. 20.

JOD.

73 * Thy hands have made me and fashioned me : ' give me understanding,

judgments of old on the despisers of his servants, and his deliverance of them from trouble, may give us comfort under such contempt : and the prospect of that perdition which awaits the impenitent, may well fill us with horror whenever we think of them, and turn all our resentment into compassion and prayers for them.—The believer dwells on earth, in the body, as in “ the house of his pilgrimage ; ” ere long he will be “ absent from the body and “ present with the Lord : ” in the mean time the word and works of God supply him with subjects for joyful meditation and grateful praise. In the season of affliction, and in the silent hours of the night, he remembers the name of his God, and is thus animated to cheerful obedience : and the Lord graciously recompenses these services, by rendering the observance of his precepts daily more easy and pleasant.—Who can be sufficiently thankful, that sinners, when penitent, may rejoice in the infinite and all sufficient God, and hope that he will, to all eternity, employ his perfections in rendering them happy ! But what words can express the folly and madness of those, who prefer this present world as their portion, though it is connected with the everlasting wrath of God ! Yet so depraved is man, that we are all disposed to make this wretched choice ; and special grace alone can enable us to say from our experience, “ Thou art my Portion, O LORD ; I have said, that “ I will keep thy words.” Yet surely the favour of the Almighty is worthy of being “ intreated with our whole “ heart ; ” we cannot be too instant with him to be “ merciful unto us according to his word : ” and no one ever thus intreated him in vain.—We should frequently think on our ways, and review our past and present conduct with great accuracy, comparing all our thoughts, words, and works with the law of God ; if we would either perceive our urgent want of the salvation of the gospel, or our need of repentance, and of turning our feet into the ways of holy obedience. (*Note, Jam. i. 22—25.*)—As the interests of eternity are at stake, it behoves sinners to make haste and not delay, to escape from the brink of that tremendous precipice, on which they have long trifled ; and the believer will be equally in haste to obtain assurance of his safety, and to glorify his God by keeping his commandments.—If the wicked combine to defraud us of our property, and “ the proud forge lies ” against us ; we should be rendered the more obedient and attentive to the precepts of God, that we may ensure the true riches, and live down calumny.—It argues much grace, when we can be cheerful and thankful under great injuries, without being interrupted, by regretting our losses, or resenting ill usage, from praising the Lord for all his righteous judgments ; and when troubles and dangers, which break our rest, only make us solace ourselves the more with thankfulness for our remaining unmerited mercies.—The more the wicked hate God’s people, the greater union should subsist among them ; that they may comfort, and edify, and pray for each other. (*Note, John xv. 17—21.*) Thus the communion of saints assists, as well as evidences, their communion

“ that I may learn thy commandments. u cxi. 16. Jam. iii. 13.

74 They that * fear thee will be glad x 79. xxxiv. 2—6. lxxvi. 16. Mal. iii. 16.

with God. In this grand concern, party-distinctions and other discriminations should be but little regarded : for were we all like our Master, even the saint upon a throne would associate with the saint in a cottage, without deducting from his real dignity, and without leading his poor brother to neglect the duties of his inferior station : and we should all prefer the company of the meanest and simplest who fear God and keep his precepts, to that of the most polished, ingenious, or honourable of the ungodly.—As the earth is filled with the unmerited blessings of Providence, and with the glad tidings of free salvation ; we should be instant in prayer to be taught the statutes of the Lord, that our hearts also may be filled with his mercy, grace, and peace : and repetitions in our requests will not be condemned, unless they are vain and unmeaning. (*Note, Matt. vi. 7, 8.*)—Every past mercy of God to his servants, according to his word, encourages them to pray for more wisdom and grace ; that “ their love may abound more “ and more in knowledge and in all judgment ; ” and that having believed, they may experience the happiness of keeping God’s commandments.—To the reproach of our fallen nature, prosperity commonly produces ungodliness ; and adversity is the frequent means of exciting men to the consideration of religious subjects. Many have said, “ Before I was afflicted I went astray ; but now I have kept “ thy word : ” and, “ It was good for me, that I was afflicted, “ ed, that I might learn thy statutes.” This should reconcile the afflicted to their trials, and teach them to improve them ; and it should lead us all to leave our concerns to the disposal of God, seeing we know not what is good for us. For it is infinitely better to learn by sufferings to delight in God’s word, and to value it “ more than thousands of gold and silver ; ” than by prosperity to grow callous, and ripe for eternal destruction.—But how dreadful is the case of those who are hardened in sin, even in the furnace of affliction ! Let us then still beseech our God, “ who is good, and doeth good,” to teach us his statutes, and to incline our hearts to faith, obedience with the patience of hope, and submission to his holy will.

NOTES

V. 73. “ Thy hands have made and established me : “ make me wise, and I shall learn thy commandments ; ” and thus be capable of answering the grand purpose of my creation.’ (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 124, 125, c. 3. cxxxix. 13—18. Job x. 8—13.*)

V. 74. ‘ It will be a great comfort and encouragement to all good men, when they see me delivered out of all “ these troubles : for thereby they will be confirmed in their “ belief of thy faithfulness to thy promises ; on which, it “ will appear, that I have not vainly depended, though I “ stay long for the performance.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—David’s cheerfulness under his trials, also, was suited to comfort the hearts of those pious persons who witnessed it. (*Notes, xxxii. 6, 7. xxxiv. 4—6.*)

y 42. 147. cviii. 7. when they see me; because ^yI have
Gen. xxxii. 11, hoped in thy word.
12. Luke xxi. 33.

z 7. 62. 128. 160. 75 ^zI know, O LORD, that thy judg-
Deut. xxxii. 4. ments are ^zright, and *that* ^athou in
Job xxxiv. 23. faithfulness hast afflicted me.
Jer. xii. 1.

* Heb. *righteous-* 76 Let, I pray thee, ^bthy merciful
ness. Gen. xviii. kindness be [†]for my comfort, accord-
25. Rom. iii. 4, 5. ing to thy word unto thy servant.
a xxv. 10. lxxxix. 30—33. Heb. xii. 10, 11.

b lxxxvi. 5. cvi. 4. 77 Let ^ethy tender mercies come
5. 2 Cor. i. 3—5. unto me, that I may live; ^dfor thy law
† Heb. *to comfort* is my delight.
me.

c 41. li. 1—3. Lam. iii. 22, 23. Dan. ix. 18. 78 Let ^ethe proud be ashamed; for
d 24. 47. 174. i. 2. they dealt perversely with me ^fwithout
Heb. viii. 10—12. a cause: *but* ^gI will meditate in thy
e 21. 51. 85. xxxv. 26. precepts.

f 86. vii. 3—5. xxv. 3. xxxv. 7. lxix. 4. cix. 3. 1 Sam. xxiv. 10—12. 17. xxvi. 18. John xv. 25. 79 Let ^hthose that fear thee, turn
g 23. i. 2.
h 63. 74. vii. 7. cxlii. 7.

unto me, and those that have known thy testimonies.

80 Let my heart be ⁱsound in thy statutes; ^kthat I be not ashamed.

CAPH.

81 My soul ⁱfainteth for thy salvation; ^mbut I hope in thy word.

82 Mine ⁿeyes fail for thy word, saying, ^oWhen wilt thou comfort me?

83 For I am become ^plike a bottle in the smoke; ^qyet do I not forget thy statutes.

84 ^rHow many *are* the days of thy servant? ^swhen wilt thou execute judgment on them that persecute me?

i xxv. 21. xxxii. 2. 2 Chr. xii. 14. xv. 17. xxv. 2. xxxi. 20, 21. Prov. iv. 23. John i. 47. 2 Cor. i. 12.
k 6. xxv. 2, 3. 1 John ii. 28. 120. 40. xlii. 1, 2. lxxxii. 26. lxxxiv. 2. Cant. v. 8. Rev. iii. 15, 16. m See on 42. 77. 114.
n 123. lxix. Deut. xxviii. 32. Prov. xiii. 12. Is. xxxviii. 14. o lxxxvi. 17. xc. 13—15.
p xxii. 15. cii. 8. 4. Job xxx. 30. q 16. 61. 176.
r xxxix. 4, 5. lxxxix. 47, 48. xc. 12. Job vii. 6—8. s vii. 6. Rev. vi. 10, 11.

V. 75. 'All these dispensations of thy Providence, in 'the heavy afflictions which have befallen me, are perfectly righteous, and will only make thy truth and faithfulness at last the more illustrious.' Bp. Patrick. (*Notes, Deut. xxxii. 3, 4. Jer. xii. 1—4. Lam. iii. 21—36.*)—It should also be noted, that chastening is a *promised* blessing to the children of God; who are bound to own the fulfilment of the promise, while enduring the salutary discipline. (71. *Notes*, 67, 68.)

V. 76. The persuasion that sin is pardoned and God reconciled; with peace in the heart and conscience by the power of the Holy Spirit, according to the promises of Scripture; will make the believer comfortable even before his trials are removed. For this David prayed, as well as for deliverance. (*Notes*, 41, 42. xxv. 10, 11. cvi. 4, 5.)

V. 77. Without pardoning mercy, the sinner remains under the sentence of eternal punishment; and without experiencing the tender compassion of God, the believer has little enjoyment of life here, or hope of eternal life hereafter: but those who now delight in the law of God, will surely at last rejoice in his tender mercies. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Rom. vii. 22—25.*)

V. 78, 79. Or, "The proud shall be ashamed, &c." "Those who fear thee, and have known thy testimonies, "shall be turned to me." (*Notes*, 19—23. 85. xxv. 21, 22. xxxv. 25—28. cxlii. 7.) It may be considered as the language of assured hope, rather than of prayer. Many other verses may be read in the same manner. 'David beseecheth God, if any good men had been alienated from 'him, either through fear, prejudice, or offence, that they 'might return to him, join, and acknowledge him.' Bp. Horne. The effect of confident and plausible false accusations, either in the time of Saul, or during Absalom's rebellion, in prejudicing even pious persons against him, were probably in David's mind; but his words are applicable to slandered, yet conscientious believers, in every age.

V. 80. The word rendered "sound," signifies *perfections*. *Soundness of heart* denotes strict integrity and sincerity, in professed dependence on God and devotedness to him; and this is opposed to every kind and degree of hypocrisy or indecision: as the vigorous appearance, which

springs from a firm and healthy constitution, differs from that corpulency and florid complexion, frequently attending some fatal diseases, or a decay of the vital parts. (*Notes*, xxv. 21. xxvi. 9—11. John i. 47—51. Jam. i. 5—8. 1 John ii. 26—29. iii. 18—24.) Without this soundness of heart, men professing godliness will at last be put to shame, either in this world, or in the day of judgment, or in both. (*Notes, Dan. xii. 2, 3. Rom. v. 3—5.*)

V. 81, 82. Some think that David here spoke the language of the ancient church, as waiting for the coming of the promised Messiah, "the Salvation of God," and the Consolation of Israel. But he seems rather to have expressed the state of his mind; while he expected to be delivered by his merciful God, from his sins, his foes, and his fears. Nothing short of this could satisfy his soul: for this he longed, and hoped on the ground of God's promises. But "hope deferred made his heart sick" and faint; and his eyes were fatigued, and failed, in looking out for the tokens and comforts of this expected salvation; as all know to be the case, when they long and look in vain, for the arrival of some expected and much loved friend. (*Notes*, 19—21. 40—42. xiii. 1—4. xlii. 1—3. lxxxiv. 1, 2. Cant. ii. 5.)

V. 83. Bottles made of skins would shrivel up, and become unsightly and useless, by hanging in the heat and smoke. Thus David seemed to himself to have become useless and despicable, through the infirmities of age, and his manifold trials and sufferings. (*Notes*, cii. 3—11. Job xxx. 25—31. Matt. ix. 16, 17.)—'My skin ... is shrivelled 'up with toil and grief; and yet I have never taken any 'unlawful course to rid myself of all this misery.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 84. David here either enquired how long the Lord would permit his servant to be thus afflicted; or, whether he meant him to spend all his remaining days under persecution; and to close his life, without seeing God arise to plead his cause, and avenge him on his unrighteous persecutors. (*Notes*, lxxxix. 46—48. xc. 13—17.) The time seemed long, from Samuel's anointing David to the kingdom, till God, by inflicting judgment on his persecutors, fulfilled his promises: especially as it was spent in very great dangers and hardships. (*Marg. Ref.*)

¹ 78 vii. 15. xxxv. 7. xxxvi. 11. Prov. xvi. 27. Jer. xviii. 20. 85 The ^t proud have digged pits for me, ^u which *are* not after thy law.

^u lviii. 1, 2. x 138. 142. 151. xix. 9. Rom vii. 12. 86 All ^{*} thy commandments *are* faithful: ^v they persecute me wrongfully; ^z help thou me.

^y 78. vii. 1—5. xxxv. 7. 19. xxxviii. 19. lix. 3. 4. Jer. xviii. 20. 87 They had ^a almost consumed me upon earth; ^b but I forsook not thy precepts.

^z lxx. 5. cxlii. 4—6. cxliii. 9. a 1 Sam. xx. 3. xxiii. 26. 27. 2 Sam. xvii. 16. b Matt. x. 28. c 51. 61. 1 Sam. xxiv. 5, 7. xxvi. 9, 24. d 25. 40. 159. e 2. 146. xxv. 13. lxxviii. 5. cxxxii. 12. 88 ^d Quicken me after thy loving-kindness; ^e so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth.

LAMED.

^f 152. 160. Matt. v. 18. xxiv. 35. 1 Pet. i. 25. 89 ^f For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

^g Deut. vii. 9. Mic. vii. 20. 90 Thy ^g faithfulness is [†] unto all

[†] Heb. *to generation and generation.* lxxxix. 1, 2 c. 5. *marg.*

^h lxxxix. 11. xciii. 1. civ. 5. Job xxxviii. 4—7. 2 Pet. iii. 5—7. 91 They ⁱ continue this day according to thine ordinances; for ^k all *are* thy servants.

[†] Heb. *standeth.* i cxlviii. 5, 6. Gen. viii. 22. Is. xlviii. 13. Jer. xxxiii. 25. k Deut. iv. 19. Josh. x. 12, 13. Judg. v. 20. Matt. v. 45. viii. 9. 92 Unless ^l thy law *had been* my delights, ^m I should then have perished in mine affliction.

^l 24. 77. 143. Rom. xv. 4. m xxvii. 13. xciv. 18, 19. Prov. vi. 22, 23. n 16. 50. John vi. 63. 1 Pet. i. 23. o lxxxvi. 2. Josh. x. 4—6. Is. xli. 8—10. xlv. 2. 5. lxiv. 8—10. Acts xxvii. 23, 24. p 27. 40. 173. q 61. 69. 85—87. x. 8—10. xxvii. 2. xxxvii. 32. xxxviii. 12. 1 Sam. xxiii. 20—23. 2 Sam. r 24. 31. 111.

^{xvii.} 1—4. Matt. xxvi. 3—5. Acts xii. 11. xxiii. 21. xxv. 3. 125. 129. 167. 93 I ⁿ will never forget thy precepts; for with them thou hast quickened me.

94 ^o I *am* thine; save me: ^p for I have sought thy precepts.

95 The ^q wicked have waited for me to destroy me; *but* ^r I will consider thy testimonies.

^{xvii.} 1—4. Matt. xxvi. 3—5. Acts xii. 11. xxiii. 21. xxv. 3. 125. 129. 167.

V. 85. In order to take the wild beasts, in those countries where they abound, they dig deep pits, and cover them over carefully with turf, supported by slender twigs: and the wild beasts attempting to walk over these pits fall in, and are taken alive. Thus David's enemies employed craft, as well as power, for his ruin; without regard to the law of God, nay, in direct contempt of it. (*Notes*, 78, 79. vii. 14—16. xxxv. 4—9. xxxvi. 10, 11. Prov. xvi. 27. Jer. xviii. 19, 20.)

V. 86. The Psalmist contrasts the commandments of God, as requiring truth and faithfulness; with the unfaithful and iniquitous conduct of his persecutors: and this encourages his hope and prayer for deliverance.—“All thy commandments are truth.” (*Notes*, 66, 142. vii. 1—5. Matt. v. 10—12. Luke vi. 21—23. 1 Pet. iv. 12—16.)

V. 87. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xciv. 16—18. cxxiv. 1—3. 2 Cor. i. 8—11.) David, when persecuted by Saul, narrowly escaped with his life: yet he adhered to the precepts of God, and would not injure Saul, when he had him in his power, who so “wrongfully persecuted” him. (*Notes*, 1 Sam. xxiii. 26—28. xxiv. 4—15. xxvi. 5—12.)

V. 88. ‘Preserve my life, raise me from this death-like condition, animate me by thy grace; that I may keep thy testimonies.’ (*Notes*, 25. 40. 159.)

V. 89, 90. Or, “Thou art for ever, O LORD; thy word, &c.” The word of God is as unchangeable and everlasting as his own existence. It is established “in the heavens,” beyond the reach of the revolutions of this lower world: and its accomplishment is as certain, as the motions of the heavenly bodies, which are not at all affected by the convulsions and vicissitudes of the earth and its inhabitants. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, Col. iii. 1—4. 1 Pet. i. 3—5.)

V. 91. The heavens and earth, and all the hosts of them, still keep their station or perform their courses, according to the original appointment of the Creator: and shall man, who alone is endued with reason and formed for immortality, be single in rebellion against him? (*Notes*,

Gen. viii. 20—22. ix. 9—17. *Deut.* iv. 19. *Is.* xlviii. 12—15.)

V. 92. David delighted to study the word of God: he took pleasure in the truths, promises, and precepts contained in it: and thus he was preserved from sinking under the weight of his troubles. He was directed how to act in the most difficult circumstances, and escape the destructive machinations of his enemies; and he derived encouragement from the word of God in the most afflictive situations. (*Notes*, xxvii. 13. xciv. 16—19.)

V. 93. The benefit which the Psalmist had hitherto derived from the precepts of the sacred word, by means of which he had been made alive to God, and animated in his service, greatly endeared them to him; and having his them in his heart, he was persuaded he should never forget them. ‘God relieveth and “quickeneth” us, sometimes with one part of his word, sometimes with another. ‘Now when we have found ourselves thus benefited, at ‘any time, by a particular passage of holy writ, we ‘should “never forget,” but remember and treasure it ‘up in our minds, against a like occasion, when the ‘same affliction or temptation may again befall us.’ *Bp. Horne.* (*Notes*, 50—53. *Jam.* i. 16—18, v. 18. 1 Pet. i. 23—25, v. 23.)

V. 94. ‘He proveth *by effect*, that he is God's child; ‘because he seeketh to understand his word.’—‘Let it be ‘remembered, that no man can say to God, with a good ‘conscience, “I am thine;” unless he can also go on and ‘say, “I have sought thy precepts;” I desire to serve, ‘and obey thee alone: ... since, after all, “his servants ‘“we are to whom we obey:” and if sin be our master, ‘how can we say to a Master, whose interest is directly ‘opposite, “I am thine?”’ *Bp. Horne.* (173, 174. *Notes*, 159. 166. *Rom.* vi. 16—19.)

V. 95. Amidst the virulent persecution of the wicked, the Psalmist considered and meditated on the sure testimonies of God, or his truths and promises; till his fears were allayed, and his heart was established in confidence and obedience. (*Notes*, 2, 3. 11—14. 111. xix. 7—11.)

xxxix. 5, 6. 96 I have 'seen an end of all per-
 1 Sam. ix. 2. xxi. 4, 5. 2 Sam. xiv. 25. xvi. 23. xvii. 23. xviii. 14, 17. Ec. i.
 xvii. 8. 49—51. 2, 3. ii. 11. vii. 20. xii. 8.

fection; but 'thy commandment is ex- t xix. 7, 8. Matt.
 ceeding broad. v. 28. xxii. 37—
 40. Mark xii. 29
 —34. Rom. vii.
 7. 12. 14. Heb. iv. 12, 12.

V. 96. 'David in his time had seen Goliath the strongest overcome, Asahel the swiftest overtaken, Ahithophel the wisest befooled, and Absalom the fairest deformed.' *Henry*. He had seen the vanity of all created good; the vexation of that estate which men account the summit of earthly bliss; the imperfection of the most accomplished human characters; the wretched close of the most prosperous lives; and the miserable disappointment of those, who trusted in men, or idolized earthly possessions and enjoyments. The more he was acquainted with men and worldly things, the deeper was his conviction, that the former were imperfect at best, and the latter wholly insufficient to make him happy: but the fuller knowledge he attained of the sacred Scriptures, the more excellent, extensive, and complete they appeared; a perfect rule for his conduct and ground for his hope, a guide to happiness, and a source of present comfort. Or, the passage may mean, that the more fully the Psalmist understood the extent, spirituality, and excellence of the divine law; the more clearly he discerned the imperfection of all human obedience. "By the law is the knowledge of sin;" the breadth of the commandment shews the scantiness of man's best righteousness, and recommends the righteousness of the Redeemer, as alone commensurate with its extensive and holy requirements: (*Notes*, Mark xii. 28—34. Rom. iii. 19, 20. vii. 7—12 :) and the whole word of God shall endure for ever, when all things on earth shall come to an end and perish. (*Note*, 1 Pet. i. 23—25.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 73—96.

The Lord has "made us and fashioned us" capable, *by the faculties of our rational souls*, of knowing, loving, worshipping and enjoying him; but we are as fallen creatures become incapable, *by the blindness of our understandings, and the depravity of our hearts*, of this employment and felicity. Yet the gospel opens a way for our recovery to the image of God, and the capacity of his service and favour: we ought therefore continually to beseech him by his Holy Spirit, to give us understanding, that we may learn and do his will; and our prayers will be prevalent, when they spring from a humble desire of being enabled by his grace, to answer the end of our creation and redemption.—Those, who fear and serve God, love to associate together, and to converse concerning their common faith and hope in his word: but they are especially rejoiced, when they see such as have trusted in the promises of God under very severe trials, and have been delivered; because this relieves their fears and encourages their hopes. (*Note*, xxxiv. 4—6.)—It is easy to acknowledge that "all the judgments of God are right," with reference to others: but to be fully assured of this truth, when his afflicting hand lies heavy on us; and to allow his wisdom, justice, goodness, and faithfulness, under our acutest sufferings, is no common attainment even among true believers: and as far as this assurance prevails, we shall be preserved from repining, and rendered thankful

and submissive under every trial. It is, however, evident, not only that God is faithful and merciful, *though* he afflict his people: but that "he afflicts them in faithfulness and mercy;" such loving corrections are promised in his covenant, and without them we should be ruined. But, while we are taking these needful, but unpleasant medicines; we may beg of the Lord that his merciful kindness may be for our comfort: and faith, patience, and prayer, will surely make way for the consolations of the Holy Spirit. The abundant mercies and tender compassions of our Father come to all, who trust in him and delight in his law: and they shall neither sink in trouble, nor be finally baffled by temptation; for as their Redeemer lives, they shall live also, even for ever and ever.—The pride and blasphemy, the perverseness, iniquity, oppression, and deceit of the enemies of God, are certain fore-runners of their confusion and destruction: and while his servants "meditate on his testimonies," they may despise the boastings, menaces, and insults of those, who hate them for righteousness' sake. Indeed it is best, in such circumstances, to live retired, and to commune with our God, our Bible, and our own hearts; lest we be engaged in contentions, which produce only sin and sorrow. But when those who "fear God, and have known his righteous judgments," imbibe jealousies and prejudices, and become reserved, or oppose us, the trial is very heavy. We ought, however, to examine our conduct, and be humbled for those sins and indiscretions, which may have occasioned this unfavourable opinion concerning us: and we should then apply to him, who has all hearts in his hand, beseeching him to turn them unto us, that they may counsel and comfort us in our difficulties. Above all, we should pray for "a sound heart" in God's statutes: and then all aspersions or suspicious appearances will vanish in due time, and our disgrace will terminate in honour, either here or in a better world. (*Notes*, xxxvii. 5—8. 32, 33. Rom. viii. 32—39.) But shame will be the lot of hypocrites, more than of any other workers of iniquity.—Happy are those, who long for the salvation of God, and hope in his word, waiting for the performance of his promises, in attendance on his ordinances, and obedience to his precepts. Their intense desires, and sharp trials, may make their souls ready to faint; and delays may cause their eyes to fail, while they are saying, "When wilt thou comfort me?" Afflictions, slanders, infirmities, and persecutions may render them despised, and thrown aside as a broken vessel, or "a bottle in the smoke:" but as they do not forget God's statutes, he will not be regardless of their distresses. The days of their mourning shall be ended: though they appear tedious, they are but for a moment, compared with that eternal felicity, which they are working out for them: and at length vengeance will be executed on all, who harassed and tried to ensnare them, in defiance of the authority and law of God.—The commandments are true and faithful guides in that path of peace and safety, which the testimony of God reveals, and his promise secures, to every believer.—*Nature* is most disquieted by suffering wrongfully: but *faith* and

MEM.

97 ^a Oh, how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.

98 Thou ^x through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for ^{*} they are ever with me.

99 I have more understanding ^y than all my teachers: ^z for thy testimonies are my meditation.

100 I ^a understand more than the ancients, ^b because I keep thy precepts.

^a 48, 113, 127, 159.
165, 167. i. 2.
Deut. vi. 6—9.
xvii. 19. Josh. i.
8. Prov. ii. 10.
xviii. 1.
^x 104. Deut. iv. 6.
1 Sam. xviii. 5.
14, 30. Prov. ii.
6. Col. iii. 16.
^{*} Heb. it is ever
with me. 11. 30
105. Jam. i. 25.
^y 2 Sam. xv. 24—
26. 1 Chr. xv. 11
—13. 2 Chr. xxix.
5, &c. xxx. 22.
Jer. ii. 8. viii. 8.
9. Matt. xi. 25.
xiii. 11. xv. 6—
3. 14. xxiii. 24.
&c. Heb. v. 12.
^z 24. 2 Tim. iii. 15
—17.
a 1 Kings xii. 6—15. Job xii. 12. xv. 9, 10. xxii. 4—10.
b cxi. 10.
Job xxviii. 28. Jer. viii. 8, 9. Matt. vii. 24. Jam. iii. 13.

101 I have ^c refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word.

102 I have not ^d departed from thy judgments; ^e for thou hast taught me.

103 How ^f sweet are thy words unto my [†] taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth.

104 ^g Through thy precepts I get understanding: ^h therefore I hate every ⁱ false way.

c 59, 60, 104, 122.
xviii. 25. Prov.
i. 15. 18. 111. 6
iv. 7. Jer. ii. 36
Tit. ii. 11, 12.
1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. iii.
10, 11.
d xviii. 1. Prov.
v. 7. Jer. xxxii.
40
e Eph. iv. 20—24.
1 Thes. ii. 13
1 John ii. 19
27.
f xix. 10. lxxiii. 5.
Prov. iii. 17.
viii. 11. xxiv. 13.
14. Cant. i. 2—
4. v. 1.
† Heb. palate.
g 98, 100.
h 128. xxxvi. 4.
xcvii. 10. ci. 8.
i 29, 30. Prov. xiv. 12. Matt. vii. 13.

Prov. viii. 13. Am. v. 15. Rom. xii. 9

29, 30. Prov. xiv. 12. Matt. vii. 13

grace are encouraged by that very consideration; for we cannot so confidently expect help from God, when we suffer as evil-doers, as when, like our Master, we “do well” and suffer for it.” (Notes, 1 Pet. iii. 17, 18. iv. 12—16.)—Wicked men may almost consume the believer on earth; but as neither fear, nor dejection under sufferings, induce him to forsake the divine precepts; so the Lord will support him in obeying them, and deliver him out of all his troubles: and should men prevail to kill the body, they will only liberate the soul, and hasten its entrance on unsullied joys. We should therefore seek in the first place to be invigorated and animated, by the loving-kindness of the Lord, to hold fast his truth and adhere to his precepts; and then we may cheerfully leave all our concerns in his hands. For the engagements of his covenant are established on a firmer basis, than the earth itself: his faithfulness remains to all generations, and to eternity: and all the hosts of heaven, in serving the Lord and doing his will, concur in accomplishing his promises to his people. May we have grace, in our respective places, to do his will in like manner: then we may be sure, that we shall not perish in our afflictions, and every recollection of his precepts will animate our hopes, and enliven our affections; as by them the Lord at first quickened us, when we were dead in sin. Thus shall we know that we are the Lord’s, by his choice and purchase of us, and by our choice of him and devotedness to him; and, while we are seeking to know and do his precepts, and considering his testimonies, we may be sure of his salvation, however the wicked and the wicked one, wait for us to destroy us.—In fine, the enlarged knowledge of the word of God, in its length and breadth, will mar our relish for the pleasures of sin, lessen our value of all earthly good, and take us off from all confidence in man, or in our own wisdom, strength, and righteousness. Thus we shall be led to seek our comfort and felicity from God alone; and to receive Christ Jesus, as “made of God unto us, Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.” Being thus interested in his perfect obedience, we shall learn to copy his perfect example; and shall neither be satisfied with an imperfect holiness, nor with any portion, which is not vast as our capacities and durable as our existence.

NOTES.

V. 97. ‘He sheweth that we cannot love God’s word, except we exercise ourselves therein, and practise it.’ (Notes, 15, 23, 24. 113—117. i. 1—3. Josh. i. 8. Prov. ii. 10, 11. xviii. 1.)

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V. 98—100. ‘The “commandments” of God were “ever with” David; the “testimonies” of God were his “meditation,” and “the precepts” of God it was his care “to observe:” therefore his wisdom exceeded the policy “of his “enemies,” the learning of his “teachers,” and “the experience of the “ancients.”’ Bp. Horne.—In David’s circumstances, it was hardly possible that he should not be conscious of this; seeing every day’s experience and observation confirmed it. In judging thus, he thought “soberly of himself and as he ought to think;” unless he “would call good evil, and evil good, and put “light for darkness, and darkness for light:” (Note, Is. v. 20:) and he gave the whole honour of his proficiency to God, who had by his word given him this ‘good understanding in the way of godliness.’ It would not, however, be expedient for any man to speak thus of himself, except for some special purpose: but “the Spirit of God “spake” by the Psalmist; and it was proper that this high commendation of the Scriptures should stand on record, for the honour of God, and the instruction of mankind in all subsequent generations. (Note, 2 Tim. iii. 14—17.)

V. 101. Notes, 57—63. 104. 128. i. 1—3. Jer. xiv. 10—12. Tit. ii. 11—14.

V. 102. (Note, 33.) ‘Perseverance is the effect of instruction from above, by the Spirit through the word: and our heavenly Teacher differeth from all others in this, that, with the lesson, he bestoweth on the scholar both ‘a disposition to learn, and an ability to perform.’ Bp. Horne. (Notes, 2 Sam. xxii. 21—28. Jer. xxxii. 39—41. Matt. xi. 28—30. John vi. 41—46. 1 John ii. 18—25.)

V. 103. ‘The soul has its “taste,” as well as the body; and that taste is then in right order, when the “words” of scripture are “sweet” to the soul, as “honey” is ‘to the mouth. If they are not always so, it is because ‘our taste is vitiated by the world and the flesh.’ Bp. Horne. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 66. xix. 7—11. Job xxiii. 8—12, v. 12. Prov. xxiv. 13, 14. Jer. xv. 15—18. Heb. v. 11—14. 1 Pet. ii. 1—3.)

V. 104. A full and clear knowledge of the precepts of the divine law, in their extent, spirituality, and excellence, is an introduction to a right understanding of the gospel, and indeed of the whole scripture; it is the best preservative from heresies and delusions, almost all of which may be traced to errors or ignorance in this respect: and where the heart, as well as the mind, has learned the precepts of God, a holy taste, as well as a sound judgment, will be the sure effect; and every false and evil way will be hated

NUN

* xix. 8. xliii. 3.
 Prov. vi. 23.
 Eph. v. 13.
 3 Pet. i. 19.
 * Or, candle
 xviii. 28. Job
 xxix. 3.
 l lvi. 12. lxvi. 13.
 14. 2 Chr. xv.
 13. 14. Neh. x.
 29. Ec. v. 4, 5.
 Matt. v. 33.
 2 Cor. viii. 5.
 m l15. 2 Kings
 xxiii. 3.
 n vi. 1—3. xxii.
 14—18. xxxiv. 19.
 o 25. 88. cxliii. 11.
 p Num. xxix. 39.
 Hos. xiv. 2.
 Heb. xiii. 15.
 q 12. 26. 130. 169.
 r Judg. xii. 3.
 1 Sam. xix. 5.
 xx. 3. Job xiii.
 14. Rom. viii.
 36. 1 Cor. xv.
 31, 2 Cor. xi. 23.

105 Thy ^k word is a * lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

106 I have ^l sworn, and I will perform it, ^m that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

107 I am ⁿ afflicted very much: ^o quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word.

108 ^p Accept, I beseech thee, the free-will-offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and ^q teach me thy judgments.

109 ^r My soul is continually in my

hand; ^s yet do I not forget thy law.

110 The ^t wicked have laid a snare for me; ^u yet I erred not from thy precepts.

111 ^x Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever; ^y for they are the rejoicing of my heart.

112 I have ^z inclined mine heart to ^a perform thy statutes alway, even unto the end.

SAMECH.

113 I ^b hate vain thoughts: but ^c thy law do I love.

Mark vii. 21. 2 Cor. x. 5.

s 83. 117. 158.
 t 85. x. 6—19.
 u cxxiv. 6, 7. cxi.
 5. cxii. 9. Jer.
 xviii. 22.
 x 51. 87. 95. Dan.
 vi. 10. Luke xx.
 19—26.
 y 14. 127. 162.
 z xvi. 6. Deut.
 xxxiii. 4. Is. liv.
 17. Acts xxvi.
 18. Col. i. 12.
 Heb. ix. 15.
 a 1 Pet. i. 4.
 b 77. 92. 174. xix.
 8. Jer. xv. 16.
 c 1 Pet. i. 8.
 d 36. cxli. 4. Josh.
 xxiv. 23. 1 Kings
 viii. 58. Phil. ii
 13.
 e Heb. do.
 f 33. 44. 1 Pet. i.
 13.
 g xciv. 11. Is. lv.
 7. Jer. iv. 14.
 h 97. 103.

and shunned. (Notes, xcvi. 10. Ex. xx. 1. Prov. viii. 13. Am. v. 14, 15.)

V. 105. 'The word of God discovereth to us our errors; 'it sheweth us where we lost our way, and how we may 'recover it again. If we take this "lamp" in our hand, 'it will not only point out our course in general, but also 'direct us in every step, and guide our "feet" into the "path" of holiness and peace.' Bp. Horne.—The metaphor is taken from a man walking on a dangerous road, in the dark, except as he sees by a lamp, or lantern, where to set his feet, step by step, as he proceeds: but taking heed to his way by this friendly light, he passes on safely, and even comfortably, where otherwise he must have fallen into mischief or destruction. Such is this world and our passage through it; such is man without revelation, or with revelation and without faith; and such is the use which true faith makes of revelation. (Notes, xliii. 2, 3. Prov. vi. 23. xvii. 16. Is. viii. 20. Matt. vi. 22, 23. Eph. v. 8—14. 2 Pet. i. 19—21.)

V. 106. David had bound his soul with a most solemn vow, to live devoted to God and obedient to his commandments. The preventing grace of God had inclined his heart to this; he doubtless depended on his continued help for ability to perform his vow: and the obedience, to which he thus bound himself, was that of a sinner under a dispensation of mercy, and of a believer who is interested in the covenant of grace. Such a solemn vow is implied in baptism, in bringing our children to be baptized, and in our attendance on the Lord's table: and these publick solemnities should be preceded by those secret transactions, between God and our souls, in which we accept of his proffered benefits, and yield up ourselves to his service. (Notes, lvi. 12. cxvi. 13. 2 Chr. xv. 12—15. Neh. x. 29. Matt. xix. 13—15. P. O.)

V. 107. 'The faithful servants of God may be "afflicted" "very much:" but let them consider, that by afflictions their corruptions are purged away, their faith is 'tried, their patience perfected, their brethren are edified, 'and their Master is glorified. Let them still firmly rely 'on the divine promise of grace and salvation, still humbly 'pray for its accomplishment in themselves: "quicken "me, O LORD, according to thy word." Bp. Horne. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 25. 88.)

V. 108. Praise and thanksgiving, with other devotional exercises, are the free-will-offerings of the mouth, which are acceptable to God through the sacrifice and mediation

of Christ: and David, in his afflictions, could present no other oblations. (Notes, Num. xxix. 39. Hos. xiv. 1—3. Col. iii. 16, 17. Heb. xiii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. ii. 4—6.)

V. 109. (Marg. Ref. r.) David's life was continually in danger; and he was required at all times to exert himself, and use the greatest precaution, in warding off the assaults of his persecutors: but he did not forget, and purposed not to violate, the law of God, even in order to self-preservation.

V. 110. 'They that make no conscience of their actions, 'have contrived a subtle plot to ruin me: but I have never 'stepped out of the way of thy precepts, to avoid the snares 'they have laid for me.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 85. 1 Sam. xviii. 17—30. Jer. xviii. 18. Dan. vi. 4—11.)

V. 111. By faith receiving the truths which God had attested, and embracing the promises he had given, and thus walking with him in his commandments and ordinances, formed that life, which David deliberately chose to lead on earth, as introductory to his everlasting heritage in heaven: and the rejoicing of his soul in the exercise of faith, hope, love, and other pious affections, here below, was an earnest and pledge of those unalloyed pleasures, reserved for him in the future world. (Notes, 14. 127. xix. 7—11. Josh. xxiv. 15. Luke x. 38—42. P. O.—Note, 1 John v. 9—12.)

V. 112. 'The inclination of the heart to good is the 'work of God: but man is, nevertheless, in this, as in 'other instances, said to perform it, when he listens to the 'call, and obeys the motions of his grace. We are not to 'judge of ourselves by what we sometimes say and do; but 'by the general disposition and tendency of the heart and 'its affections.' Bp. Horne. Notes, 32. 44. Rom. viii. 12, 13. Phil. ii. 12, 13.)

V. 113. The word *vain* is not in the original; and some render the verse, "I hate *other* thoughts; but thy law do "I love." Those "thoughts," however, which the Psalmist hated, doubtless were vain or evil, and therefore contrary to the law which he loved. 'Love and hatred are the two 'great and influencing affections of the human mind. Since 'the fall, they have been misplaced. By nature we love 'vain thoughts, and hate the law of God. "The carnal 'mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the 'law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. viii. 7. But 'in the renewed mind the case is altered; its "delight is in 'the law of God;" and therefore it cannot bear "vain 'thoughts," which are contrary to that law, and exalt

^d xxxii. 7. xci. 114 Thou *art* ^d my Hiding-place,
and ^e my Shield: ^f I hope in thy
word.

^g vi. 8. xxvi. 5. 115 ^g Depart from me, ye evil-doers:
^h for I will keep the commandments of
my God.

ⁱ xxxvii. 17. 24. 116 ⁱ Uphold me according unto thy
word, that I may live: ^k and let me
not be ashamed of my hope.

^l xvii. 5. lxxi. 6. 117 ^l Hold thou me up, and I shall

lxxiii. 23. cxxxix. 10. Is. xli. 13. John x. 28, 29. Rom. xiv. 4. 1 Pet. i. 5. Jude 24.

be safe: ^m and I will have respect unto
thy statutes continually.

118 Thou hast ⁿ trodden down all
them that ^o err from thy statutes; for
^p their deceit is falsehood.

119 Thou ^q puttest ^r away all the
wicked of the earth *like* dross: ^s there-
fore I love thy testimonies.

120 ^t My flesh trembleth for fear of
thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments.

s 53. Lev. x. 1—3. 1 Sam. vi. 20. 2 Sam. vi. 8, 9. 1 Chr. xxi. 16, 17, 30. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 21, 27. Is. lxvi. 2. Dan. x. 8—11. Hab. iii. 16. Phil. ii. 12. Heb. xii. 21, 28, 29. Rev. i. 17, 18.

m 6. 48. 111, 112.
n Is. xxv. 10.
o lxxiii. 3. Mal. iv.
p 8. Luke xxi. 24.
q Rev. xiv. 20.
r 10. 21. xcv. 16.
s 29. lxxviii. 36.
t 37. 57. Is. xlv.
u 20. Eph. iv. 22.
v 6. 2 Thes. ii.
w 9—11. 2 Tim. iii.
x 13. Rev. xviii. 23.
y Heb. *causest to*
cease.
z 1 Sam. xv. 23.
aa Jer. vi. 30. Ez.
ab xxii. 18—22. Mal.
ac iii. 2, 3. Matt. iii.
ad 12. vii. 23. xlii.
ae 40—42. 49, 50.
af 111. 126—128.

‘themselves against it. Thoughts are often said to be free: from human censure they are, but not from the cognizance and judgment of the Omniscient. The mind should be well furnished with proper materials, on which to employ itself. We shall then be secured against the incursions of rambling, conceited, worldly, impure, and revengeful thoughts, which otherwise will devour half our time, and appear against us, to our unspeakable amazement, ... when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed.’ *Bp. Horne.*—In those *vacant* hours, which are spared from business, pleasure, company, and sleep, and which are spent in solitude, at home or abroad; unprofitable, proud, covetous, sensual, envious, or malicious imaginations, occupy the minds of ungodly men, and often infect their very dreams. These are not only sinful in themselves, indicating the state of their hearts, and as such will be brought into the account at the day of judgment; but they excite the dormant corruptions, and lead to more open and gross violations of the holy law. The carnal mind welcomes and delights to dwell upon these congenial imaginations, and to solace itself by *ideal* indulgences, when opportunity of other gratification is not presented, or when a man dares not commit the actual transgression. But the spiritual mind recoils at them: such thoughts will intrude from time to time, but they are unwelcome and distressing, and are immediately thrust out; while other subjects, from the word of God, are stored up in readiness to occupy the mind more profitably and pleasantly, during the hours of leisure and retirement. (*Notes*, lxvi. 18, 19. *Jer.* iv. 14.) There is no better test of our true character, than the habitual effect of “vain thoughts” upon our minds; whether we love and indulge them, or abhor, and watch and pray against them. And by enquiring, to what subjects we habitually and allowedly revert, when present circumstances do not impose any one upon us, we may discover the prevalent disposition of our heart, whether we be carnal or spiritual; and may also learn whether pride, malice, avarice, ambition, or sensuality, be the predominant corruption in our souls.—‘Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit.’ *Liturgy.*

V. 114, 115. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xxxii. 6, 7. xc. 1, 2. xci. 1, 2. cxxxix. 19—22. *Prov.* xiii. 20. xviii. 10, 11. *Is.* xxxii. 1, 2. *Matt.* xxiii. 37—39.) ‘From vain thoughts, and vain persons the Psalmist teacheth us to fly, by prayer, to God, as our Refuge and Protector.’ *Bp. Horne.*

V. 116, 117. (*Note*, 106.) ‘He desireth God’s continual assistance, lest he should faint in this race which he had begun.’—The Psalmist formed his purposes, under a consciousness of his weakness, and of the power of temp-

tation, and in dependence on the promises of God. He therefore “watched and prayed, lest he should enter into “temptation,” knowing that, “though the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak.” (*Notes*, li. 11—13. 2 *Sam.* xi. 1—5. *Matt.* xxvi. 40, 41.) “Uphold me, and I shall live, “&c.” “Hold thou me up, and I shall be saved.” His spiritual and eternal life and salvation, as well as his perseverance in obedience, could only be secured by the supports of divine grace.—*Ashamed*, &c. (116) *Notes*, *Is.* xxviii. 16. xlv. 15—17. *Rom.* v. 3—5.

V. 118. Ungodly men, when endeavouring to deceive others, impose on themselves; and their boasted proficiency in worldly wisdom, their deep laid stratagems, and all their crooked politicks, at length disappoint their expectations, and leave them to hopeless contempt and misery. (*Notes*, *Job* v. 11—16. *Eph.* iv. 20—24. 2 *Tim.* iii. 10—13.)

V. 119. (*Notes*, *Jer.* vi. 27—30. *Ez.* xxii. 18—22. *Mal.* iii. 1—4, v. 3. 2 *Cor.* xi. i. 5, 6.) ‘Ungodly men and hypocrites are mingled among the sons and servants of God, as dross is blended with the pure metal, and appear to be part of it; but the fiery trial of divine judgment soon discovereth the difference. ... These dispensations of God’s Providence increase our love of his word; because they give us sensible experience of its truth, and shew us the justice of God in punishing others, together with his mercy in sparing us, and removing those, who might have corrupted us.’ *Bp. Horne.* (*Notes*, *Is.* i. 21—27.)

V. 120. (*Notes*, 50—53. *Lev.* x. 1—3. 2 *Sam.* vi. 8, 9. xxiv. 12—14. *Is.* lxvi. 1, 2. *Hab.* iii. 16. *Heb.* xii. 18—29. *Rev.* xv. 1—4.) Even the temporal judgments, which the Psalmist had observed, experienced, or heard of, as inflicted by a holy and just God on transgressors, and even on his offending children, caused him to fear and tremble, lest he should fall under his awful displeasure; or lest he should finally come short of the promised rest, and have his portion with the workers of iniquity.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 97—120

When grace is in lively exercise, the thirst and the relish for “the sincere milk of the word” of God become exceedingly strong, and shew themselves by a daily and constant meditation on it, in all the intervals of needful business and conversation: and if the Lord has thus disposed our souls to love, study, and keep his truths, testimonies, and precepts; he will give us true wisdom.—The diligent believer will after a time “have the word of Christ dwelling richly” and abundantly in his memory, judgment,

t vii. 3—5. xvi. 1.
20—24. lxxv. 2.
1 Sam. xxiv. 11
—15. xxv. 28.
2 Sam. viii. 15.
Acts xxiv. 16.
xxv. 10, 11.
2 Cor. i. 12.
u xxxvii. 53. lvii.
3, 4. 2 Pet. ii. 9.

AIN.

121 I ^t have done judgment and justice: ^u leave me not to mine oppressors.

and affections: and, having it ever with him, he will be wiser than his most sagacious enemies; and able to discern, escape, or profit by all their machinations, and even to baffle every temptation of his most subtle adversary the devil. (*P. O. Matt. iv. 1—4. Notes, Eph. vi. 14—17. Col. iii. 16, 17.*) Nay, the simplest Christian, who by faith and prayer appropriates the information conveyed to him in the scriptures of truth, will soon surpass, in useful knowledge and practical wisdom, the most learned teachers, the most renowned fathers, and the most aged and experienced persons, who, “leaning to their own understandings,” reject the Oracles of God, or are but superficially acquainted with them: for these are far surer guides to truth, than doctors, councils, or synods, ancient or modern. It will not indeed readily occur to the mind of a humble Christian, that he is thus wiser than his seniors and superiors; and he will suspect and fear the thought, when it presents itself: yet, daily reading his Bible, he must perceive how men deviate from that unerring standard of truth and wisdom, and run into error and delusion; he cannot, without ingratitude, deny what the Lord has taught him; nor dares he, in an affected and “voluntary humility,” “call darkness light, “and light darkness,” or prefer human conjectures to the decisions of the only wise God.—But, “who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among us? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.” If the Lord has indeed taught us, we “refrain our feet from every evil way, that we may keep his word;” nor shall we depart from his judgments all our days. Our souls relish the words of God, more than the mouth does the sweetness of honey; and in proportion as, through his precepts, “we get understanding,” we shall hate and shun every way of sin and of hypocrisy. We do not use our knowledge ostentatiously, and to gain applause: but, knowing what a dark and perilous path we tread, and how important each of our steps is to ourselves and to others, we use the word of God as a lamp, which we carry in our hands, that we may not stumble, be ensnared, or defiled; and that we may not only not quite miss our way, but may proceed uniformly with credit and comfort.—Depending on the promised grace of God, the true Christian solemnly vows to “keep his righteous judgments,” and he determines to perform his vows. He is often greatly afflicted; but it chiefly grieves him, that “he cannot do the things that he would:” and his longing desire, to become more holy, dictates his daily prayers for quickening grace. He offers the free-will-offerings of his mouth, his grateful praises for former mercies, united with supplications for further instruction and assistance; and he depends only on mercy for the acceptance of his defective and defiled services. If we are indeed thus “led by the Spirit,” neither enemies nor dangers will induce us to forget the law of our God, or to “wander from his precepts:” but we shall choose his testimonies as our eternal heritage, and find his service our present rejoicing, even in the midst of tribulation and persecution; and we

122 Be ^x surety for thy servant for good: ^y let not the proud oppress me.
123 ^z Mine eyes fail for thy salvation, and for the word of thy righteousness.

x Gen. xliii. 9.
Prov. xxii. 26,
27. Is. xxxviii.
14. Philom. 18.
y 9. Heb. vii. 22.
z 21. xxxvi. 11.
81, 82. lxix. 3.
cxxx. 6. cxliii.
7. Lam. iv. 17.

shall bestow pains, as well as pray, that our hearts may be inclined to perform God’s “statutes alway, even unto the “end.” In proportion as we are thus spiritually-minded, we shall hate all sinful thoughts, and delight in heavenly meditations; and shall flee to the Lord as our Hiding-place and Shield, from the incursions of vain imaginations and satanical suggestions, as much as for protection from outward violence, hoping in his word for deliverance from them all. Would we make progress in thus keeping God’s commandments, we must separate from evil-doers, and even drive them from our company, if they will intrude; unless we mean to sacrifice conscience to courtesy, which king David would not do. We must also rely entirely on the upholding of divine grace; or we shall never be safe, or able to have continual respect to all the Lord’s statutes: but in this simplicity of intention and dependence, we shall be held up and live, and never be ashamed of our hope. Every affection of the soul must be engaged in keeping us stedfast in the ways of God. We must be allured by hope, and constrained by love, and even moved by fear. And it will be profitable for us, often and seriously to consider the contempt and misery, which are poured upon the wicked, and prepared for them; for assuredly they will be trodden down like mire, and “put away like dross,” or “driven like chaff” into “unquenchable fire:” and these reflections on the doom of hypocrites and apostates, will induce us to cleave more steadily in love to the testimonies of God. But if such subjects made David exclaim, “My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, “and I am afraid of thy judgments:” surely we, who fall so far below him in devout affections, should “fear, lest “a promise being left us of entering into” heavenly “rest, “any of us should seem to come short of it!” (*Note, Heb. iv. 1, 2.*)

NOTES.

V. 121, 122. Conscious of having adhered to justice and equity, even towards his persecutors, the Psalmist appeals to God from their unrighteous decisions: and he prays that he may not be left in the hands of his proud oppressors; but that the Lord himself would become his Surety. (*Notes, vii. 3—11. 2 Sam. xxii. 21—28. 2 Cor. i. 12—14.*)—“Put thyself between mine enemies and me, “as if thou wert my pledge.”—As a rich person, by becoming surety for a poor man, rescues him from oppression or imprisonment; so the Lord delivers his servants from their enemies and from impending ruin, by undertaking their cause. Christ, our Surety, having paid our debt and ransom, rescues us from merited condemnation, and engages for all the blessings of complete salvation to every true believer. (*Note, Heb. vii. 20—22.*)

Be surety. (122) צִדֵּק. Hezekiah uses the same word in the passage rendered, “O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me.” (*Note, Is. xxxviii. 14, 15.*)

V. 123. *Notes, 81, 82. lxix. 1—3. lxxxiv. 1, 2. cxliii. 6, 7.—The word of thy righteousness.] “Thy just pro-*

^a 41. 76, 77, 132. **124** * Deal with thy servant accord-
ing unto thy mercy, and ^b teach me thy
statutes.

^b 12. 26. cxliii. 10. **125** I *am* ^c thy servant: ^d give me
understanding, ^e that I may know thy
testimonies.

^d 34. 66. 2 Chr. i. **126** It is ^f time for *thee*, LORD, to
work; for ^g they have made void thy law.

^e 11. 18, 19, 29. **127** Therefore ^h I love thy com-
mandments above gold; yea, above
fine gold.

^f ix. 19. cii. 13. **128** Therefore ⁱ I esteem all *thy* pre-
cepts concerning all things to be right;
^g Jer. viii. 8. Hab. i. 4. Mal. ii. 8. Matt. xv. 6. Rom. iii. 31. iv. 14.
10. Prov. iii. 13—18. viii. 11. xvi. 16. Matt. xiii. 45, 46. Eph. iii. 8.
8. Deut. iv. 8. Job xxxiii. 27. Prov. xxx. 5. Rom. vii. 12, 14, 16, 22.

cepts concerning all things to be right;
^k and I hate every false way.

k 104. 1, 8.

PE.

129 Thy ^l testimonies are wonder-
ful: therefore ^m doth my soul keep
them.

130 The ⁿ entrance of thy words
giveth light; ^o it giveth understanding
unto the simple.

131 I ^p opened my mouth, and pant-
ed; for ^q I longed for thy command-
ments.

l 18. cxxxix. 6.
Is. ix. 6. Rev
xix. 10.
m 2. 31. 146. xxv.
10.
n 105. Prov. vi.
23. Is. viii. 20.
Luke i. 77—79.
Acts xxvi. 18.
Eph. v. 13. 14.
2 Pet. i. 19
o xix. 7. Prov. i.
4. 22, 23. Rom.
xvi. 18, 19. 2 Tim.
iii. 15—17.
p 20. xlii. 1. Is
xxvi. 8, 9. 1 Pet.
ii. 2.
q 40. 162. 174
Heb. xii. 14.

“mise.” *Old Version*.—“The “word,” which hath pro-
mised it,” (salvation,) “is the word of truth, faithfulness,
and “righteousness;” the attributes of God are engaged
for its accomplishment, and “He cannot deny himself.””
Bp. Horne.—The justice of God, in deciding between
David and his unjust oppressors, according to his word,
might also be intended. (*Notes*, vii. 3—11. cxliii. 1.
2 *Thes.* i. 5—10.)

V. 124, 125. “I am devoted to thy service, and de-
signed by thee to a high employment: enlighten my un-
derstanding therefore, that I may fully know my duty.”
Bp. Patrick.—These repeated petitions no doubt were re-
collected by Solomon, when he prayed to the same effect.
(*Note*, 1 *Kings* iii. 5—14. *P. O.* 1—15.)

V. 126. (*Marg. Ref.*) They “make void the law of
“God,” who deny its obligation and authority, who ob-
scure or explain away its meaning, and who render it of
none effect by their traditions, or by their lives. (*Notes*,
Jer. viii. 8, 9. *Mal.* ii. 4—9. *Matt.* xv. 3—6. *Rom.* iii. 29
—31.) When these evils become general, it is time for
the Lord to take the matter in hand, and by his own power
to silence infidels, profligates, Pharisees, and antinomians,
to stand up for the honour of his own word, and to main-
tain his own cause among men: for no other power can
effect these purposes; and in such circumstances the
whole honour will be given unto him. (*Notes*, *Is.* lix. 9
—19.)

V. 127. “As the wickedness of those increaseth, who
“make void the divine law;” the zeal and love of be-
lievers should increase in proportion, to stem the tor-
rent: and this may be done, to a surprising degree, by a
few persons, who, after the example of the first Christ-
ians, can forsake all to follow their Master; who have
the sense and the courage to prefer truth, wisdom, holi-
ness, and heaven, to falsehood, folly, sin, and the world;
who can resolutely reject the glittering temptation, and
say, without hypocrisy, to their God, “I love thy com-
mandments above gold, yea, above fine gold.”” *Bp.*
Horne. (72. *Notes*, 14. 111.)

V. 128. “The more I consider them, the more I ap-
prove every one of them, ... and abhor all those base and
dishonest ways, whereby others study to advance them-
selves to riches and honours.” *Bp. Patrick*. (*Notes*, 29,
30. *Prov.* xxx. 5, 6.) “For the same reason that the
children of God, in the worst of times, “love his com-
mandments,” they love them all; not observing such

“only as they can observe without giving offence, but re-
gardless of the censures of the world, doing their duty
in every particular; not “hating” some “evil ways,”
and at the same time walking in others, but extending
and manifesting their aversion to all alike.” *Bp. Horne*.
(*Notes*, *John* xv. 12—16, v. 14. *Jam.* ii. 8—13.)

V. 129. The discoveries which the word of God makes
of the mysteries of his nature, the perfections of his cha-
racter, and the power of his works, and likewise of the
invisible and eternal world, are suited to excite the highest
wonder and astonishment. The harmony of the divine
attributes in the mystery of redemption; the way of a sin-
ner’s acceptance; and the method of speaking peace to
his conscience, without giving the least encouragement to
sin; the rule and example of obedience, and all the mo-
tives and obligations to it; are most worthy of our admir-
ation, love, and gratitude: and it is owing entirely, either
to the depravity of our hearts, or to the familiarity of our
thoughts with these subjects, that we are no more affected
by them. (*Notes*, 18. cxxxix. 17, 18. *Is.* ix. 6, 7. 1 *Cor.*
ii. 6—9. *Eph.* ii. 4—10. iii. 9—12. 1 *Pet.* i. 10—12.
1 *John* v. 9—12.)

V. 130. The words of God enter the soul when, being
read or heard, they are understood, believed, stored up in
the memory, and used to regulate the judgment and con-
duct. They then give a satisfactory light to the mind, upon
every subject on which they treat: and speedily communi-
cate more useful knowledge upon the most important
topicks, to the simplest believer, than the acutest philoso-
phers have been able to develope through successive gene-
rations. (*Note*, 98—100.) “The simple idiots, that sub-
mit themselves to God, have their eyes opened, and their
minds illuminated, so soon as they begin to read God’s
word.”—“Thus will they” (the Scriptures) “give to the
simple, in a few days, an understanding of those mat-
ters, which philosophers for whole centuries sought in
vain.” *Bp. Horne*. (*Notes*, 105. xix. 7—11. xciii. 5.
Prov. vi. 23. *Is.* viii. 20. *Luke* xxiv. 44—49. *Acts* xvi. 13
—15. 2 *Cor.* iv. 3—6.)

V. 131. As the man, who has run himself out of breath,
opens his mouth to draw in the refreshing breeze, and
eagerly pants for it; so the believer, wearied with the cares
of life and his conflict with sin, longs for the consolations
conveyed to him by the sacred word, and stands expecting
and prepared to receive them into his heart. (*Notes*, 19—
21. 40. 81, 82. xlii. 1—3. *Heb.* xii. 14.)

124. xxv. 18. Ex. iv. 31. 1 Sam. i. 11. 2 Sam. xvi. 12. 1s. lxiii. 7—
 132 'Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, * as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.

* Heb. according to the custom toward those, &c. cvi. 4. 116 xvii. 5. xxxii. 8. cxxi. 3. 1 Sam. ii. 9.
 133 'Order my steps in thy word; and 'let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

122. lvi. 1, 2. 13. cv. 43—45. Ez. xi. 17—20. xxxvi. 24—27. Luke i. 74, 75. Acts ix. 31.
 134 'Deliver me from the oppression of man: so will I keep thy precepts.

iv. 6. lxxx. 1. 3. 7. 19. Num. vi. 25, 26. Job xxxiii. 26. Rev. xxii. 4, 5.
 135 * Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; ' and teach me thy statutes.

12. Job xxxiv. 32. xxxv. 11. xxxvi. 22. Luke xxiv. 45.
 136 ' Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.

53. 158. ' Sam. xv. 11. Jer. ix. 1. 18. xiii. 17. xiv. 17. Ez. ix. 4. Luke xix. 41. Rom. ix. 2, 3.

TZADDI.

137 'Righteous art thou, O LORD, and upright are thy judgments.

138 Thy ' testimonies, that thou hast commanded, are ' righteous, and very ' faithful.

139 My ' zeal hath ' consumed me; because ' mine enemies have forgotten thy words.

140 Thy word is ' very ' pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.

141 I am ' small and despised; ' yet do not I forget thy precepts.

142 Thy righteousness is ' an everlasting righteousness, ' and thy law is the truth.

ix. 58. 2 Cor. viii. 9. Jam. ii. 5. g 109. 176. Prov. iii. 1. li 6. 8. Dan. ix. 24. 2 Thes. i. 6—10. i 151. John xvii. 17. Eph. iv. 21.

a xci. 4. ciii. 6. cxlv. 17. Deut. xxxii. 4. Neh. ix. 33. Jer. xii. 1. Dan. ix. 7. 14. Rom. ii. 5. iii. 5, 6. ix. 14. Rev. xv. 3, 4. xvi. 7. xix. 2. b 86. 144. xix. 7. 9. Deut. iv. 8. 45. † Heb. righteous-ness. ‡ Heb. faithful-ness. 75. c lxix. 9. 1 Kings xix. 10. 14. John ii. 17. § Or, cut me off. d liii. 4. Matt. ix. 13. xii. 3—5. xv. 4—6. xxi. 13. 16. 42. xxii. 29. Acts xiii. 27. xxviii. 23—27. e 128. xii. 6. xviii. 30. xix. 8. Prov. xxx. 5. Rom. vii. 12. 16. 22. 1 Pet. ii. 2. 2 Pet. i. 21. Heb. tried, or refined. f xxii. 6. xl. 17. Prov. xv. 16. xvi. 8. xix. 1. Is. liii. 3. Luke vi. 20. h 144. xxxvi. 6. Is. 3. Luke vi. 20.

V. 132. The love of the name, or perfections, of God, distinguishes the believer from all those who are carnally minded and enmity to God: for nothing "availeth in Christ, but faith which worketh by love."—The reconciled believer is dealt with according to the gospel of grace: the unregenerate and unbelieving according to the strict and holy law. This David understood, and prayed earnestly to be dealt with according to that gracious rule, by which the Lord pardoned and recompensed his friends; not in that strict justice, with which he punishes his enemies. (Notes, 124, 125. xxv. 6, 7. cvi. 4, 5.)

V. 133. The frequent ejaculatory prayers for divine teaching and upholding, and that God would not permit any sin to acquire dominion over him, shew, how much the Psalmist understood and felt his entire dependence on God, not only for providential protection, and the forgiveness of his sins; but also as to those things, in which men in general depend on themselves, and assume the credit of any real or supposed difference, subsisting between them and others; namely, the due exercise of their rational powers, and the right state of their hearts.—'O God, from 'whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just 'works do proceed, &c.' Liturgy.—It is evident David deeply felt, that iniquity, in one form or other, would enslave him, unless God himself ordered and upheld his goings, according to the sacred word. (Notes, xix. 12—14. Rom. vi. 8—19. vii. 15—25.)

V. 136. Conformity to Christ is the standard of the believer's growth in grace. David had "that mind in him" which was also in Jesus Christ: his grief was therefore intense, and his tears flowed as rivers down his furrowed cheeks, when he looked around, and saw multitudes ruining themselves and others, as well as dishonouring God, by impenitently despising and violating his holy law, and neglecting his salvation. (53. Notes, 157, 158. Jer. ix. 1, 2. xiii. 15—17. Luke xix. 41—44. Rom. ix. 1—3.)

V. 137. 'It is said of the emperor Mauritius, that 'upon seeing all his children slain before his face, at the 'command of that bloody tyrant and usurper, Phocas, 'himself expecting the next stroke, ... he exclaimed aloud, 'in these words of David, "Righteous art thou, O LORD, 'and upright are thy judgments.'" Bp. Horne.—This

story is a good exposition of the verse; and if satisfactorily authenticated, would be a most admirable exemplification of the genuine tendency of the doctrine contained in it; namely, confidence in God, and acquiescence in his will, under the severest calamities. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 75, 76.)

V. 138. "Thou hast commanded justice by thy testimonies, and truth especially." Old Version. This translation is as literal as that of the present version.—The law commands perfect righteousness; and even the gospel requires truth in the inward parts. (Note, li. 5, 6.)

V. 139. The Psalmist's ardent love to the word of God, and zeal for his glory, threw his mind into a most distressing commotion, whilst he observed how his enemies forgot and neglected the most obvious truths and precepts of Scripture. "His spirit was stirred within him:" and he became even sick with uneasiness; finding himself unable to stop the progress of their impiety and rebellion.—In this he may be considered as a type of the Saviour. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 136. lxix. 8, 9. John ii. 13—17.)

V. 140. 'Gold hath need to be fined; but thy word is 'perfection itself.'—The figurative term, used in the original, denotes the purity of the sacred scriptures; which reflect the holiness of the Lord's character and government, and require of us purity of heart and life, and lead us to it. This purity of the scriptures the carnal mind dislikes; but the spiritually-minded love and relish it, and they perceive it equally in the righteous precepts, as in the faithful promises; and therefore they love the whole word of God. (Notes, 128. xii. 5, 6. Prov. xxx. 5, 6. Rom. vii. 9—12. 22—25.)

V. 142. 'Men may decree wickedness by a law; or 'they may change their decrees, and, with them, what was 'right to-day may be wrong to-morrow: but the law of 'God is righteousness, and it is truth, to day and for ever.' Bp. Horne.—Perhaps the everlasting righteousness of God, as a Saviour, which "is unto all and upon all that believe," is intended; and not merely his righteousness as a Judge.—His law is the truth, as the standard of right and wrong; and his testimony, as to facts, doctrines, denunciations, and promises. (Notes, 66. 86. 150, 151.)

k 107. xviii. 4, 5.
xxxviii. 3, &c.
xxvi. 3. cxix. 1.
Mark xiv. 33, 34.
• Heb. found me.
116. 47. Job xxiii.
12. John iv. 34.

143 ^k Trouble and anguish have
* taken hold on me; ^l yet thy com-
mandments are my delights.

V. 143. *Marg. Ref.*—Notes, xl. 6—12. xciv. 19. *Matt.* xxvi. 36—39.

V. 144. (Notes, 138. 152. *Matt.* v. 17, 18.) ‘So that
the life of man, without the knowledge of God, is death.’
(*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 121—144.

Happy is the man who, from evangelical principles, does judgment and justice to all around him; he will have “rejoicing in the testimony of his conscience,” and confidence in the mercy and truth of his God, in the midst of slander and persecution: the Lord will be his “Surety for good,” and will not leave him in the hand of any proud oppressor. Delays may try his patience, while he waits for the salvation of God, and the performance of his faithful and righteous word: but in due time the Lord will do justice between him and his enemies, and answer, yea far exceed, his largest expectations.—If we are indeed become the servants of God, whether in a low or in a lofty station, he will deal with us according to his mercy: and if we desire to know his will and our duty, in that station which God has assigned us, he will “give us understanding, that we may learn his testimonies.”—In proportion as we love his service and value his commandments, we shall be grieved to witness the neglect and contempt, with which they are treated: we shall be sensible that we cannot stop the progress of infidelity and immorality, or of those “damnable heresies,” which “make void the holy law” of God; and this will excite our prayers to him, to arise and work, and cause iniquity to stop its mouth.—If we can say, that “we love God’s commandments more than much fine gold,” and really value the comforts and the cause of true godliness, more than our worldly interests; and if our love to the word of God gather strength in proportion, as we see others despise and trample upon it; we may hope to do something effectual, as instruments, by our example, prayers, influence, and talents, to stem the torrent of impiety. For we shall then venture the loss of every earthly advantage, and submit to any self-denial and suffering, in this important cause; and shall be as zealous and active in extolling and establishing, as wicked men are in decrying and vilifying, the truths and statutes of the Lord. But those who spiritually love any of his precepts, love them all, and “esteem them all to be right:” and those who hate any false way, hate all of them, as dishonourable to God and ruinous to man.—Increasing illumination, and closer meditation on divine subjects enhance the Christian’s admiration and gratitude: and the wonders of redeeming love, which “angels desire to look into,” will fix the heart in the observance and adoration of them. (Note, 1 *Pet.* i. 10—12.)—When we simply receive the testimony of revelation, by faith, with a due preparation of the heart, a new light pervades the understanding, and every object assumes another appearance: every view of spiritual things, in their glory and excellency, excites more ardent desires of clearer discoveries: nor can the longing, panting, thirstings of the heaven-born soul, for more perfect knowledge and holi-

144 The ^m righteousness of thy tes-
timonies is everlasting: ⁿ give me ^o un-
derstanding, and I shall live.

m 138. 152. *Matt.* v. 18. 1 *Pet.* i. 23—25.
n 34. 66. 73. 169.
o 2 *Cor.* iv. 6.
1 John v. 20, 21.

ness, be ever satisfied till it arrives in the world above. Thus to hunger and thirst after righteousness may indeed here create uneasiness: but these desires shall be fully answered, when all of a contrary nature shall be eternally disappointed. (Notes, *Matt.* v. 6. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 8—12.)—The Lord regards, with tender and fatherly mercy, those who love his name: and if we cannot decide that we are of this happy number, we yet may pray to him, and say, “Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name.” And this will be done with more encouragement, if we can sincerely add our petitions, “that he would order our steps according to his word, and not let any iniquity have dominion over us.” When it is our aim and desire thus “to keep the precepts of God,” he will deliver us from oppression, or comfort us under it, by his presence and “the light of his countenance;” and will teach us more and more of his holy truth and will.—But, though exempted from sorrow on our own account, we must expect to be grieved for others, whilst in this vale of tears; nor can we do otherwise, than mourn to behold our fellow-creatures hurry, by tens of thousands, nay millions, unto eternal destruction, without being able to prevent it. It behoves us, however, to submit to the justice of God in this, as well as in other matters: this will calm the tempest of our souls; and we shall allow his judgments to be righteous in the destruction of the wicked, though nearly connected with us, as well as in our own afflictions: and we shall be induced to cheerful obedience, and a firm reliance on his faithful promises.—When our zeal is purified from bitterness, and resentment against ungodly opposers; when it runs in the same channel with that of the Redeemer; and when it makes us willing to renounce, venture, and suffer, for the benefit even of our persecutors; it is good evidence that we are true Christians, and it will be very useful to others also.—Happy are they who love the whole word of God, because of its purity, and its purifying influence on their hearts; for this no unregenerate person can do.—Those who are noble in this world, if strong in the grace of God, will be mean in their own eyes, and willing to be despised by others: and those who are poor and low in the world, will be great in the sight of God, if neither fear, shame, nor covetousness, render them forgetful of his precepts. These are of immutable and everlasting excellence and obligation. The law of God is the truth, the standard of holiness, and the rule of happiness. Yet the divine obedience of Christ alone forms that “everlasting righteousness,” which is testified to us in Scripture, and which justifies the believing sinner. But they, who are thus justified, learn to “delight in God’s commandments,” and to copy that obedience by which they are accepted: the trouble and anguish, which took hold on their consciences, end in sweet peace and confidence: they enter on a new state, bear a new character, and lead a new life. They are comforted under subsequent trials, and at length are brought forth out of them all. May the Lord give us understanding, that we may see and walk in this way of peace and salvation; that we may here live the life of faith and

KOPH.

p 10. lxi. 1, 2. lxii.
8. lxxxvi. 4. cii.
title. cxlii. 1, 2.
1 Sam. i. 10. 15.
Jer. xxix. 13.

q 44. 106. 115.
* Or, that I may
keep. 134. Judg.
x. 15, 16. Matt.
i. 21. Tit. ii. 14.
iii. 4—8.

r v. 3. xlii. 8.
lxxxviii. 13.
cxxx. 6. Is. xxvi.
9. Mark i. 35.

s 74. 81. lvi. 4.
cxxx. 5. Heb.
vi. 17—19.
t 62. lxiii. 1. 6.
cxxxix. 17, 18.
Lam. ii. 19.
Luke vi. 12.

u v. 2, 3. lv. 2.
lxiv. 1.
x li. 1. lxix. 16.
cix. 21. Is. lxiii.
7.

y 25. 40. 156.
z xxii. 11—13. 16.
xxvii. 2. 1 Sam.
xxiii. 26. 2 Sam.
xvii. 16. Matt.
xxvi. 46, 47.

a l. 17. Job xxi.
14. Prov. i. 7. 22.
xxviii. 9. Eph.
ii. 13, 14.

145 I^p cried with *my* whole heart:
hear me, O LORD: ^qI will keep thy
statutes.

146 I cried unto thee: save me,
* and I shall keep thy testimonies.

147 I^r prevented the dawning of
the morning, and cried: I^s hoped in
thy word.

148 Mine^t eyes prevent the *night-*
watches, that I might meditate in thy
word.

149 ^uHear my voice^x according
unto thy loving-kindness: O LORD,
^yquicken me according to thy judg-
ment.

150 They^z draw nigh that follow
after mischief: they are^a far from thy
law.

151 Thou *art*^b near, O LORD; and
^call thy commandments *are* truth.

152 Concerning^d thy testimonies, I
have known of old, that thou hast
founded them for ever.

RESH.

153 ^eConsider mine affliction, and
deliver me; ^ffor I do not forget thy
law.

154 ^gPlead my cause, and deliver
me: ^hquicken me according to thy
word.

155 ⁱSalvation *is* far from the wick-
ed; for^k they seek not thy statutes.

156 ^lGreat¹ *are* thy tender mer-
cies, O LORD: ^mquicken me according
to thy judgments.

157 ⁿMany *are* my persecutors and

b xlv. 1. lxxv. 1.
cxlv. 18. Deut.
iv. 7. Matt. i.
23.

c 138. 142.
d 144. 160. lxxxix.
34—37. cxi. 7.
8. Ec. iii. 14.
Luke xxi. 33.

e 159. ix. 13. xiii.
3. 4. xxv. 19.
Ex. iii. 7, 8.
Neh. ix. 32.
Lam. ii. 20. v.
1.

f 16. 98. 109. 141.
176.
g xxxv. 1. xliii.
1. 1 Sam. xxiv.
15. Job v. 8.
Prov. xxii. 23.

h 25. 40.
i lxxiii. 27. Job v.
4. Is. xlv. 12.
lvii. 19. Eph. ii.
17, 18.

k x. 4. Job xxi.
14, 15. Prov. i.
7. Rom iii. 11.
† Heb. Many.

l li. 1. lxxxvi. 5.
13. 15. 1 Chr.
xxi. 13. Is. lv.
7. lxiii. 7.

m 149.
n iii. 1, 2. xxiv.
12. 16. xxv. 19. lvi. 2. cxviii. 10—12. Matt. xxiv. 9. xxvi. 47. Acts iv. 27.

grace, and at length be removed to the life of glory, vision,
and fruition.

NOTES.

V. 145, 146. ‘He sheweth, that all his affections and
‘whole heart were bent to God-ward, for to have help in
‘his dangers.’—The Psalmist was also at least as earnest
to be enabled to keep the commandments of God, as to
be rescued from his sufferings; and considered his deliver-
ance as an introduction to his obedience, which he was
fully purposed to render to the God of his salvation.
(Notes, 10. 106. lxii. 8—10. Eph. ii. 4—10, v. 10. Tit. ii.
11—14.)

V. 147, 148. ‘David delighted in the holy exercises of
‘prayer and meditation; therefore he prevented the dawn-
‘ing of the morning, and was beforehand with the light
‘itself; therefore his “eyes prevented the watches,” that
‘is, the last of those watches, into which the night was
‘by the Jews divided: he needed not the watchman’s call,
‘but was stirring before it could be given. Climate and
‘constitution will doubtless make a difference, and claim
‘considerable allowance. But by Christians who enjoy
‘their health, in temperate weather, the sun should not
‘be suffered to shine in vain, nor the golden hours of the
‘morning to glide away unimproved.’ Bp. Horne. (Notes,
Mark i. 35—39. P. O. 29—45. Note, Luke vi. 12.)

V. 149. Notes, 77. li. 1, 2.—[Quicken, &c.] ‘Give me
life and animation in thy service; according to the wise
and righteous appointments of thy word.’

V. 150, 151. ‘If our enemies draw nigh to destroy us,
‘God is still nearer to preserve us.’ Bp. Horne.—He is
indeed near, in his Providence; but we should, with David,
pray, that he may be graciously near us, to uphold us in
keeping his commandments, which are truth and right-
eousness; as well as to protect us against those, who
“follow after mischief” and “are far from his law.”
(Notes, 155. xxii. 11—13. 16—21.)

V. 152. ‘This hath ever been my support, long before

‘I fell into these troubles, that whatsoever thou hast tes-
‘tified to be thy will and pleasure is firm and stedfast, and
‘shall never fail those that depend upon it.’ Bp. Patrick.
(Notes, 142. 144.)

V. 153. (Notes, 109. 176.) None of the afflictions,
which had befallen David, rendered him forgetful of the
law of God; but on the most trying emergencies, he aimed
to regulate his conduct according to it: and the conscious-
ness of this encouraged his hope, and formed a cogent
plea in prayer, that the Lord would look upon his afflic-
tion and deliver him.

V. 154. The word (נָצַחַ), translated “deliver me,” is
taken from the office of a Redeemer, or next of kin
among the Israelites, to whom it belonged to redeem the
inheritance, or ransom the person, of his impoverished or
enslaved relative; and also to be his patron and defender
against injustice and oppression, and the avenger of his
blood, if he were slain. (Notes, Lev. xxv. 25—28. 47—55.
Num. xxxv. 11—15. Ruth iv. 1—8.) In this character
of a Redeemer, David, “according to his word,” sought
to God for protection, support, and animating consolation,
in his trials. (Notes, 121, 122. Rom. vii. 22—25.)

V. 155. “The salvation of God is nigh them that fear
“him;” for they seek to know and do the will of God.
(Note, lxxxv. 9:) but, after all which has been done
by the great Redeemer, or revealed and promised in
scripture, or vouchsafed by a kind Providence as ‘means
‘of grace;’ “salvation is far from the wicked,” or im-
penitent; “for they seek not the statutes” of God
(Notes, Luke xiii. 22—30. 1 Pet. iv. 17—19.)—Some in-
deed explain the verse of temporal deliverance, but eternal
salvation is at least as far from them. ‘Far be it from
‘thee to afford any help to the wicked: for they have no
‘regard to thy statutes; but seek only how they may sa-
‘tisfy their own lewd and cruel desires.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 156. Notes, 148. 159. li. 1, 2. Is. lv. 6, 7. lxiii.
7, 8.

V. 157, 158. (Notes, 23. 51. 53. 110. 136, 139 Job

^o 51. 110. xlv. 17. mine enemies; ^o yet do I not decline from thy testimonies.

^p 53. 136. Mark iii. 5. 158 I ^p beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.

^q 97. 153. 2 Kings xx. 3. Neh. v. 19. xiii. 22. 159 ^q Consider how I love thy precepts: ^r quicken me, O LORD, according to thy loving-kindness.

^r 88. 160 ^r Thy word is true from the beginning; ^s and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.

SCHIN.

^s 23. 157. 1 Sam. xxiv. 9—15. xxvi. 18. John xv. 25. 161 ^s Princes have persecuted me

without a cause; but ^u my heart standeth in awe of thy word.

^u 4. Gen. xxxix. 9. xlii. 18. 2 Kings xxii. 19. Neh. v. 15. Job xxxi. 23. Is. lxvi. 2. Jer. xxxvi. 23—25. 162 I ^u rejoice at thy word, ^v as one that findeth great spoil.

^x 72. 111. Jer. xv. 16. 163 I ^x hate and abhor lying; but thy law do I love.

^y 1 Sam. xxx. 1. Prov. xvi. 19. Is. ix. 3. 164 ^y Seven times a day do I praise thee, ^z because of thy righteous judgments.

^z 29. 113. 128. 7. Prov. vi. 16—19. xxx. 8. Am v. 15. Rom. xii. 9. Eph. iv. 25. Rev. xxii. 15. 165 ^a Great peace have they which love thy law, and ^b nothing shall offend them.

^a 62. lv. 17. ^b xlvi. 11. xcvii. 8. Rev. xix. 2. 166 LORD, ^c I have hoped for thy salvation, ^d and done thy commandments.

^c Prov. iii. 1, 2. 17. Is. xxxii. 17. lvii. 21. John xiv. 27. Gal. v. 22, 23. vi. 15, 16. ^d Heb. they shall have no stumbling block. Is. lviii. 13—15. xxviii. 13. lvii. 14. Matt. xiii. 21. xxiv. 24. 1 Pet. ii. 6—8.

xxiii. 8—12.) ‘Persecution tempteth men to apostasy, and is the great trial of our fidelity to God and to his word. He, who in such circumstances forgetteth his own sufferings, to commiserate the sin and folly of his persecutors, is a true follower ... of Jesus Christ.’ Bp. Horne. —The original word denotes *disgust*, as well as *sorrow*. Thus our Lord “looked round” on the Pharisees “with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts.” (Note, Mark iii. 1—5, v. 5.)

V. 159. The frequent, though varied, repetition of the ejaculatory prayer, “Quicken me according to thy word,” “thy judgments,” “thy loving-kindness,” &c. shews that the Psalmist considered it as relating to objects of the highest importance. (Note, 25.) The preservation of his temporal life, deliverance from his deep distresses, the communication of spiritual life, and preservation to eternal life; with animating, encouraging grace, and whatever was needful in order to his activity and vigour in obeying the commandments of God, amidst temptations, dangers, and sufferings, may be all considered as implied in the general term; and sometimes one, sometimes another, to have been especially intended, according to existing circumstances. (25. 37. 40. 88. 107. 149. 154. 156.)

V. 160. “The beginning of thy word is truth.” (Marg.) The first promise to fallen Adam of a Redeemer, and the first promise to Abraham concerning his posterity, were truth itself. (Note, Gen. xii. 1—3.)—All the righteous judgments of God, whether in the declarations of his word, or in the dispensations of his providence, concur in accomplishing that truth, and form a part of that great design, which shall surely be completed and endure for ever.—‘Since thou first promisedst, even to the end, all thy sayings are true.’ (Note, cxxxviii. 2.)

V. 161. Saul and his princes persecuted David most unjustly: but he so revered the word of God, that he would not retaliate, or avenge himself upon them; and thus he constrained Saul himself to say, “Thou art more righteous than I.” (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 23. 157, 158. 1 Sam. xxiv. 4—7. 16—22. xxvi. 5—12. John xv. 22—25.)

V. 162. ‘I take far more delight in doing thy will, and in what thou has promised to do for me, than in the completest victory over all my enemies.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 14. 111. Prov. xvi. 19. Is. ix. 3.)

V. 163. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 29, 30. 97—100. 104. 128.) ‘I hate all fraud and deceit, even to the degree of abhorrence and abomination: but most heartily love these honest courses, to which thy law directs me.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 164. “Seven times:” ‘that is, often and sundry times.’ (Notes, 47—53. xxxiv. 1, 2. lv. 17.)—‘They who, like David, during a time of persecution and affliction, put their trust in God, and wait his decision of their cause, will always find reason ... to praise him seven times a day, or continually, for his just decrees and “righteous judgments,” concerning them.’ Bp. Horne.

V. 165. ‘Amidst the storms and tempests of the world, there is a perfect calm in the breasts of those, who not only do the will of God, but “love” to do it. They are at peace with God, by the blood of reconciliation; at peace with themselves, by the answer of a good conscience, and the subjection of those desires which war against the soul; at peace with all men, by the spirit of charity; and the whole creation is so at peace with them, that “all things work together for their good.” No external troubles can rob them of this “great peace;” no offences or stumbling-blocks, which are thrown in their way by persecution or temptation, by the malice of enemies, or the apostasy of friends, by any thing they see, hear of, or feel, can detain, or divert them from their course. Heavenly love surmounts every obstacle, and runs with delight “the way of God’s commandments.”’ Bp. Horne. This beautiful note seems indeed rather to shew what would be the case, did we perfectly love the law of God; and were indwelling sin not only dethroned, but destroyed; than what is generally, or perhaps in any instance, attained in this world.—But love to the law of God is a sure proof of conversion, and is in ordinary cases attended by proportionable peace: all disturbance and disquietude arise from contrary sources; and all who love the law, shall be “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.” Other professed Christians may be offended and fall away; but these never shall. (Notes, Is. xxxii. 16—20. John x. 26—31. xiv. 15—28. Rom. viii. 28—39.)

V. 166. ‘He sheweth that we must first have faith, before we can work and please God.’—To hope, on scriptural grounds, “for the salvation of God,” and in this

97. 111.
159. John xiv.
21—24. xv. 9,
10 Heb. x. 16,
17.
s xl. 8. Rom. vii.
22.
h xlv. 20, 21. xc.
8. cxxxix. 3.
Job xxxiv. 21.
Prov. v. 21. Jer.
xxiii. 24. Heb.
iv. 13. Rev. ii.
23.
i 145. xviii. 6.
2 Chr. xxx. 27.
k 144. 1 Chr. xxii.
12. 2 Chr. i. 10.
Prov. ii. 3—5.
Dan. ii. 21. Jam.
i. 5.
l 41. lxxxix. 20—
25. Gen. xxxii.
9—12. 2 Sam.
vii. 25.
m 7. 1. 23. lxxi. 17.
23, 24.
n 13. 46. xxxvii.
30. xl. 9, 10.
lxxviii. 4. Deut.
vi. 7. Matt. xii.
34, 35. Eph. iv. 29. Col. iv. 6.

167 My ¹soul hath kept thy testi-
monies; ²and I love them exceedingly.

168 I have kept thy precepts and
thy testimonies; ³for all my ways *are*
before thee.

TAU.

169 Let ¹my cry come near before
thee, O LORD: ²give me understand-
ing according to thy word.

170 Let my supplication come be-
fore thee: ¹deliver me according to
thy word.

171 My ^mlips shall utter praise,
when thou hast taught me thy statutes.

172 My ⁿtongue shall speak of thy

word; ^ofor all thy commandments *are*
righteousness.

173 ^pLet thine hand help me; ^qfor
I have chosen thy precepts.

174 I have ^rlonged for thy salva-
tion, O LORD; ^sand thy law *is* my de-
light.

175 ^tLet my soul live, and it shall
praise thee; ^uand let thy judgments
help me.

176 I have ^xgone astray like a lost
sheep: ^yseek thy servant; ^zfor I do
not forget thy commandments.

9. Rom. viii. 28. 1 Cor. xi. 31, 32. 2 Cor. iv. 17.
6. 16. Matt. x. 6. xv. 24. xviii. 12, 13. Luke xv. 4—7. John x. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 25.
y Cant. i. 4. Jer. xxxi. 18. Luke xix. 10. Gal. iv. 9. Phil. ii. 13. Jam. i. 17.
z 61. 93. Hos. iv. 6.

o 86. 138. 142. 144.
Rom. vii. 12. 14.
p 94. 117. Is. xli.
10—14. Mark ix.
24. 2 Cor. xii. 9.
Eph. vi. 10, &c.
Phil. iv. 13.
q 30. 35. 40. 111.
Deut. xxx. 19.
Josh. xxiv. 15.
22. 1 Kings iii.
11, 12. Prov. i.
29. Luke x. 42.
r 81. 166. Gen.
xlix. 18. 2 Sam.
xxiii. 5. Prov.
xiii. 12. Cant. v.
8. Rom. vii. 22
—25. viii. 23—
25. Phil. i. 23.
s 16. 24. 47. 77.
162. 167.
t ix. 13, 14. xxx.
9. li. 14, 15.
cxviii. 18, 19.
Is. xxxviii. 19.
u 75. Is. xxvi. 8.
x Is. liii. 6. Ez. xxxiv.
6. 16. Matt. x. 6. xv. 24. xviii. 12, 13. Luke xv. 4—7. John x. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 25.
y Cant. i. 4. Jer. xxxi. 18. Luke xix. 10. Gal. iv. 9. Phil. ii. 13. Jam. i. 17.
z 61. 93. Hos. iv. 6.

hope to obey his commandments, unreservedly and habi-
tually, forms a sure pledge of eternal felicity, and a con-
stant preparation for death and judgment. (Notes, 81, 82.
Gen. xlix. 18. Luke ii. 25—32. Rom. ii. 7—11. viii. 1, 2.
2 Pet. i. 5—11. Jude 20, 21. Rev. xxii. 14, 15.)

V. 167, 168. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 5—8. 97. 111.) ‘The
‘plea of having “kept the divine precepts,” &c. in the
‘mouth of David, or any other believer, intendeth sin-
‘cerity, not perfection, and is alledged as an evidence of
‘grace, not as a claim of merit.’ Bp. Horne. (Note, 2 Sam.
xxii. 21—28.)

All my ways, &c.] ‘I have no respect of men, but set
‘thee always before mine eyes, as the Judge of my doings.’
(Notes, xlv. 17—22. cxxxix. 1—12. 1 Cor. iv. 3—5.)

V. 169, 170. ‘The Psalmist still continueth instant
‘in prayer for “understanding,” to direct him in the
‘midst of dangers and temptations, and for “deliver-
‘“ance” out of them all, when God shall see fit to ac-
‘complish the promises made in his “word.” These are
‘blessings for which a man cannot be too frequent, or too
‘earnest, in his petitions to the throne of heaven.’ Bp. Horne.
—Give me understanding, &c. (169) God has promised in his
word to give wisdom to those who ask him for it; and un-
derstanding, or wisdom, consists in having the mind en-
lightened, and the judgment formed, according to the
truths and precepts of scripture. This is the medium
through which God gives true knowledge and wisdom,
and through which man must seek them; and it is the
standard by which he judges of them, and distinguishes
the genuine from all counterfeits. (Notes, cxi. 9, 10. Jam.
i. 5—8.)

V. 171. Utter.] ‘The word signifieth to pour forth
‘continually.’—“My lips shall pour forth praise; for thou
‘hast taught me thy statutes.” This is more literal, and
accords better to the context; the same particle is ren-
dered for in the next verse. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 173, 174. ‘Let thy divine power therefore succour
me; ...for I rely on that alone, having resolved to be
‘guided wholly by thy precepts. And I have long ex-
‘pected with most ardent desires, thy help, O LORD, for
‘my deliverance; delighting myself, in the mean time,
‘in thy laws.’ Bp. Patrick.—The help of divine grace, in
keeping the precepts of God which he had chosen, and
“salvation with eternal glory,” were probably more in

David’s thoughts, when he presented these requests, than
any temporal aid or deliverance. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 5.
25. 166. Rom. vii. 13—25.)

V. 175. “My soul shall live, and praise thee, and thy
“judgments shall help me.”—The judgments of God on
his enemies, the fatherly corrections of his people, the
counsels of his word, and the ordinances of his house, are
all helpful to the believer’s sanctification, through the effi-
cacious teaching and assistance of the Holy Spirit. (Notes,
50—53. 75. Rom. v. 3—5. viii. 28—31.)

V. 176. ‘It is doubtful, whether David here speaks of
‘his misery or his sin, of his wandering as an exile, ...or
‘of his going astray from the commandments of his God.’
Bp. Horne.—The simile, however, of “a lost sheep” is
so generally applied to the latter case; and the language,
thus interpreted, accords so well to other parts of scrip-
ture; that it is most probable his past sins, and his prone-
ness to wander, were especially meant in this concluding
confession and ejaculation. (Notes, Is. liii. 4—6. Matt.
xviii. 12, 13. Luke xv. 3—7. John x. 14—18. 1 Pet. ii.
18—25, v. 25.)—Perhaps it was written after he had gone
so far astray in the matter of Bathsheba and Uriah; and,
being deeply convinced of his guilt and misery, he felt his
need of the special interposition of the good Shepherd, to
bring him back to the fold of God. (Marg. Ref.—Note,
xxiii. 1—3.) A sheep, wandered from the fold, cast into a
pit, entangled in thorns and briers, or surrounded by beasts
of prey, wounded and bruised, and wholly unable to rescue
itself, or escape destruction; had it the powers of reason
and speech, and did it see the tender shepherd at a dis-
tance, might be supposed as earnestly calling to him in
similar language.

‘My soul hath gone too far astray,
‘My feet too often slip;
‘But since I’ve not forgot thy way,
‘Restore thy wandering sheep.’ Dr. Watts.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 145—176.

Supplications “with the whole heart” differ very widely
from that lip-labour, in which formalists confide; and are
presented by those alone who long for God’s salvation, and
who love his commandments, but are sensible of their in-
ability to keep them.—Great earnestness in any under-

PSALM CXX.

The Psalmist prays to be delivered from his calum-

niator, and shews his doom from God, 1—4. He complains, that his permanent abode is among the contentious and malicious, 5—7.

taking often interrupts our sleep : thus fervent love to the word of God, and delight in communion with him, will render us willing to deduct from the hours of rest and refreshment, rather than be prevented from attending on these needful and pleasant exercises.—The Lord, indeed, has not seen good to give us positive injunctions in these matters, and is accessible at all hours : yet we may often detect ourselves to be defective in love, gratitude, and spirituality, by our slothfulness and self-indulgence : as we have been needlessly asleep, or employed in trifles, when we might have been improving our privilege of access to the mercy-seat, and to that sacred word in which we profess to hope. This should lead us to call upon God to hear our voice, and to quicken us, according to his love, his wisdom, and his truth.—When employed in the service of God, we need not fear, though “ they should draw nigh ” who follow after mischief, and are far from his law ” in their temper and conduct ; for he is near to defend us, and will vindicate the honour of his commandments, against those who hate us for obeying them : and if we have depended on his testimonies, our constant experience will assure us, that he has “ established them for ever.” He considers the weight and the continuance of our afflictions, and will plead our cause and deliver us ; as we do not forget his law, but are more desirous of being invigorated in his ways, than of exemption from trouble. But present safety, and everlasting salvation, are far from the wicked, who neither observe, nor understand, nor even seek after, the truths and statutes of the Lord : and alas ! how numerous are these careless, presumptuous transgressors !—The number, power, and malice of our persecutors, should enhance our value for the tender mercies of God, and our steady purpose not to decline from his ways. And in this frame of mind, we shall rather grieve for the transgressors who are ruining themselves, than for the uneasiness which they occasion us.—Happy are they, who can appeal to God how cordially they love this law ! His grace has planted this love in their hearts ; they are interested in all his precious promises, which from the beginning have been true and faithful ; and they are brought into the way of those “ righteous judgments,” every one of which is immutable and endureth for ever.—When princes become persecutors, their frowns and menaces prove powerful temptations to apostasy or iniquity ; and desire of self-preservation may dictate very unwarrantable measures : but those, whose “ hearts stand in awe of God’s word,” will rather endure the wrath of man, than break the law of their almighty Judge, and will prefer suffering to deliverance by sin. (*Notes, Jer. xxvi. 12—15. Dan. iii. 16—18. vi. 10, 11. Acts iv. 13—22.*) Nay, were there no denunciations of wrath, on those that draw back for fear of the cross ; their value for the promised blessings and consolations of the Scripture is so great, that they would not renounce them to save their lives, and to obtain all worldly advantages : for they rejoice in digging into those rich mines of everlasting truth and love, far more than their enemies can do in spoiling them of their earthly substance.—Our dread and detestation of hypocrisy, fraud, and dissimulation, will be proportioned to our love of the truth

and law of God : they therefore, who impose on their neighbours for their own gain, cannot really love the gospel.—The mercies of common Providence, the righteous judgments recorded in Scripture, and the blessings conveyed to us by them, demand our constant tribute of praise ; and were our hearts like that of David, we should not be so remiss and infrequent in this heavenly exercise : nor would even troubles and persecutions unfit us for it ; seeing we have so many unmerited comforts, such glorious discoveries made to us, and such blessed prospects set before us, in our most trying circumstances.—The believer, “ delighting in the law ” of his reconciled God, enjoys great peace of conscience and tranquillity of mind, even in this turbulent and unsettled world ; and the promises of God assure him, that he shall not meet with any stumbling-block, over which he shall fall to rise no more. He hopes for the free salvation of the gospel, and conscientiously obeys the holy commandments of the law : he keeps the testimonies of God, yea, loves them exceedingly ; and attends on his worship, as one who knows, that “ all his ways are before his eyes.” Yet he will not rest in present attainments : he continues to cry unto God for further instruction and sanctification, and for deliverance from his sins. Expecting the answer of his prayers, he determines that his lips shall render praises to his God. He knows that all his commandments are righteousness itself, and therefore he will speak of them to others ; while he chooses them as the rule of his own conduct, and begs for help from the powerful hand of the Lord, that he may be enabled to obey them. He longs for more complete salvation, and delights in the service of God ; and he would live on earth, and hopes to live in heaven for ever, that he may shew forth his praises : nay he values even afflictions, when they help him in following after holiness. He often looks back with shame and gratitude to his original lost estate, when, like a helpless sheep, he wandered from the fold of God, and was sought and brought back by the good Shepherd. He humbly confesses his manifold subsequent wanderings : but as he has not forgotten the commandments of God, he still prays to be sought out, and brought home, and kept safe, under the watchful eye and tender care of the chief Shepherd, who “ purchased his flock with his own blood ; ” that he may know his voice, and follow him, and receive from him the gift of eternal life.—To close our meditations on this important psalm ; let us by it examine our intentions, desires, fears, hopes, affections, experiences, and tempers ; that we may judge ourselves, whether we be led by the Spirit of Christ or not, and that we may discover what progress we make in the divine life. Let us frequently step aside from a vain world, to view ourselves in this sacred mirror ; that we may discover and rectify what is wrong in our tempers and conduct, and be directed by it in our confessions, our watchfulness, and our prayers : remembering always, that the more we advance in holiness, the more we shall anticipate the joys of heaven ; and, as it were, breathe the pure air of those celestial regions, even while we continue in the noisome dungeon of this evil world

^a cxxi. — cxxiv.
titles.

^a A Song of degrees.

^b xviii. 6. xxx. 7.
8. 1. 15. cvii. 13.
cxvi. 3, 4. cxviii.
5. Is. xxxvii. 3.
4. 14. &c. xxxviii.
2—5. Jon. ii. 2.
Luke xxii. 44.
Heb. v. 7.

I^b ^b my distress I cried unto the LORD,
and he heard me.

^c xxxv. 11. lii. 2.
—4. cix. 1, 2.
cxl. 1—3. Matt.
xxvi. 59—62.

2 Deliver my soul, O LORD, ^c from
lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.

^{*} Or, What shall
the deceitful
tongue give
unto thee? Or,
What shall it
profit thee? Job
xxvii. 8. Matt.
xvi. 26. Rom.
vi. 21.

3 ^{*} What shall be given unto thee?
or what shall be [†] done unto thee, thou
false tongue?

[†] Heb. added.
[‡] Or, It is as the
sharp arrows of
the mighty man,
with coals of
juniper. lvii. 4.

4 [‡] Sharp ^d arrows of the mighty,
with coals of juniper.

lix. 7. Prov. xi. 9. xii. 18. xvi. 27. xviii. 8. 21. Jam. iii. 5—8.
cxl. 9—11. Deut. xxxii. 23, 24. Prov. xii. 22. xix. 5. 9. Rev. xxi. 8. e Jer. ix.
2, 3. 6. xv. 10. Mic. vii. 1, 2. 2 Pet. ii. 7, 8. Rev. ii. 13. f Gen. x. 2. Ez. xxvii.
13. Meshech. g Gen. xxv. 13. Cant. i. 5. Is. lx. 6, 7. Jer. xlix. 28, 29.

5 ^e Woe is me, that I sojourn in
^f Mesech, that I dwell in ^g the tents of
Kedar!

NOTES.

PSALM CXX. *Title.* No satisfactory reason has been assigned, why this and the fourteen following psalms are entitled “Songs of degrees.” Some think it denotes, that they are peculiarly suited to mount the soul from earth to heaven: but others suppose that this title only relates to the manner, in which they were set to musick, and sung at the temple.—“This psalm seems to have been made by David, when the calumnies of Doeg and others forced him to flee his country.” *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 1, 2. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xxxi. 17, 18. xxxv. 11, 12. lii. 2—4. cxxx. 1, 2. *Matt.* xxvi. 57—62.)—“From lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue,” God alone can deliver the most blameless of men: but eventually, in answer to their prayer he will deliver them; and for this deliverance let them patiently wait. (*Notes*, xxxvii. 5—8. *Is.* liv. 15—17. *Mic.* vii. 8—10.)

V. 3. Or, “What shall a false tongue give to thee? And what shall it add to thee?”—“What profit do you expect from this lying and slandering?”—“What fruit had ye in those things, of which ye are now ashamed?” (*Notes*, *Job* xxvii. 7—10. *Rom.* vi. 21—23.)

V. 4. The intenseness and duration of the misery of those who slandered the servants of God, are represented by the vehement and lasting heat, which the wood of the juniper-tree is said to yield, after it is reduced to charcoal; and also by the sharp arrows of a mighty warrior, when he overtakes his enemy. Some however think, that the slandering tongue is described under these images:—“It is as the sharp arrows of the mighty man, &c.” (*Marg.—Notes*, lvii. 4. lix. 7. *Prov.* xii. 18, 19. *Jam.* iii. 3—12.)

V. 5. It is probable, that David never actually resided in Mesech or Kedar, that is, in Arabia; but the conduct of Saul, and Doeg, and the Ziphites, was so treacherous and impious, that he seemed to have his dwelling among the wild Arabs, who subsisted by war and violence. (*Notes*, *Jer.* ix. 1—6. xv. 10. *Mic.* vii. 1—4.) Some render the word *Mesech*, not as the name of a people, but adverbially:—“Woe is me, that I sojourn so long, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar.”—Thus our Lord says, “How long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you?”

6 My ^h soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.

7 I am ⁱ for ⁱ peace: but ^k when I speak, they are for war.

PSALM CXXI.

The Psalmist expects help from God; and shews the security of the church, and of every believer, under the constant protection of the Almighty, 1—8.

^a A Song of degrees.

I^b WILL ^b lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

2 ^c My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.

^h lvii. 4. 1 Sam. xx. 30—33. Ez. ii. 6. *Matt.* x. 16. 36. *Tit.* iii. 3. Or, a man of peace. i xxxiv. 14. xxxv. 20. lv. 20. 2 Sam. xx. 19. *Matt.* v. 9. *Rom.* xii. 18. Eph. ii. 14—17. Heb. xii. 14. k 1 Sam. xxiv. 9—11. xxxvii. 2—4.

^a cxx. title. Or, Shall I lift up mine eyes to the hills? whence should my help come? *Jer.* iii. 23.

b ii. 6. lxxviii. 15, 16. lxxxviii. 68. lxxxvii. 1. cxxiii. 1. Is. ii. 3. c xvi. 1. cxxiv. 8. cxlvi. 5, 6. 1s. xl. 28, 29. xli. 13. *Jer.* xx. 11. Heb. xiii. 6.

V. 7. *I am for peace.*] Or “I, peace.” David, though valiant in war, loved peace, and was very desirous of it: but his wise and blameless conduct only served to excite still more the envy and enmity of Saul and his courtiers. (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, *Rom.* xii. 17—21.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

While we look, not to David only, but to Jesus “the Prince of peace,” and see him surrounded by ensnaring cavillers, and calumniated by lying lips and deceitful tongues; while we consider how long the holy Saviour sojourned in this wicked world, “as in Mesech and in the tents of Kedar;” while we attend to his blameless, useful life, and the great object of his coming into the world, namely, “to make” and give “peace by the blood of his cross;” and then view him hated, reviled, and persecuted even to death, by the professed worshippers of God: we cannot marvel, if the world hate and slander us too; we shall not court the friendship of those, who would wage war with the Son of God himself, if he were again on earth; and, though uneasy, we ought not to murmur, at being for a time constrained to dwell amidst the contentious and malicious. But let us follow David, as he prefigured Christ; in our distress let us “cry unto the LORD, and he will hear us;” and deliver our persons and reputations from lying lips, and every deceitful tongue. Let us possess our souls in patience, and follow after peace and holiness, and strive to overcome evil with good. Then, after our weary pilgrimage shall expire, we shall enter a land of eternal harmony, purity, and tranquillity. And as we must foresee the dreadful misery of all impenitent slanderers and liars, in the everlasting fire of hell; let us in meekness warn them of their danger, “if peradventure God will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.” (*Note*, 2 *Tim.* ii. 23—26.)

NOTES.

PSALM CXXI. V. 1, 2. Some read the first verse as an interrogation, “Shall I lift up, &c?” (*marg.*) as if the Psalmist had enquired whether it became him, as a wor-

d xci. 12. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Prov. ii. 8. iii. 23. 26. 1 Pet. i. 5.

e xxvii. 1. xxxii. 7. 8. cxxvii. 1. Is. xxvii. 3.

f 1 Kings xviii. 27. Ec. viii. 16. Rev. f vii. 15.

g Ex. xiii. 21. Is. iv. 5. 6. xxv. 4. xxxii. 2. Matt. xxiii. 37.

h xvi. 8. cix. 31. i xci. 5—10. Is. xlix. 10. Rev. vii. 16.

k xci. 9. 10. Job v. 19. &c. Prov. xii. 21. Matt. vi. 13. Rom. viii. 28. 33—39. 2 Tim. iv. 18.

3 He ^d will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

4 Behold, ^e he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The LORD is thy Keeper; the LORD is ^g thy Shade ^h upon thy right hand.

6 The ⁱ sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

7 The LORD shall ^k preserve thee

from all evil: ^l he shall preserve thy ^{xxxiv. 22. xxvii. 10. cxlv. 20.} soul.

8 The LORD shall preserve ^m thy going out, and thy coming in, ⁿ from this time forth, and even for evermore. ^{m Dent. xxviii. 6. 19. 2 Sam. v. 2. Ezra viii. 21. 31. Prov. ii. 8. iii. 6. Jam. iv. 13—16. n cxiii. 2. cxv 18.}

PSALM CXXII.

David expresses his joy at being called on to go up to the sanctuary; and he extols the holy city, 1—5. He exhorts the people to pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and resolves to seek her good, 6—9.

shipper of God, to look up to those hills for help, on which idolaters worshipped their idols. But the sentence, as it stands in our version, may mean, that he would look up to the hill of Zion, or Moriah, on which the tabernacle was placed, for help from that God, whose glory appeared above the mercy-seat.—If David was the writer of this psalm, (as is most probable,) and if it be explained as it stands in our version; it must relate to other dangers and difficulties, and not to those of his persecutions by Saul; for the hill of Zion was not in Israel's possession, nor was the ark placed there, till after Saul's death. (*Notes*, 2 Sam. v. 6—9. vi. 12, 13.)—‘Though I am driven, not only from my own palace, but from God's dwelling-place; yet my eyes shall be ever directed thitherward; from whence I expect a powerful aid against those numerous enemies, that are combined to destroy me.’ *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 3, 4 (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xvi. 8—11. xxxvii. 23, 24. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Prov. iii. 23—25.)—‘Bishop Lowth supposeth the first two verses to be the language of David, when going out to war; and the answer of encouragement to be made by the high priest from the holy place.’ *Bp. Horne*.—If, however, the psalm was written when David was driven away from Jerusalem by Absalom, this could not be: yet, it seems to have been composed, in order to be sung responsively; and these verses form the response to the preceding avowal of confidence in God.—‘In him thou hast a Guardian, who is not like all others, liable to remit his care, by being subject to sleep or death. The eye of his Providence is upon thee, and that is always open. Behold, He that keepeth Israel neither slumbereth nor sleepeth.’ *Bp. Horne*. (*Notes*, xlv. 23—26. 1 Kings xviii. 27—29.)

He will not suffer, &c. (3) ^{לֹא יִסְּרֶנּוּ}. This might perhaps be more literally rendered as a prayer; and the two verses translated in connexion thus:—“May he not suffer thy foot to be moved! may he who keepeth thee not slumber! Behold, he will not slumber, neither will he sleep, keeping Israel.” The former verse appears to be the language of supplication; the latter, of assured confidence. This marked difference between the Hebrew negative particles ^{לֹא} and ^{אֵין} is generally observed by our Translators; and this is one of the very few instances of the contrary.

V. 5—8. As the pillar of cloud and fire shaded Israel in the wilderness, from the scorching noon-day sun, and from the chilling cold and unwholesome influences of the night, over which the moon presides; (*Note*, Gen. xxxi. 40;) so the Lord shelters his people from every open as-

sault, and every insidious attempt of persecutors, seducers, or the powers of darkness. (*Notes*, Ex. xiii. 21, 22. Num. x. 33, 34. Matt. vi. 13. 2 Tim. iv. 16—18.)

- ‘Nor scorching sun, nor sickly moon,
- ‘ Shall have his leave to smite;
- ‘ He shields thy head from burning noon,
- ‘ From blasting damps at night.
- ‘ He guards thy soul, he keeps thy breath,
- ‘ Where thickest dangers come;
- ‘ Go and return, secure from death,
- ‘ Till God commands thee home.’

Watts.

—‘He sheweth that God's providence not only watcheth over his church in general; but also over every member thereof.’ (*Notes*, xci. 3—12. cxxv. 1, 2. Job v. 20—27.)—For evermore. (8) *Notes*, xxxvii. 37, 38. xlviii. 14. lxxiii. 23—28.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

During the believer's wearisome pilgrimage and perilous warfare, he should constantly look unto him, who bled on mount Calvary, and who now reigns upon the holy hill of Zion; in whom “we have righteousness and strength,” through whom we have access to the mercy-seat, and to JEHOVAH as our Father, and by whom we shall ere long be received into everlasting mansions.—The Helper and “Keeper of Israel” is the almighty Creator of heaven and earth; and “if he be for us, who can be against us?” (*Notes*, Rom. viii. 28—39.) We should then enquire, whether we belong to this holy nation, this peculiar people; which being ascertained, we may dismiss our anxious cares and fears; or only be careful to use the appointed means, and be found employed in our proper work. (*Notes*, Matt. vi. 25—32. Phil. iv. 5—7.) The Lord will “uphold our goings in his ways, that our footsteps slip not.” He “neither slumbereth nor sleepeth;” he will keep his people night and day, in dangers, snares, temptations, and persecutions; from open and secret enemies: he will preserve them from all real evil, and make all seeming evil work together for their good: he will protect their lives, during the appointed period, and order all the circumstances of their departure: he will preserve their souls, and take care of them in going out and coming in; when present with their bodies, and when separated, and when again united to them, from this time forth for evermore. (*Notes*, lxxxiv. 11, 12. 2 Cor. v. 5—8. Phil. i. 21—26. iii. 20, 21.) “Happy are the people that are in such a case; yea, blessed are the people, who have the LORD for their God.”

a cxx. — cxxxiv. titles.

b xlii. 4. lv. 14. lxiii. 1—3. lxxxiv. 1, 2, 10. cxix. 111.

c Is. ii. 3. Jer. xxxi. 6. 1. 4, 5. Mic. iv. 2. Zech. viii. 21—23.

d lxxxiv. 7. lxxxvii. 1—3. c. 4. Ex. xx. 24. 2 Chr. vi. 6.

e 2 Sam. v. 9. Eph. ii. 20, 21. iv. 4—7. Rev. xxi. 10, &c.

f lxxviii. 68. cxxxii. 13. Ex. xxxiii. 17. xxxiv. 23, 24. Deut. xii. 5, 11. xvi. 16.

g Ex. xvi. 34. xxvi. 33, 34. xxxii. 15.

h lxvii. 13—16. cvii. 1—3. cxvi. 17—19. cxviii. 19.

a A Song of degrees of David.

I WAS glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the LORD.

2 Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

3 Jerusalem is 'builded as a city that is compact together;

4 Whither 'the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, unto 'the testimony of Israel, 'to give thanks unto the name of the LORD.

5 For 'there *are set thrones of judgment, 'the thrones of the house of David.

6 'Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: 'they shall prosper that love thee.

7 'Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity 'within thy palaces.

8 For 'my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee.

9 Because of 'the house of the LORD our God, 'I will seek thy good.

i Deut. xvii. 18. 2 Chr. xix. 8. * Heb. do sit. k 2 Sam. viii. 18. 2 Chr. xi. 22. l li. 18. cxxxvii. 6, 7. Jer. li. 50. John xvii. 21. Eph. iv. 3. 2 Thes. iii. 16. m Gen. xii. 3. Num. xxiv. 9. 1 John iii. 14. n 1 Chr. xii. 18. Is. ix. 7. liv. 13. John xiv. 27. Jam. iii. 18. o xlviii. 3. p xvi. 3. xlii. 4. cxix. 63. Eph. iv. 4—6. Phil. ii. 2—5. Jam. iii. 13—18. q xxvi. 8. lxix. 9. lxxxiv. 1, 2, 10. 1 Chr. xxix. 3. John ii. 17. r cii. 13, 14. cxxxvii. 5, 6. Neh. ii. 10. xiii. 14.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXII. V. 1, 2. This psalm seems to have been written for the use of the Israelites, when they went up to Jerusalem, after the ark was removed thither, to celebrate their sacred feasts, and to have communion with God and with their brethren. Their journey would often be inconvenient, wearisome, and expensive: but the holy joy and benefit, which thence accrued, would amply repay them. (Notes, lxxxiv. 4—10.) 'David ... being, at this 'time, upon some occasion in the country, heard the good 'people there speak one to another, as some of them did 'to him, of going to worship God, at some of the three 'solemn feasts; which devotion of their's, as it rejoiced 'his heart, so it moved him, I conjecture, to compose this 'psalm for their use, at such times.' Bp. Patrick.—Jerusalem was typical both of the church of true believers, and of the heavenly state; and the solemnities of Israel were, like our public ordinances, acts of sacred worship; and, when attended on in faith and love, were earnest and foretastes of the worship and joy of heaven.—It may be supposed, that the Psalmist greatly rejoiced, not only in anticipating the pleasure of attending on the ordinances of God, but also in perceiving the people generally and zealously disposed to the duties of religion. (Notes, xxvii. 4—6. xlii. 1—5. lxiii. 1—6. lxvi. 13, 14. xcv. 1—6. cxvi. 17—19. cxviii. 19—24. cxxxii. 7—10. Is. ii. 2—5. lxvi. 19—23. Jer. i. 4—6. Mic. iv. 1—5.)

V. 3—5. 'By the artificial joining and beauty of the 'houses, he meaneth the concord and love that was between the citizens.' (Notes, Eph. ii. 19—22. iv. 1—6. 11—13. Rev. xxi. 9—27.)—Jerusalem, from the time of David, was considered as the centre of the worship and government of Israel, and as the bond of union among the tribes: and while that city remained compact and united, as their common head, they were safe and prosperous. The union also of the priesthood in Aaron's family, with the kingdom in that of David, was very advantageous to their common interests civil and religious; when justice was administered according to the law of God, and regal authority protected and supported the worship of God at his temple.—This typified the union of the priesthood and kingdom in the person of the Redeemer. (Notes, Zech. vi. 12, 13. Heb. viii. 1, 2.)—David's sons were 'chief rulers,' soon after the removal of the ark to mount Zion; (2 Sam. viii. 18;) so that the thrones of his family,

as well as his own throne, were then established at Jerusalem.—Testimony. (4) Note, Ex. xxv. 10—21.

V. 6, 7. 'The members of the Israelitish church are 'exhorted to pray for its peace and welfare. What that 'church was, the Christian church militant upon earth 'now is, and demandeth in like manner the prayers of all 'Christian people, for its peace and welfare in a troublesome and contentious world. Its increase here below is, 'in reality, the increase of Jerusalem above, of which it 'is a part, and ought to be a resemblance.' Bp. Horne.—'Happy shall they be, who out of love to the religion 'and justice administered in thee, O beloved city, contribute their endeavours, as well as their prayers, for thy 'safety and prosperity.' Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, li. 18, 19. cxxxvii. 1—6. Gen. xii. 1—3.)

V. 8, 9. The Psalmist concludes, by declaring his full purpose of using his authority and influence for the benefit of the holy city, from love to his brethren and his pious friends, but especially from love to God and his sacred service. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Chr. xxix. 3—19.) Thus he gave all rulers, through succeeding generations, an example, in what manner to improve their talents, in promoting true religion among their subjects, without at all infringing on the rights of conscience. (Notes, 2 Chr. xxx. 12. Is. xlix. 22, 23. P. O. Ez. xlvi. 1—15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The servants of God should exhort others, and be glad to be exhorted themselves, to attend on his ordinances. Indeed those who love his name and seek his salvation, will "rejoice when it is said unto them, Let us go into "the house of the LORD;" and the pleasure and profit, which they derive from 'the means of grace,' will make the zealous believer disregard inconvenience and fatigue in resorting thither. With what alacrity then should we think of going to the temple above, when our feet shall stand within the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem! and how cheerfully should we bear the cross while we live, and welcome the stroke of death, in hopes of that immortal crown of glory!—Union and harmony are the ornament and stability of the church on earth: and if all the disciples of Christ were of one mind, and "endeavoured to keep the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," their enemies would be deprived of their chief advantage against them. And if they were all more attentive to the commands of the Son of David, and more submissive to his authority,

PSALM CXXIII.

The Psalmist, (or the church and every true believer,) expresses confidence in God, and complains

^a *cxix.* — *cxixiv.* of the contempt of the proud, 1—4.

^b *xxv.* 15. *cxix.* 1.
cxli. 8. Luke
xviii. 13.

^c *ii.* 4. *xi.* 4. *cxiii.*
5. 6. *cxv.* 3. *Is.*
lvii. 15. *lxvi.* 1.
Matt. vi. 9.

^d *Josh.* ix. 23. 27.

^e *x.* 6.

^f *xi.* 1—3. *cxix.*
82. 123—125.

^g *cxix.* 5, 6. *Gen.*

^h *cxix.* 26. *xlix.*
18. *Lam.* iii. 25.

ⁱ 26. Luke *xviii.*
1.

^a A Song of degrees.

UNTO thee ^b lift I up mine eyes,

^c O thou that dwellest in the heavens.

2 Behold, ^d as the eyes of servants
look unto the hand of their masters,
and as the eyes of a maiden unto the
hand of her mistress; ^e so our eyes

wait upon the LORD our God, until
that he have mercy upon us.

3 'Have mercy upon us, O LORD, ^f have mercy upon us; ^g for we are exceedingly filled with contempt.

4 Our soul is exceedingly filled
^h with the scorning of those that are
at ease, and with the contempt of the
proud.

PSALM CXXIV.

Israel blesses God for marvellous deliverances, and
exults in his protection, 1—8.

^f *lvii.* 1, 2. *lvii.* 1.
lxix. 13—16.
Luke *xviii.* 11—
13.
^g *xliv.* 13—16.
lxxxix. 50, 51.
Neh. iv. 2—4.
Is. liii. 3. Luke
xvi. 14. *xxiii.* 35.
^h *lxxiii.* 5—9.
cxix. 51. *Job.* xii.
5. *xvi.* 4. *Jer.*
xlviii. 11. 27. 29.
Acts. xvii. 21. 32.
xxvi. 24. 1 *Cor.*
iv. 13.

and referred their causes to his decision; they would be more like "the tribes of Israel," even the "tribes of the LORD, when they went up to the testimony of Israel," (the ark of the covenant and the mercy-seat,) "to give thanks unto the name of the LORD." But Satan's maxim has always been, to divide that he might conquer: and few Christians have been sufficiently aware of his design. Let all then, who love the cause of pure religion, "pray for the peace," in order to the prosperity of the church. Let us consider every one, who bears the image and seeks the glory of the Redeemer, as our brother, our companion, our fellow-traveller, and our fellow-soldier; without greatly regarding unessential differences, or secular distinctions. Let us seek the peace and comfort of every true believer, the union and harmony of Christians among themselves, the security of the church against the assaults and devices of the common enemy, and the prosperity of all, whether in palaces or cottages, who use their influence and abilities to promote the cause of Christ, from love to his name. Let us, from zeal for the honour of our God, and good will to all our brethren, and delight in the ordinances of his house, seek to do good to every part of his church, by our prayers and example, and by every means in our power: and, while we lament the abuses and divisions which prevail in the church on earth, let us solace ourselves with a foresight of the perfect harmony and tranquillity of the church in heaven; for perfect "peace will for ever be within her walls, and prosperity "within her palaces."

NOTES.

PSALM CXXIII. V. 1. Some think, that this psalm was composed for the use of the church, during the Babylonish captivity, or when persecuted by Antiochus Epiphanes: but others suppose it to have been written by Isaiah, on occasion of the scoffing boasts and menaces of Sennacherib and Rabshakeh; while others are of opinion that David wrote it during Absalom's rebellion. (*Notes*, xi. 4, 5. *cxv.* 3—7. *cxix.* 1, 2. *Is.* lvii. 15, 16. *Matt.* vi. 9.)

V. 2. The worshippers of God, while suffering heavy things from his enemies, for obeying him, and threatened with still severer miseries; yet adhering stedfastly to his service, and obeying his commands; expected, and patiently waited for, deliverance from God; as faithful servants depend on their masters for redress and protection, while employed in their proper work. But the

assailant may be so powerful, that the master cannot protect or rescue his servant, nor the mistress her maiden; so that these may look in vain: but our God is both able, and faithful, and merciful, to deliver all who wait on him. (*Notes*, *cxvi.* 16. *Josh.* ix. 25—27. *x.* 1—6.)

V. 3, 4. These verses represent the Psalmist, and those in whose name he speaks, as living on scorn and contempt, even as a man lives on his daily provisions, till they were satiated with them, and knew not how to endure any more; yet still exposed to the insulting scoffs and taunts of their prosperous and haughty oppressors: but in this extremity they humbly sought mercy from God, to pardon their sins, and to comfort them under the cruel treatment of their enemies; and they renounced all other hope of support and deliverance, unreservedly committing their cause into his hand. (*Notes*, *xliv.* 9—16. *lxxiii.* 5—9. *lxxxix.* 50, 51. *cxix.* 50—53. *Neh.* iv. 4, 5.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Our merciful God, from his throne in the heavens, (that high, holy, and glorious palace, where he displays his more immediate presence,) looks down to behold the affairs of men, and hear the prayers of his afflicted people; being able and ready to redress their grievances, whenever they look up to him for help and deliverance. If then we are become his servants, by faith in Jesus Christ; if we rely on his mercy, observe his directions, and expect our recompence from him, and not from man: we may also confidently look to him as our Master, to provide for, comfort, and defend us; and he will certainly require it of all those, who interrupt, or injure us, whilst employed in his work. Being thus observant of his hand, and waiting for his mercy, we need not be disconcerted, if we meet with scorn and insults from the pampered worldling, or the proud infidel, from the sensual, self-indulgent, and prosperous sons of rebellion and impiety. Indeed contempt is very hard to bear: but the servants of God should not complain, if they are treated as his beloved Son was; and they cannot be more filled than he was with "the scorning of those that are at ease, and the contempt of the proud." Let us then, when ready to faint under this trial, look unto Jesus, copy his meekness and patience, and by faith and prayer cast ourselves upon the mercy of our God. (*Notes*, *Heb.* xii. 1—3.) Ere long the proud and luxurious scorner will be "filled with his own devices;" and the despise believer will inherit the throne of glory.

B. C. 1040.

a cxx. — cxxiv.

titles.

b xxvii. 1. xlv. 7.

11. liv. 4. lvi. 9.

cxviii. 6. 7. Is.

viii. 9. 10. Rom.

viii. 31. Heb.

xiii. 5. 6.

c cxxix. 1.

d ii. 1. 2. iii. 1.

xxii. 12. 13. 16.

xxxvii. 32. Num.

xvi. 2. 3.

e xxvii. 2. xxxv.

25. lvi. 1. 2. lvi. 3.

lxxiv. 8. lxxxiii. 4.

Esth. iii. 6. 12. 13.

f Num. xvi. 30—

34. Prov. i. 12.

Jer. li. 34. Jon.

i. 17.

g lxxvi. 10. 1 Sam.

xx. 30—33. Dan.

iii. 19. Matt. ii.

16. Acts ix. 2.

xxvii. 11.

h xviii. 4. xlii. 7.

lxix. 15. Is. viii.

7. 8. xxxviii. 2. lxx.

19. Jer. xlv. 7. 8.

Dan. ix. 26. Rev. xii. 15. 16. xvii. 1. 15.

i xciii. 3. 4. Job xxxviii. 11. Jer. v. 22.

^a A Song of degrees of David.**I**F it had not been ^b the LORD who was on our side, ^c now may Israel say;**2** If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, ^d when men rose up against us:**3** Then ^e they had ^f swallowed us up quick, when ^g their wrath was kindled against us:**4** Then ^h the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul:**5** Then ⁱ the proud waters had gone over our soul.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXIV. V. 1—3. The title ascribes this psalm to David: so that, abiding by this authority, we must look for the occasion of it in the history of that prince; though it is not easy to determine the particular deliverance to which it refers.—It may, however, be applied to any season of special danger or distress to the church, or to believers, from which they have been beyond expectation rescued.—Had Israel's Helper been any other than the almighty and everlasting God, their numerous, powerful, and furious enemies must at once have destroyed them; as a voracious beast, or bird of prey, or sea-monster, swallows alive the helpless animal which falls in its way.—Israel had no power to deliver himself; and all other help, but that of God, must have been ineffectual.—This seems peculiarly suited to Hezekiah's deliverance from Sennacherib; to which some learned men, notwithstanding the title, suppose the psalm to refer. (*Notes*, 2 Kings xix.) It would equally suit Israel's deliverance from Pharaoh and his army. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, Ex. xiv. xv.) Indeed the omnipotence of God our Saviour alone has preserved his church in every age amidst all the persecutions from without, and the treachery and corruption from within, together with the rage, and subtlety, and power of Satan and his angels; or it must long since have been destroyed from the face of the earth.

V. 4—8. Overwhelming torrents, or the furious waves of the stormy sea; (*Notes*, xlii. 6—8. Is. viii. 6—8. Rev. xii. 13—17;) the voracious jaws of lions, tigers, or wolves; and the craft and skill of the fowler, in deceiving and ensnaring the poor unsuspecting bird; form three striking illustrations of the danger, to which the people of God had been exposed from their fierce, violent, and deceitful enemies. Yet God had wonderfully delivered them; and they were filled with admiring gratitude, when they recollected the extreme danger to which they had been exposed, and found themselves brought into a secure and happy situation. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, 2 Tim. ii. 23—26.) And as God had helped them, they were determined to confide as to the future in his protection alone. (*Notes*, xlv. 5—7. cxlvi. 3—6.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The church of God, in every age, has been opposed by multitudes of powerful, enraged, and cruel enemies: fierce

6 Blessed be the LORD, ^k who hath ^k not given us as a prey to their teeth.

7 Our ^l soul is escaped ^m as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped.

8 Our ⁿ help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

PSALM CXXV.

The security of the faithful, 1—3. A prayer for them, and a prediction of the ruin of apostates and of the ungodly, 4, 5.

^a A Song of degrees.**T**HEY ^b that trust in the LORD shall

persecutions, bloody wars and massacres, and wide spreading destructive heresies, have alternately threatened to swallow her up; as the furious billows were ready to overwhelm the feeble bark, in which Jesus was asleep. But, notwithstanding the machinations of hell, in aid of the efforts of human malice and power, the despised cause of Christ still maintains its ground: "the proud waters" have not yet overwhelmed and swallowed her up. "Blessed be the LORD, who hath not given her up as a prey unto the teeth" of her furious enemies. But, recollecting her dangers and helplessness, well may she say, "If it had not been the LORD, who was on our side, we should have been swallowed up quick, when men," when the powers of darkness, "were so enraged at us."—The believer also, recollecting his perilous situation previous to his conversion, and the surprising manner in which he has been rescued, the dangers from which he has often narrowly escaped, and the difficulties from which he has been extricated, notwithstanding his own ignorance, folly, and feebleness; will readily make the same thankful acknowledgment, and ascribe all the honour of his salvation to the power, mercy, and truth of Israel's God. He will consider himself as a ship-wrecked mariner marvellously saved from the tumultuous waves; as a poor lamb snatched from the jaws of the greedy wolf; or as the helpless bird set at liberty from the fowler's snare, in which it had heedlessly got entangled. Ere long every true Christian, being finally delivered from troubles, enemies, sins, and dangers, will look back on the way, in which the Lord has led him, with admiring gratitude; and celebrate his mercy and truth in eternal songs of praise. Let us then *now* begin to praise him for the past, "if indeed Satan's snare be broken, and we be delivered;" and let us rejoice that our help, for the time to come, "is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth." Thus let us stand prepared ere long, to join with rapturous exultation, the song of the redeemed in heaven, "saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb. ... Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen." (*Note*, Rev. vii. 9—12.)

NOTES.

PSALM CXXV. V. 1. It does not clearly appear on

c cxxxii. 13, 14. Is. xii. 6. xiv. 22. li. 3. 11. 16. lii. 1. 7. removed, ^d but abideth for ever.

2 As ^e the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so ^f the LORD is round about his people from henceforth, even for ever.

3 For ^g the rod of ^h the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous; lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.

4 ⁱ Do good, O LORD, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts.

5 As for ^k such as turn aside unto

their ^l crooked ways, the LORD shall lead them forth ^m with the workers of iniquity: but ⁿ peace shall be upon Israel.

PSALM CXXVI.

The joyful surprise of the Jews, when delivered from captivity, 1—3. A prayer for a more complete deliverance; with assurances of a happy event to all the sorrows of God's people, 4—6.

^a A Song of degrees.

WHEN the LORD ^{*} turned again the captivity of Zion, we were ^b like them that dream.

l Prov. ii. 15. Is. lix. 8. Phil. ii. 15.
m Matt. vii. 23. xxiv. 48—51.
n cxxxviii. 6. Is. liv. 10. 13. Ez. xxxvii. 26. Hos. ii. 18. John xiv. 27. Gal. vi. 16. 1 Pet. i. 2.

a cxx — cxxv. titles.
• Heb. returned the returning of Zion. liii. 6. lxxxv. 1. Ezra i. Job xlii. 10. Jer. xxxi. 8—10. Hos. vi. 11. Joel iii. 1. b Job ix. 16. Mark xvi. 11. Luke xxiv. 11. 41. Acts xii. 9. 14—16.

what occasion, or by whom, this Psalm was written: some however consider it, as referring to the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib, and the miraculous deliverance granted to Jerusalem, in answer to the prayers of Hezekiah and Isaiah. (Notes, 2 Kings xix.)—The security of the church implies the security of every true member of it. (Note, Matt. xvi. 18.)

V. 2. "Jerusalem, the mountains are round about her. And the LORD is round about his people from henceforth for evermore." This is a literal translation. The surrounding mountains only seemed to render the holy city impregnable: (Notes, Lam. iv. 12. Zech. ii. 1—5:) but the power of the almighty God, through the intercession of our heavenly Advocate, and his everlasting covenant, effectually secures his true people. (Notes, Rom. viii. 28—39.) 'While her inhabitants' (Jerusalem's) 'continued to trust in the Lord, this was the case. But when they became faithless and disobedient, she became weak, and like another city. Let not our "trust in God" be a presumptuous ungrounded assurance; but let it be a confidence springing from faith unfeigned, out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and fervent charity.' Bp. Horne.

V. 3. The persecuting rage and power of the wicked fall upon the righteous, but they do not "rest upon them," or prevent them from possessing and enjoying their allotted inheritance. (Marg. Ref.) Persecutions and oppressions, as well as other afflictive dispensations, are permitted, moderated, and sanctified, for their trial, correction, and spiritual proficiency: but if augmented and continued, according to the desire of their enemies, they might become too powerful a temptation, and at length induce them to put forth their hands unto iniquity. (Notes, lxxvi. 10. Is. xxvii. 7—11. Matt. xxiv. 21, 22. 1 Cor. x. 13.)

V. 4, 5. Uprightness before God, and kindness to men, characterize true believers, for whom the Psalmist here prays, that God would do them good, or, deal gently, kindly, and mercifully with them, according to his faithful promises. But as to those who "turn aside unto their crooked ways," the Lord would "lead them forth," and allot them their portion with such as had always been "workers of iniquity;" (Notes, Ez. iii. 20, 21. Hab. ii. 4. Zeph. i. 6. Heb. x. 35—39. 2 Pet. ii. 20—22;) while peace would still be continued to Israel, to the nation as a body, and to all true Israelites. (lxxiii. 1.)

Crooked. (5) The way of holiness is straight: there are

no windings or shiftings in it: it is a uniform course of piety, integrity, sincerity, and kindness. But the ways of sinners are crooked: they shift from one pursuit to another, and turn hither and thither to deceive; they wind about a thousand ways, to conceal their base intentions, to accomplish their iniquitous projects, or to escape the punishment of their crimes: yet disappointment, detection, confusion, and misery, are their inevitable portion. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Is. lix. 3—8, v. 8. Heb. xii. 12, 13.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The people of God trust in his mercy, truth, and power, and keep his commandments: they copy his example of goodness; and, with all their defects, are "upright in their hearts." Their hopes and their souls are built upon that tried and precious Foundation, which God has laid in Zion; on which the whole church is founded, and which "cannot be removed, but abideth for ever:" yea, the Lord himself is with them, and a Protection round about them, "from henceforth even for ever." Their dread of sin, and of apostasy, and their prayers to be kept from them, though by suffering or death, are the evidences that they shall not apostatize: for the Lord will proportion their strength to their trials, and make "all things work together for their good;" the malice and enmity of the wicked shall only prove a correcting rod, and not a destroying sword; even this rod shall not "rest upon them," lest they faint under the chastisement: and not only the prayers of their brethren, but the intercession of their Saviour, secure to them the upholding power and preserving grace of God.—"As for such as turn back unto their crooked ways," they never were "upright in their hearts:" and their apostasy is the detection of their hypocrisy. Their knowledge, conviction, and profession, will but enhance their condemnation, and "the LORD shall lead them forth with evil-doers; but "peace shall be upon" every "Israelite indeed, in whom "there is no guile." LORD, number us with them, in time and to eternity!

NOTES.

PSALM CXXVI. V. 1—3. This psalm is generally thought to have been composed, when the Jews were restored to their own land after the Babylonish captivity. Their restoration was effected in so sudden and extraordinary a manner, and was so delightful to them, that it

c xiv. 7. liii. 6. cvi. 47, 48. Ezra iii. 11. Job viii. 21. Is. xxxv. 10. xlix. 9—13. Jer. xxxi. 12, 13. xxxiii. 11. Rev. xi. 15—17.

2 Then ^c was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: ^d then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath ^e done great things for them.

d Num. xxiii. 23. Josh. ii. 9—11. ix. 9, 10. Neh. vi. 16. Zech. viii. 22, 23. Rom. xi. 15.

3 The ^e LORD hath done great things for us, *whereof* we are glad.

* Heb. magnified to do with them. e xviii. 50. xxxi. 19. lxvi. 5, 6. lxviii. 7, 8, 22. Ezra vii. 27, 28. Is. xi. 11—16. xii. 4—6. li. 9—11. lii. 9, 10. lxvi. 14. Luke i. 46—49. Eph. i. 18—22. Rev. xii. 10. xix. 1—7.

4 'Turn again our captivity, O LORD, ^g as the streams in the south.

5 They ^h that sow in tears shall reap in ⁱ joy.

6 He ^j that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing ^k precious seed, ^k shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves *with him*.

k Is. ix. 2, 3. Luke xv. 18—24. Acts xvi. 29—34. Rev. vii. 15—17.

f See onl.—lxxxv. 4. Hos. i. 11. g Josh. iii. 16. Is. xli. 18. h cxxxvii. 1. Is. xii. 1—3. Jer. xxxi. 9—13. Joel ii. 17. 23. Matt. v. 4. John xvi. 20—22. 2 Cor. vii. 8—11. i Or, singing. i xxx. 5. Job xi. 13—17. Is. lxi. 3. Jer. i. 4, 5. Gal. vi. 7, 8. j Or, seed basket.

seemed more like a pleasant dream than a reality. (Notes, xiv. 7. cvi. 47, 48. Ezra i. 1—6. iii. 12, 13. Job xlii. 10—17, v. 10. Is. xxix. 7, 8. Jer. xxxi. 8—14.) Even the heathen noted the hand of God in their deliverance, and allowed that he had done great things for them; in which sentiment the people thankfully concurred. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xv. 14—16. Num. xxiii. 23. Josh. ii. 8—11. ix. 8—11. 1 Kings viii. 41—43. 2 Kings xix. 14—19, v. 19. Neh. vi. 15, 16. Zech. viii. 20—23.)—The whole event was typical of the spiritual redemption of the church, and of every believer, from the bondage of sin and Satan: and the peace, and joy, and thanksgiving, which even now are the consequences of it; and of the unspeakable joy and exultation, and praise, which shall attend the completion of it in eternal glory; (Note, 2 Thes. i. 5—10, v. 10:) and the word of God predicts a deliverance of the new testament church from her long-continued captivity, which will occasion still greater surprise and exultation. (Is. xl. 1, 2. xliii. 14—21. Rev. xi. 15—18. xviii. xix.)—*Like them that dream.* (1) Note, Acts xii. 5—11, v. 9.

V. 4. The torrent and the brooks, in the southern deserts, run off and dry up, in the summer-months: but after the periodical rains they return again, and the channels are filled for the refreshment of the thirsty traveller. Thus the Jews, who were settled in their own country, prayed that their brethren might be brought back in much larger numbers, to replenish the land, which had lain so many years desolate. (Note, Job vi. 15—23.)

V. 5, 6. The poor husbandman, who perhaps wants his seed-corn to feed his family; and cannot part with it, and witness their hunger, without tears; and, who with great labour and anxiety sows his good seed; will in due time rejoice in reaping and conveying home a plenteous harvest. So the tears, with which the poor captives at Babylon had accompanied their repentance and prayers; the grief with which on their return they beheld, and attempted to repair, the desolations of their city and temple; and all the hardships, which they endured in that pious attempt; would surely issue in joy and praise. (Notes, Ezra i. 5, 6. iii. 12, 13.)—"In going forth he shall go forth, and with weeping, "carrying the precious seed: coming he shall come again, "with shouting, carrying his sheaves." (Note, Gen. xlvii. 23—26. Is. xvi. 8—11.) The same is applicable to all the sorrows of the true Christian. (Notes, Is. xii. 1—3. Jer. xxxi. 8—14. Matt. v. 4. John xvi. 16—22. 2 Cor. vii. 9—11. 2 Tim. ii. 3—7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The hand of God should be acknowledged in all our mercies, whoever be the instrument of them: and if unexpected deliverance from outward captivity be so highly valued, and so greatly rejoiced in; how ought we to value

redemption from the wrath to come, and from the power of sin and Satan! The poor trembling sinner, being deeply convinced of his guilt and danger, having long sought and waited, perhaps with discouragement, for peace and liberty; when, by looking to a crucified Saviour, he is freed from his burden, and receives peace to his conscience, and power to break off his sins; reviews the misery which he has escaped, the price and method of his rescue, and the prospect which opens to him, and can often scarcely believe his happiness a reality. The phantoms of a dream, or the sportive illusions of the waking imagination, could never present to his mind any thing so welcome, as he now by faith perceives, and by grace experiences. Thus "is his "mouth filled with laughter, and his tongue with singing:" and if his future conduct correspond to this happy beginning, even the ungodly will be constrained to own, that "the LORD hath done great things for him." With what exultation then will the redeemed sinner rejoin, "The LORD hath done great things for me, whereof I am "glad!" Yet still he has to struggle with many temptations, corruptions, and afflictions: he will seek, and not in vain, for renewed and more complete deliverance; he will often on earth renew his songs of grateful praise: but when at last, redeemed from death, he shall stand complete before the throne of glory, he will present his perfect praises with unalloyed rejoicing. We should not then be reluctant to "sow in tears," while we remain in this world of sorrow. When we mourn for our sins, or sympathize with the afflicted, or suffer for Christ's sake, or endure chastisements, we are "sowing in tears to reap in joy." (Notes, Heb. xii. 4—13. 1 Pet. i. 6—9. Rev. vii. 13—17.) But let us be sure that we are sowing *good seed*, thus to be watered with our tears; exercising repentance, faith, love, and patience, continuing instant in prayer, and in the use of every means of grace; and being unwearied in every good work, though we should meet with ingratitude and discouragement from all quarters: then we shall "doubtless come again with joy, bringing our sheaves "with us;" for none of our labours, sorrows, or prayers will be lost; and if others are not profited by them, they will return into our own bosom, and augment our gracious and eternal reward. But, whether we rejoice in present comforts, or solace ourselves under sorrows, in hope of this glorious event, let us not forget our brethren in tribulation: but let us pray for the support of every suffering saint; and for the deliverance of the church from oppression, from the defilement of heresy and iniquity, and from the debilitating effect of division. (Notes, cxxii. 6—9. P. O.)—Let sinners also recollect, how dreadful their case will be, if they have all their little joy in this mourning world, and nothing hereafter but weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth: and let us all remember that "God is not

PSALM CXXVII.

Every labour is vain without the blessing of God, 1,

2. Children are gifts of God, and highly to be valued, 3—5.

* A Song of degrees * for Solomon.

EXCEPT ^b the LORD ^c build the house ^d they labour in vain ^f that build it: ^e except the LORD keep the city, 'the watchman waketh *but* in vain.

2 *It is* ^g vain for you to ^h rise up early, to sit up late, to eat ⁱ the bread

^a cxx—cxcvi. titles.
^b Or, of Solomon. lxxii. title.
^c xxxiii. 16—18. Prov. xvi. 9. xxi. 30, 31. Ec. ix. 11. 1 Cor. iii. 7.
^d 1 Chr. xxii. 6, 11. xxviii. 10, 20. xxix. 19. 1 Cor. iii. 9—15.
^e 1 Cor. xv. 14. Gal. iv. 11.
^f Heb. that are builders of it init.
^g cxxii. 3—5. Ec. xxxvii. 3. Zech. ii. 4, 5.
^h Cant. iii. 3. v. 7. Is. xxi. 5—12. lvi. 10. lxii. 6. Jer. li. 12. 31. Ez. xxxiii. 2—9. xxxix. 5, 6. Ec. i. 14. ii. 1—11. 20—23. iv. 8.

h Prov. xxxi. 15—18.

i Gen. iii. 17—19. Ec. vi. 7.

“mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” (Note, Gal. vi. 6—10.)

NOTES.

PSALM CXXVII. Title. It is probable, that Solomon composed this Psalm, when he succeeded to the throne of Israel, and was about to build the temple: for the title may be read, “A Song of degrees: *A Psalm of Solomon.*” (Note, 1 Kings iv. 30—34. Cant. i. 1.)

V. 1. The duty of constantly and entirely depending on God, in every undertaking, is here inculcated. The Psalmist did not mean, that diligence, vigilance, and skill ought not to be employed; but that God should be depended on, or they would be employed in vain. Paul may plant, and Apollos water; nay, it was their indispensable duty so to do; but God alone gave the increase. (Marg. Ref.—Note, 1 Cor. iii. 4—9.)—The spiritual watchmen also must be vigilant, and faithful in giving warning: yet, without the Lord bless their labours, their watching will be in vain. (Note, Ez. iii. 17—19.) This was very applicable to Solomon’s undertaking of building the temple, and preserving the holy city in peace and safety. (Notes, Zech. iv. 4—10.)

V. 2. Whilst others perplex themselves with fruitless cares, and incessant labours, about their worldly pursuits, often to no purpose; God, in the way of reliance on him, “giveth sleep to his beloved;” *surely*, he giveth his beloved sleep: he enables them to do their duty cheerfully, and to leave the event with him in the confidence of faith, and in submission to his will, and thus to close their eyes in sleep without useless solicitude. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, iii. 3—5. iv. 6—8.)—*His beloved.*] לְיָדָיו, singular. Note, 2 Sam. xii. 24, 25.

V. 3—5. When worldly men are eagerly pursuing their temporal interests, they commonly profess that they only mean to provide for their families after them. But it entirely depends on the Lord, whether they shall have children or not; whether their children shall live with them, and survive them; and whether they will be a comfort or a grief to them. (Notes, Ec. ii. 18—23.) Those however, who trust in God and walk in his ways, may hope to be comforted in their children: receiving them as a heritage from him, and bringing them up in his fear, they may expect, (and they will not generally be disappointed,) that, as they defended their offspring in helpless infancy, so these will be their defence and ornament in the decline of life. (Notes, cxxviii. 3—6. Prov. xvii. 6. xxxi. 13—29, v.

of sorrows: ^kfor so he giveth his beloved sleep.

3 Lo ^lchildren *are* an heritage of the LORD; *and* the fruit of the womb *is* his reward.

4 As ^marrows *are* in the hand of a mighty man; ⁿso *are* children of the youth.

5 ^oHappy *is* the man that hath ^phis quiver full of them: ^qthey shall not be ashamed, but they shall ^rspeak with the enemies in the gate.

^k iii. 5. iv. 8. Ec. v. 12. Jer. xxxi. 26. Ez. xxxiv. 25. Acts xii. 5, 6.
^l cxxviii. 3, 4. Gen. i. 28. xv. 4, 5. xxiv. 60. xxx. 1, 2. xxxiii. 5. xli. 51, 52. xlviii. 4. Deut. xlviii. 4. 1 Sam. i. 19, 20. 27. ii. 20, 21. 1 Chr. xxviii. 5. Is. viii. 18.
^m Jer. l. 9.
ⁿ Prov. xvii. 6. xxxi. 28.
^o Gen. i. 23. Job i. 2. xlii. 12—16.
^p Heb. filled his quiver with them.
^q Job v. 4. Prov. xxvii. 11.
^r Or, subdue. xviii. 47. Or, destroy.

28.) ‘Such children shall be able to stop their adversaries’ mouths, when their godly life is maliciously accused.’—‘In a house full of dutiful children consisteth the happiness of their parents, who then can never want friends; friends that will at no time be ashamed, but will at all times rejoice, to appear for them, to meet their enemies and accusers in the gate, or place of judgment, there to answer any charge against them, to vindicate them in their persons, their good name, or their property. It is a glorious sight to behold children thus standing forth in defence of their parents.—Mr. Merrick mentions a remarkable Chinese proverb: When a son is born into a family, a bow and arrow are hung before the gate.’ *Bp. Horne.*—Parents in general are apt, like Jacob, to be most attached to the children of their old age: (Notes, Gen. xxxvii. 3. xlv. 20:) but “the sons of their youth” must be their champions and defenders, and *their* good conduct reflects most honour on the parents who brought them up.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Whether we build, or plant, or defend our habitations and property, or even attempt any good work for the house and city of our God; we should remember that our labour and watching will be in vain, except the Lord build, and plant, and watch with us. We should therefore diligently use the proper means, and then expect and pray for his blessing; that we may trust in him without presumption. Thus the minister in his labours and watchings for the good of souls; the Christian in seeking to grow in grace, and to guard against temptation; and the sinner in coming to the Saviour; should use all appointed means with persevering application, and yet rely on the Lord alone to render them effectual. This is the method of being safe, comfortable, and successful. For want of attending to this rule, many labour and watch to no purpose. In vain they “rise early, sit up late, eat the bread of sorrows,” and “bereave their souls of good,” to provide for themselves and their families: whereas “seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,” using moderate diligence in their lawful callings, and casting all their care on God, they would have all needful success, without solicitude and vexation.—But if we enjoy either outward sleep, or inward tranquillity, we should give God thanks for it; and we ought never to forget that the rest, the peace, and the provision, which he gives to his beloved, are far preferable to the much greater prosperity of the wicked.—It ill becomes the professed servants of God to murmur, because children

PSALM CXXVIII.

a cxx—cxxxvii. ti-

ties.

b ciii. 11. 13. 17.

cxii. 1. cxv. 13.

cxlvii. 11. Luke

i. 50.

c i. 1—3. lxxxii.

13. cxix. 1.

Luke i. 6. Acts

ix. 31. 1 Thes.

iv. 1.

d Gen. iii. 19.

Deut. xxviii. 4.

11. 39. 51. Judg.

vi. 3—6. Ec. v.

18. 19. 1s. lxii.

8. lxxv. 13. 21—

23.

e Ec. viii. 12. 1s.

iii. 10. Jer. xxii.

15. 1 Cor. xv.

58. Eph. vi. 3.

f Gen. xlix. 22.

Prov. v. 15—18.

Ez. xix. 10.

The blessedness of the righteous, personal and domestic, temporal and spiritual, 1—6.

A Song of degrees.

BLESSED is ^b every one that feareth the LORD; that ^c walketh in his ways.

2 For ^d thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy *shalt* thou be, ^e and *it shall be* well with thee.

3 Thy wife *shall be* as ^f a fruitful

vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like ^g olive-plants ^h round about thy table.

4 Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the LORD.

5 The LORD shall ⁱ bless thee out of Zion; and ^k thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

6 Yea, ^l thou shalt see thy children's children, and ^m peace upon Israel.

are withheld; but it is far worse, to fret because they have a numerous offspring. Children are in scripture considered as a heritage, and a reward from God to his people; and shall we deem them our encumbrance? as if he could not provide for many as well as for a few! When trained up according to his word, they generally prove the best defence, ornament, and comfort in declining years, if parents and children are spared to each other: and they are the seed of the church, and often prove the support of religion, after the decease of their parents. Children also should remember their obligations to their parents; and study to requite them, by being ready to supply their wants, to vindicate their characters, and to protect them from oppression, in their old age. In this case they would be as “arrows in the hand of the mighty man;” and happy will he be “who has his quiver full of them:” he need neither be ashamed, nor afraid, to meet his enemies in the gate. Yet all earthly comforts are precarious; but the Lord will assuredly comfort and bless those who trust and serve him: and those, who zealously seek the conversion of sinners, will assuredly find their spiritual children, (though alas, they often grieve them at present, and prove a source of much anxiety,) to be their joy and crown, in the day of Jesus Christ, (Notes, 2 Cor. ii. 1—4. Gal. iv. 17—20, v. 19. 1 Thes. ii. 17—20. iii. 6—10.) May all his ministers receive abundantly “this heritage and gift, that cometh of “the LORD!”

NOTES.

PSALM CXXVIII. V. 1. ‘Some think this was a form prescribed to be used at the blessing of their marriages; when they wished the new married couple all manner of happiness; especially a long life in peaceable times.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Gen. i. 28. Ruth iv. 11, 12.) It is probable, that this opinion occasioned the insertion of the Psalm, in ‘the form for the solemnization of matrimony,’ in our church.—No blessing can warrantably be expected in any situation of life, except by those who “fear God “and walk in his ways;” and they will be blessed in every station. (Note, cxii. 1.)

V. 2. ‘The world esteemeth them happy, which live in wealth and idleness: but the Holy Ghost approveth them best, that live of the mean profit of their labours.’ (Note, Ec. v. 18—20. 1s. iii. 10, 11. lxii. 8, 9. lxxv. 21—23.)—‘He will prosper thy honest labours, and give thee an heart also to enjoy the fruit of them; yea, this will seem no small part of thy happiness, that thou art able to live of thyself, and not be beholden to others.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 3, 4. The opinion above-mentioned, (Note 1) illustrates the propriety of the blessedness secured to a pious man, being here viewed with a special respect to the comforts of the married state: for on that supposition, newly married persons are exclusively addressed. Yet it is worth while for those, who, either from supposed religious motives, or from an idea that wives and children hinder men’s interest or comfort, are averse to marriage, either in their own case, or that of others, to consider this verse, in which a faithful wife and a flourishing offspring are, by the Spirit of inspiration, considered as most valuable blessings; and some of the most beautiful images in nature are employed by the Holy Spirit, to shew what a solace, and ornament, and comfort they are, to those who fear God. Would such language have been suggested to the inspired writers, if marriage had been a less holy or less happy state, than celibacy? (Notes, Gen. ii. 24. 1 Tim. iv. 1—5.)—The Psalmist here speaks of one wife, and no more, as a blessing to a pious man. Polygamy, practised by David, and by Solomon far more, though connived at, does not seem, even then, to have been general; and certainly it is unnatural, and contrary to domestick comfort. (Notes, Gen. vii. 7. Prov. v. 15—19. Ec. ix. 7—9. Matt. xix. 3—6. Mark x. 2—12.)

V. 5, 6. Whatever may be the dispensations of Providence towards believers; (for general rules always admit of exceptions, and the preceding verse should be considered as a general rule, not as an express promise;) yet, they shall be blessed out of Zion, “with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ Jesus.”—The concluding part of these verses seems to be made difficult in the application of it, either to facts, or probable expectations of believers, by being translated in the *future* tense, and not in the *imperative* or *optative* mood, according to the original:—“The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and “mayest thou see the good of Jerusalem all thy days; yea, “mayest thou see thy children’s children, and peace upon “Israel.” Or, “Look thou for the good of Jerusalem, &c.” (Notes, li. 18, 19. cxxii. 6—9. P. O.) It cannot be supposed, that every pious man shall see prosperous times and a flourishing family, and live to old age. But such a wish, or prayer, or exhortation, was perfectly suited to the occasion.—‘Mayest thou be so happy as to see Jerusalem, ‘the seat of justice and religion, in a flourishing condition ‘all thy life long. ... And long mayest thou live, to such ‘a good old age, as to see thy children’s children: and ‘the whole nation, all the time, in a prosperous tranquillity.’ Bp. Patrick.

PSALM CXXIX.

Israel remembers his manifold trials and merciful deliverances, 1—4; and predicts the utter ruin of his implacable enemies, 5—8.

* A Song of degrees.

MANY a time ^b have they afflicted me ^c from my youth, ^d may Israel now say :

2 Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth; ^e yet they have not prevailed against me.

3 The ^f plowers plowed upon my back; they made long their furrows.

4 The ^g LORD is righteous: he hath ^h cut asunder the cords of the wicked.

5 Let them all ⁱ be confounded and turned back, that hate Zion:

6 Let them be ^k as the grass upon the house-tops, which withereth afore it groweth up;

7 Wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor ^l he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.

8 Neither do they which go by say, ^m The blessing of the LORD be upon you: we bless you in the name of the LORD.

Ezra ix. 15.
Neh. ix. 33.
Lam. i. 18. iii.
22. Dan. ix. 7.
h cxxiv. 6, 7. cxi.
5—11.
i lxxxiii. 4—11.
cxxxii. 6. Esth.
vi. 13. ix. 5. Is.
x. 12. xxxvii. 22.
28, 29, 35. Zech.
i. 14—17. xii. 3.
6.
k xxxvii. 2. xcii.
7. Jer. xvii. 5, 6.
l cxxvi. 6. Is. xvii.
10, 11. Hos. viii.
7. Gal. vi. 8.
m cxxviii. 26. Ruth
ii. 4.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Those who “fear God and walk in his ways” are the only happy persons, whatever their station in life may be. Nor will their comfort be diminished, if they labour hard in any honest calling, for the subsistence of themselves and families; and if they have only the necessities of life, without any of its luxuries. Indeed their happiness does not consist in relative comforts; and many of them, having all things in God, seek not wives and children, or are resigned, if bereft of them: yet religion, while it teaches the duties of every relation in life, best insures the comfort of each. Marriage is peculiarly honourable and blessed to him, who enters it in the fear of God, and desires to walk with his family according to his will: (*Notes, Prov. xii. 4. xviii. 22. xix. 14. xxxi. 10.*) and he may expect that his wife will be “as a fruitful vine, by the sides of his house, and his children as olive branches round about his table.” (*Note, cxliv. 12—15. P. O. 10—15, latter part.*) But the Lord “will bless his people out of Zion:” they shall see and taste of the blessings of his church, all the days of their life: and whether they be spared, like old Israel, to see their children’s children, and to behold the church in prosperity on earth, or not; they shall certainly share the peace of the heavenly Jerusalem, and bequeath the blessing of God as a legacy to their posterity.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXIX. V. 1, 2. It is not improbably conjectured, that this psalm was composed about the time when Sennacherib invaded Judah; yet this is no more than conjecture.—From the days of Jacob, the ancestor of the nation; and still more, from the time when Pharaoh and the Egyptians began to oppress his descendants; the history of Israel had been almost one uninterrupted narrative of the hardships, injuries, and oppressions, to which they had been exposed, from a variety of enemies and persecutors: and yet God had effectually interposed in their behalf, and no assailant had so prevailed against them, as to destroy them from being a people; nor indeed have they to this day. (*Notes, Num. xxiii. 9. Jer. xxx. 10, 11.*)—The same may be said of the true church of God, and of every believer. “The church, now afflicted, ought to remember how that her condition hath ever been such from the beginning, to be molested most grievously by the

‘wicked; yet, in time she hath ever been delivered.’—“Many a time have the righteous been under persecution, from the hour when Cain rose up against his brother Abel to this day. Like the bush which Moses beheld in the desert, the church hath burned with fire, but is not yet consumed; and for the same reason, because God is in the midst of her. He who took our nature upon him, was also “afflicted from his youth:” but his enemies ‘prevailed not finally against him.’ *Bp. Horne. (Notes, cxviii. 10—13. Gen. iii. 14, 15. iv. 3—5. Ex. iii. 2. P. O. 1—6. Notes, Rom. viii. 28—39. 1 John iii. 11, 12.)*

V. 3. “They not only scourged us so severely, that the marks of it might be seen as plain as the furrows are, which the plow makes in the ground; but long continued also our vexation and torment.” *Bp. Patrick.*—The strong metaphor here employed, seems, however, to mark out all the various refinements of cruelty, by which tyrants and persecutors have tortured the people of God: as Pilate not only delivered Jesus to be crucified, but also first scourged him. (*Notes, cxli. 7. Is. i. 5, 6. li. 21—23.*)

V. 4. In order to torture the persecuted sufferer, they first bound him; and in like manner the enslaving of Israel was needful in order to afflict him: but from time to time the righteous God broke asunder the strong cord or rope, with which he was bound. (*Notes, cxxiv. 4—8. Acts ii. 22—24. xvi. 25—28.*)

V. 5. “They shall all be confounded, &c.” The whole passage is evidently a prediction and not an imprecation. He who has delivered Israel, and confounded his foes, will continue to do so, till all who persist in enmity to his people shall be destroyed. (*Notes, lxviii. 1—3. lxxxiii. 13—18. Gen. xii. 1—3. Mic. vii. 14—17. Zech. i. 14—17. ii. 6—9. xii. 2—5.*)

V. 6—8. The flourishing and withering of grass is the constant scriptural emblem of the prosperity and ruin of ungodly men. (*Notes, xcii. 6, 7. 12. ciii. 15—18. Jam. i. 9—11. 1 Pet. i. 23—25.*) But persecutors are like the worthless grass, which grows upon the tops of houses, and withers without coming to any perfection; and consequently has no blessing pronounced upon it, or employed about it, according to the pious salutations used in Israel to reapers and mowers. (*Note, Ruth ii. 4.*)—The clause rendered, “He that bindeth sheaves,” seems to denote the gleaners, who, having gathered ears of corn, and bound

PSALM CXXX.

The Psalmist, in deep distress, cries unto God, confessing his sin, and determined patiently to wait for his gracious forgiveness, 1—6. He exhorts Israel to hope in God's mercy and plenteous redemption, 7, 8.

^a A Song of degrees.

OUT of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD.

^a CXX. — CXXIX.
titles.
^b xviii. 4—6. 16.
xxv. 16—18. xl.
2. xlii. 7. lxix.
1, 2. 14, 15. lxxi.
20. lxxxviii. 6, 7.
cxvi. 3, 4. Lam.
iii. 53—55. Jon.
ii. 2—4. Heb. v.
7.

them in small bundles or handfuls, put them in the skirts of their garments, which were held up for that purpose. For reapers or binders do not put the sheaves into their bosom.—There would not only be nothing worth reaping, but nothing worth gleaning.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If we duly considered, how Jesus was scourged, wounded, bruised, and crucified for us; how prophets, apostles, and saints have been treated in all ages; and how the church has been afflicted and persecuted from her infancy hitherto; we should not complain of hard measure, if called to endure sharper sufferings than are at present allotted to any of us. And did we, in the holy meditation of faith and thankful love, remember how Jesus arose and reigns; how his people have been supported, and have triumphed, in sufferings and death; and how the church still subsists, like the burning but unconsumed bush; we should not be anxious about the event respecting ourselves, or the cause of God. He is righteous: and as he has, so he will, cut asunder the cords which unite persecutors to each other, or with which they would bind his people “as sheep for the slaughter.” Nor can all nature furnish an emblem sufficiently expressive of the confusion, contempt, and misery, which will overtake all that hate the church and cause of Christ, in the great day of judgment, “the day of wrath, and perdition of ungodly men.” They will then sink for ever under the unmingled curse and wrath of God, and all spectators will exclaim, “So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD!”

NOTES.

PSALM CXXX. V. 1, 2. David is generally supposed to have been the writer of this psalm; though his name is not prefixed to it. Some think, that it was composed, when he was convinced of his exceedingly heinous guilt, in the matter of Uriah, and was in deep distress of mind on that account; (Notes, vi. 1—7. xxxii. 1—5. li. 2 Sam. xii. 1—14;) while others are of opinion, that he wrote it, when in danger of being overwhelmed by the persecuting rage of Saul: and indeed the general acknowledgment of criminality, in common with other men, does not well accord with David's state of mind, when crying for mercy after his most deplorable fall.—It seems, however, that inward distresses, arising from the consciousness of sin, concurred with outward troubles and dangers, in sinking him into those depths, from whence, (like Jonah from the whale's belly,) he earnestly cried unto the Lord, and was heard and delivered; and therefore it is reckoned one of the penitential psalms. (Notes, xl. 1—5. xlii. 6—8. lxix. 1—3. 14, 15. lxxi. 20, 21. lxxxviii. 5—9. Lam. iii. 52—

2 Lord, hear my voice: ‘let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

3 If thou, LORD, ‘shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

4 But ‘there is forgiveness with thee, ‘that thou mayest be feared.

5 I ‘wait for the LORD, my soul

18—20. 2 Cor. v. 19. Eph. i. 7. Col. i. 14. f ii. 11, 12. 1 Kings xviii. 39, 40. Jer. xxxiii. 8, 9. Hos. iii. 5. Acts ix. 31. Heb. xii. 24—28. g xxvii. 14. xxxiii. 20. xl. 1. lxii. 1. 5. Gen. xlix. 18. Is. viii. 17. xxvi. 8. xxx. 18. Luke ii. 25. 38.

57. Jon. ii. 1—7. Heb. v. 7—10.) ‘In the greatest straits, ‘when I can see ... no end of my troubles, but I still ‘sink lower and lower into them; I never despair of thy ‘mercy, O LORD; but cry unto thee most earnestly to ‘deliver me.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 3, 4. ‘If I were the most innocent person in the ‘world; yet if thou, LORD, shouldest strictly examine my ‘life, and proceed against me according to my deserts, ... ‘I should certainly be condemned.’ Bp. Patrick. (Note, Job ix. 14—21.)—To “mark iniquity,” in this connexion, implies, to observe strictly a man's conduct, comparing every part of it with the holy law, and punishing all deviation from that perfect standard, according to the strict demands of impartial justice. This will be the measure of the Lord's dealings with all the impenitent and unbelieving: but he does not so “mark iniquity,” as to exclude the penitent and believing from mercy and forgiveness, according to the gospel. “For there is forgiveness with ‘him:’” or a propitiation, as the original word may signify, and as it is translated by the Septuagint; for “without ‘shedding of blood there is no remission;” and “it is ‘not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats can ‘take away sin.” (Notes, Luke xviii. 9—14, v. 13. Heb. ix. 18—23. x. 3, 4.) But with God there is forgiveness, through a propitiatory sacrifice, for those who avail themselves of this gracious provision of his love and mercy: He alone can pardon; forgiveness belongs to him; and he “is ready to forgive,” and delights in mercy. (Notes, lxxxvi. 3—5. 14, 15. Ex. xxxiv. 5—7. Is. lv. 6—9. Dan. ix. 7—10. Mic. vii. 18—20. Rom. iii. 19—26.)—“That ‘thou mayest be feared.” ‘Thou most graciously invitest ‘us unto thy service, by thy readiness to pardon all that ‘are truly penitent; without the hope of which we could ‘not so much as think of becoming religious.’ Bp. Patrick. —Without the hope of forgiveness, no humble and contrite sinner could escape despair; and none else “have the ‘fear of God before their eyes.” So that without this hope, there could be no genuine piety among the fallen descendants of Adam. (Note, Gen. xxii. 11, 12.) For if there were no forgiveness with God, men would not only be “without hope,” but without the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, and so be given up to the desperate enmity of their fallen nature. But the consciousness of guilt, and the fear of wrath, united with the hope of mercy, bring the sinner into a proper disposition to seek and wait for salvation: and as hope and filial love dispel slavish fear; humble reverence and a dread of dishonouring his gracious Friend, gather strength in the believer's soul. (Note, 1 John iv. 18.)

V. 5, 6. ‘The repetitions here do beautifully express ‘that ardent desire which the contrite soul hath for the

^h cxix. 42 49. 81. doth wait, ^h and in his word do I
114 Heb. vi. 18. hope.

ⁱ lxiii. 6. cxix. 147. 6 My soul ⁱwaiteth for the Lord,
Acts xxvii. 29. more than they that watch for the
* Or, which watch morning: * I say, more than they that
unto the morn- watch for the morning.
ing. cxxxiv. 1. Is. xxi. 8.

^k xl. 3. cxv. 9—13. cxxx. 3. 7 ^k Let Israel hope in the LORD:
Zeph. iii. 12. 1 for with the LORD there is mercy, and
14. Rom. v. 20, Eph. i. 7, 8. with him is plenteous redemption.

^m ciii. 3, 4. Matt. i. 21. Rom. vi. 14. Tit. ii. 14. 8 And ^mhe shall redeem Israel from
1 John iii. 5—8. all his iniquities.

‘salvation of God.’ Bp. Horne.—The word of God reveals and promises forgiveness to the penitent, through the great Redeemer: faith credits this revelation, and waits with humble expectation the fulfilment of the promises, and of obtaining “the joy of God’s salvation.” (Notes, li. 12, 13. lxii. 1, 2. 5—7. Gen. xlix. 18. Lam. iii. 24—30. Luke ii. 25—32.) Thus the Psalmist “waited for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning.” Some understand this of the Psalmist’s being earlier at his devotions, than the watchers were at the sanctuary, who resorted thither at the break of day. But perhaps it means, that he longed for some tokens of God’s pardoning love, more eagerly than the bewildered benighted traveller, or the endangered mariner, looks out for the dawn. (Acts xxvii. 29.)—‘My soul waiteth for the Lord, and longs for his comfortable presence, more than the watchman, who is forced to wake the whole night, waiteth for the break of day, that he may be discharged.’ Bp. Hall.

‘I wait for thy salvation, Lord,
‘With strong desires I wait;
‘My soul, invited by thy word,
‘Stands watching at thy gate.

‘Just as the guards that keep the night
‘Long for the morning skies,
‘Watch the first beams of breaking light,
‘And meet them with their eyes:

‘So waits my soul to see thy grace,
‘And, more intent than they,
‘Meets the first openings of thy face,
‘And finds a brighter day.’

Watts.

V. 7, 8. ‘The church of Israel was exhorted to hope in JEHOVAH, because “with him there was mercy, and “plenteous redemption.” And of what nature was that redemption? A redemption from sin: “He shall redeem Israel from all his sins;” and consequently from all trouble and misery, which are but the effects of sin, and will cease when their cause shall be finally taken away. Now what is this but the gospel itself?’ Bp. Horne. (Notes, cxv. 9—13. cxxx. 3. Matt. i. 20, 21. Rom. v. 20, 21. Eph. i. 3—8. 1 Tim. ii. 5—7. Tit. ii. 11—14. 1 John ii. 1—6. iii. 4—10. Rev. v. 8—10.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

While sin is plunging millions of unbelievers into the depths of hell to rise no more; even believers are often brought by it under deep distress of conscience, fears of wrath, outward calamities, and sore temptations. What need then have we to watch against every approach of this

PSALM CXXXI.

David professes humility and resignation, and exhorts Israel to hope in God, 1—3.

* A Song of degrees of David.

LORD, ^b my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; ^c neither do I ^{*} exercise myself in great matters, or in things too [†] high for me.

2 Surely I have behaved and ^d quiet-

1 Sam. xxiv. 10. xxv. 32, 33. xxx. 6. 2 Sam. xv. 25, 26. xvi. 11, 12. Is. xxx. 15. Lam. iii. 26.

a cxxii. cxxiv. cxxxiii. uties. b Num. xii. 3. Deut. xvii. 20. 1 Sam. xvi. 12. 18. 22. xvii. 15. 28, 29. xviii. 23. Matt. xi. 29. Acts xx. 19. 1 Thes. ii. 6, 7. 10. c lxxviii. 70—72. Jer. xvii. 16. xlv. 5. Ani. vii. 14, 15. Rom. xii. 16. * Heb. walk. † Heb. wonderful. cxxxix. 6. Job xlii. 3. Rom. xi. 33. d xlii. 5. li. xliii. 5. lxii. 1. marg.

only evil! Yet, even from those depths, into which sin has cast us, we should without delay, and with extraordinary earnestness, cry unto the Lord: nor can any deep dungeon or cavern, or even deep guilt, exclude the relenting sinner from the presence of his merciful God; who will raise all that make supplication to him, from the depths of distress, from the gates of hell, from the borders of the grave, and at length from the grave itself. Indeed should the Lord so mark all our iniquities according to his holy law, as to deal with us in the rigour of strict justice, what man could endure the trial, or venture into his awful presence? But there is abundant forgiveness with him, which he can exercise in such a manner, as to glorify his justice, holiness, wisdom, and power, as well as mercy and truth; so that the chief of sinners may now bow before his mercy-seat, become his acceptable worshipper, and at length stand accepted before his holy tribunal. And faith in his sure testimony and faithful promise, confirmed by experience, forms the soul to the holy fear and love of the Lord our God. Happy then are they, who hope in his word, and wait for the discoveries of his pardoning mercy, in the appointed way. Their anxious fears may indeed greatly disquiet them, while the Lord proves their faith, sincerity, and humility, by salutary delays. But the day will dawn, and the Sun of Righteousness arise upon them to set no more. (Notes, Is. xii. 1—3. Mal. iv. 2, 3.) Then they will rejoice, and encourage their brethren to hope and wait for the Lord, and exhort all their fellow sinners to seek his salvation; seeing that “with him there is mercy, “and plenteous redemption,” through the atoning blood of Jesus, “who shall redeem his people from all their iniquities.” (Note, Tit. ii. 14.)

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXI. V. 1, 2. David was accused by his brethren, as an aspiring man, who was actuated by pride and ambition in the services which he performed; and by Saul as aiming to dethrone him and usurp the kingdom. (Marg. Ref. b.) But he could appeal to God, that he should have been well satisfied in privacy and obscurity, and in the meaner occupations of a shepherd; without intermeddling with affairs of state, or other “matters too “high” or wonderful “for him.” (Note, cxxxix. 4—6.) Indeed he had learned to be as indifferent about such worldly advantages, as the weaned child becomes to the milk, when it has learned to relish other nutriment. ‘Committing myself unto thy care, and depending on thy providence, ‘as a child that is newly weaned doth upon its mother;

* Heb. *my soul*. ed * myself, * as a child that is weaned
 of his mother: my soul is even as a
 weaned child.

3 † Let Israel hope in the LORD
 from henceforth and for ever.

f cxv. 9—11. cxviii.
 7. cxlvi. 5. Jer. †
 xvii. 7, 8.
 † Heb. *from now*.
 cxv. 13. Is. xxvi.
 4.

PSALM CXXXII.

The Psalmist pleads David's pious care about a stated residence for the ark; and intreats the Lord to take possession of his temple, and to bless his priests and people, 1—10. He shews the promises of God to David, and to his family, 11—18.

'just so do I silence my natural desires, and am content to be disposed of as thou pleasest.' *Bp. Patrick*. 'A child newly weaned mourneth, because of the favourite aliment which is withdrawn from him, but depending absolutely on the mother for every thing, he learns to acquiesce in her treatment of him, and quietly to accept what it shall please her to give.' *Bp. Horne*. (*Notes*, *Matt.* xviii. 1—4.)—The clause rendered, "Surely I have," is literally, "If I have not," That is, 'Then let mine enemies prevail against me.' (*Note*, vii. 3—5.)—*I have behaved and quieted myself*. (2) "I have composed and stilled my soul." (*Notes*, xxxix. 1—4. xlii. 4, 5. 11. *Luke* xxi. 12—19, v. 19. *John* xiv. 1.)

V. 3. 'And let all good men, in like manner, modestly place their confidence and hope in the Lord, ... and choose rather to be depressed, than by any undue means raise themselves to greatness and honour.' *Bp. Patrick*.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The proud man is insolent in his deportment, and despises mean persons, situations, and occupations; he is vain-glorious and ambitious, aspiring after great connexions and important employments, engaging in deep schemes and speculations, and courting observation and applause. But he, who is conscious of his unworthiness and insufficiency, is satisfied in a low situation, and with any honest employment; and reluctantly leaves an obscure station, to exercise himself in great matters which appear too high for so mean a person.—The grace of God also teaches the believer quiet submission to humbling dispensations, and indifference about worldly acquisitions; so that, having acquired a relish for heavenly things, his soul is weaned even from those objects to which he once was most addicted; at least he is aiming to attain, and is praying for, this happy frame of spirit. Yet appearances may be against him. The Lord may call him forth, and make it his duty, to engage in important and publick undertakings; and his zeal and love may be censured as ambition and ostentation, by rivals or enemies, or even by misjudging friends: but his appeal will be made to the heart-searching God, and sometimes this may be done even before his accusers.—Genuine humility in the highest stations in society, or in the church, will appear by teachableness, patience under delays and contradictions, persevering benevolence, a determination to use no unhallowed means, and a quiet spirit under reproaches and unjust suspicions.—Thus did the lowly Jesus pursue his heavenly path. He was accused of claiming honours, which it was supposed did not belong to

* A Song of degrees.

LORD, ^b remember David, and ^c all his afflictions;

2 How ^d he sware unto the LORD, and vowed unto ^e the mighty God of Jacob:

3 Surely ^f I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up into my bed;

4 I will not ^g give sleep to mine eyes, or slumber to mine eyelids;

B. C. 1004.

a cxv. — cxxxi.

titles.

b xxv. 6, 7. Gen. viii. 1. Ex. ii. 24. Lam. iii. 19.

v. 1.

c 1 Sam. xviii. — xxx. 2 Sam. xv —xx.

d lvi. 12. lxx. 1.

lxvi. 13, 14. cxvi. 14—18. cxix. 106.

e 5. xlvii. 11. 1. 1.

cxlvi. 5, 6. Gen. xlix. 24.

f Ec. ix. 10. Hag. i. 4. Matt. vi. 33.

g Gen. xxiv. 33.

Ruth iii. 18.

Prov. vi. 4.

him, and on this accusation he was condemned to death: but his resurrection and exaltation completely refuted the malignant calumny. Of him David was the type; and every one of his disciples must copy his example of humility, of heavenly-mindedness, of active love, and of patience under the cross, and unmerited slander: and let all such Israelites "hope in the Lord," under every reproach and affliction, "from henceforth and for ever."

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXII. V. 1. 'There are those that think Solomon penned this psalm: because, (in the 2 *Chr.* vi. the two last verses,) he concludes his prayer at the consecration of the temple, with some part of it, viz. *ver.* 8, 9, 10: and truly, since he speaks as if the priests were just taking up the ark to carry it into this resting place, and there begs that God would not, for David's sake, "turn away the face of his anointed," (that is, refuse to hear his prayer,) it is not an improbable conjecture.' *Bp. Patrick*.—David had endured many afflictions, before he came to the throne: but he would use no unhallowed means of obtaining that dignity, which, he knew, was intended for him. In this he was the type of Christ, who willingly endured the cross before he entered into his glory.—Afterwards, in the midst of many trials and sorrows, David laid himself out with earnest zeal for the glory of God, and especially in preparing for the temple, which Solomon his son was chosen to build; who thus besought God, in concert with the people, to remember his pious father's labours and sorrows, and to prosper the design, about which his heart had been so much engaged.

V. 2—5. Nothing is recorded concerning this vow in the history of David: but perhaps, when his own house was nearly finished, he vowed that he would not inhabit it, till he had pitched upon a place in which to station the ark, as it had been placed at Shiloh. Or perhaps, having procrastinated too long, amidst his difficulties upon his first accession to the throne, he made one morning a solemn vow, that he would come to a decision in this matter, before he went to rest. Some think, that the very spot on which the temple should be built, was intended: and that David made this vow on the morning, when the pestilence came upon Israel, because he had numbered the people; and that the threshing floor of Ornan was pointed out to him, in consequence of this resolution. (*Notes*, 2 *Sam.* vi. 1—5. vii. 1—3. xxiv. 11—25.)

h 2 Sam. vi. 17. 5 Until ^h I find out a place for the
 i 1 Chr. xv. 3. 12. LORD, * an ⁱ habitation ^k for the mighty
 * Heb. ^{habita-} God of Jacob.

1 Kings viii. 27. 6 Lo, we heard of it ^l at Ephratah;
 2 Chr. ii. 6. Is. lxvi. 1. Acts vii. 47—49. Eph. ii. m we found it in the fields of the wood.

Ruth i. 1 Sam. xvi. 12. Mic. v. 2. 7 We ⁿ will go into his tabernacles;
 m we will ^o worship at his footstool.

1 Sam. vii. 1. 8 ^p Arise, O LORD, into thy rest;
 1 Chr. xiii. 5, 6. thou and ^q the ark of thy strength.

v. 7. Is. lxvi. 13, 14. cxviii. 19. cxviii. 1. Is. ii. 3. 9 Let ^r thy priests be clothed with
 o xcv. 6. xcix. 5. righteousness; and ^s let thy saints
 9. Lam. ii. 1. shout for joy.

Is. lxviii. 1. Num. x. 35, 36. 2 Chr. vi. 41, 42. 10 For ^u thy servant David's sake,
 q lxxviii. 61. * turn not away the face of thine
 r 16. xciii. 1. civ. anointed.

Is. Job xxix. 14. Is. lxi. 10. Rom. xiii. 14. 1 Pet. v. 5. Rev. xix. 8. 11 The LORD hath ^v sworn *in* truth
 s xxxv. 26, 27. unto David; he will not turn from it;
 lxxviii. 3. lxx. 4. Judg. v. 31. 12 Of the fruit of thy ^w body will I set
 t xlviii. 1. Ezra iii. 11, 12. Zeph. iii. 14. Zech. ix. 9. ^z Of the fruit of thy [†] body will I set
 u 1 Kings xi. 12, 13. 34. xv. 4, 5. 2 Kings xix. 34. upon thy throne.
 Hos. iii. 5.

x lxxxiv. 9. lxxxix. 38, 39. 2 Chr. vi. 42. y lxxxix. 3, 4. 23—37. cx. 4. 1 Sam. xv. 29. Jer. xxxiii. 20—26. Heb. vi. 18. z 2 Sam. vii. 12. 1 Kings viii. 25. 2 Chr. vi. 16. Luke i. 69, 70. Acts ii. 30. † Heb. belly.

a lxxxix. 30—35. 12 * If thy children will keep my
 b cii. 28. cxv. 14. covenant, and my testimony that I
 Is. ix. 7. lx. 21. Luke i. 32 shall teach them; ^b their children shall
 c lxxvi. 1. 2 also sit upon thy throne for ever-
 lxxviii. 68, 69. more.

Is. xiv. 32. Heb. xii. 22. 13 For ^c the LORD hath chosen Zion:
 d xlviii. 1—3. he hath desired *it* for his habitation.

lxxviii. 16. 14 This is ^e my rest for ever: ^f here
 e 8. Is. xi. 10. lxxvi. 1. Zeph. iii. 17. will I dwell; ^g for I have desired it.

f lxxviii. 18. lxxvi. 2. cxxxv. 21. 15 I will ^h abundantly ^h bless her
 1 Kings viii. 18. provision: ⁱ I will satisfy her poor with
 27. Is. viii. 18. bread.

xii. 6. lvi. 15. Joel iii. 21. Eph. ii. 22. Heb. xiii. 22. Rev. xxi. 23. 16 I will also ^k clothe her priests
 g lxxxvii. 2. with salvation; and ^l her saints shall
 i Or, surely. shout aloud for joy.

h cxlvi. 14. Ex xxiii. 25. Lev. xxvi. 4, 5. Deut. xxviii. 2—5. Prov. iii. 9, 10. Hag. i. 6. 9. ii. 16—19. Mal. ii. 2. Matt. xiv. 15—21. 2 Cor. ix. 10, 11. 17 There ^m will I make the horn of
 i xxii. 26. xxxiii. 18, 19. xxxvi. 8. David to bud: ⁿ I have ordained a
 xxxvii. 3. 19. lamp for mine anointed.

Deut. xiv. 29. Is. xxxiii. 16. Jer. xxxi. 14. Matt. v. 6. vi. 32, 33. Mark viii. 6—9. k 9. cxlix. 4. 2 Chr. vi. 41. Is. lxi. 10. Gal. iii. 27. l Zech. ix. 9. 15—17. John xvi. 24. m xcii. 10. cxlvi. 14. Ez. xxix. 21. Luke i. 69. n 1 Kings xi. 36. xv. 4. 2 Chr. xxi. 7. Luke ii. 30—32. § Or, candle.

V. 6. Some learned men conjecture, that Jerusalem lay within the district called Ephratah: but the opinion has no ground at all in scripture; and Ephrath, or Ephratah, is always joined with Beth-lehem, never with Jerusalem. (*Marg. Ref.*) Christ was indeed, as it had been foretold, born at Beth-lehem Ephratah. (*Notes, Mic. v. 2. Matt. ii. 3—6.*) He was, doubtless, the true temple, in whom “all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily:” but there is no need to suppose, that the place of his birth must, in any sense, be coincident what that on which the temple was to be built: and there is full proof of the contrary. In fact, the enquiry is not, either where Christ should be born, or where the temple should be erected; but where the ark, the symbol of JEHOVAH’s gracious presence, might be found. The Psalmist determined to “find out a place for the LORD, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob:” that is, a place, in which the ark, the symbol of his presence, might be stationed, as it had been at Shiloh. But, having determined, probably by revelation, to remove the ark to mount Zion; the next enquiry is, where the ark might be found, having long been left in obscurity? David, while resident at Beth-lehem Ephratah, had often heard of the ark as greatly neglected; and, in prospect of being king, had determined to place it in a more conspicuous situation. Accordingly, when made king over all Israel, he had summoned the principal persons of the nation, and had gone in quest of it: and it was found at Kirjath-jearim, as “in the fields of the wood.” Thence he and his people at length conveyed it to the station selected for it, on mount Zion; and near to that first station, a magnificent temple was prepared for it. (2 Sam. vi. 1 Chr. xiii. xxi. 26—30. xxii. 1. 2 Chr. iii. 1.)

V. 7—9. (*Note, 2 Chr. vi. 41, 42.*) The ark was never removed from the holy of holies in the temple, till the captivity, when it was lost or destroyed. This was therefore “the Rest” of the symbol of the Lord’s gracious presence with his people.—The ninth verse may be rendered in the future:—“Thy priests will be clothed, &c.” “It

may be expected, that thou, O Lord, wilt over-rule this happy event, for a very great blessing to thy priests, and by their means to thy people.’—If the priests, the ministers of religion, were “clothed with righteousness,” and made accepted and holy in their persons and ministrations; “the saints,” all the true people of God, would exceedingly rejoice and praise God, both on their own account, and on that of the people in general, and of the ministers themselves: for nothing so much tends to promote, or to injure, the cause of true and vital piety, as the character of the ministers of religion (16). How properly then are we taught in our Liturgy to pray, ‘Endue thy ministers with righteousness, and make thy chosen people joyful.’ And, not only on ember days, (when few attend at the places of worship,) but at all times; that ‘God would so guide and govern the minds of his servants, the bishops and pastors of his flock, that they may lay hands suddenly on no man, but faithfully and wisely make choice of fit persons to serve in the sacred ministry of his church.’ And that ‘to those... ordained to any holy function’ he would ‘give his grace and heavenly benediction; that both by their life and doctrine they may set forth his glory, and set forward the salvation of all men.’ *Col. Ember Weeks.*

V. 10. ‘I beseech thee, have a respect to the sincere piety of my father David, and thy gracious promise to him;... and upon that account deny me not, but grant the petitions of thy servant, who, by thy special appointment, succeeds him in the government of thy people.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, 17. lxxviii. 70—72. 1 Kings xi. 9—13. 34—36.*)

V. 11, 12. *Notes, lxxxix. 1—4. 19—37. 2 Sam. vii. 8—16. 1 Kings ix. 4—6. Jer. xxxiii. 17, 18. 23—26. Luke i. 26—33. Acts ii. 25—32.*

V. 13, 14. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, 7—9. xlviii. 1—3. lxxviii. 15, 16. lxxvi. 2. lxxxvii. 2. Is. lxvi. 1, 2.*

V. 15, 16. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, 7—9. xxii. 26. 2 Chr. vi. 41, 42.*

V. 17. After the decease of David, his kingdom was 3 I

^u xxi. 8, 9. xxxv. 26. cix. 29. Job vii. 22. Dan. xii. 2.

^p lxxii. 8—11. Is. ix. 6, 7. lviii. 10—12. Matt. xxviii. 18. Luke i. 32, 33. Rev. xi. 15. xvii. 14.

^a cxxii. cxxiv. cxxxii. titles.

^b cxxii. 6—8. A commendation, and a twofold illustration, of the excellency of harmony among brethren, 1—3

^c Gen. xiii. 8. xlv. 24. 2 Sam. ii. 26. 27. Is. xi. 6—9. 13. Jer. xxxii. 39. John xiii. 35. xvii. 21. 1 Cor. i. 10. Eph. iv. 3—6. Phil. ii. 2—5. Heb. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. iii. 8. 1 John iii. 14—19.

18 ° His enemies will I clothe with shame; ^p but upon himself shall his crown flourish.

PSALM CXXXIII.

° A Song of degrees, of David.

BEHOLD, ^b how good and how plea-

made to bud forth in his successive descendants, until at length it was established in the person of the Messiah: and the kings, who as lamps were situated in Jerusalem, arising from David the first anointed of the family, at length introduced the Light of the world, and the glory of Israel. (Notes, cxlviii. 14. Ez. xvii. 22—24.)

V. 18. *Marg. Ref.*—Notes, xxi. 8—12. xxxv. 25—28. lxxii. 8—19. cix. 28—30. Is. ix. 6, 7. Matt. xxviii. 18—20.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

The Lord will recompense the labours and afflictions of his faithful servants, in blessings upon their children; especially if they carry on the same pious designs, and pray to be remembered for their sake.—Those, who have in them the mind of Christ, will prefer the honour of God, and the welfare of his church, to their own indulgence, ease, or emolument; and will counteract their propensity to procrastination, by engaging themselves as soon as possible to execute useful purposes, to whatever self-denial or weariness they may be exposed. But we should first, without delay, seek to have our own hearts made “an habitation of God through the Spirit.”—Though external splendour or exactness are by no means essential to godliness; yet those, who have it in their power, should be vigilant and diligent, in bringing the ordinances of God into publick view, and in establishing them in decency and regularity; that the people in general may be encouraged to “go into “his tabernacles, and worship at his footstool.” When we have used the proper means, we may confidently expect the Lord’s presence and blessing: and when his ministers are clothed with righteousness and salvation, his saints will shout for joy.—But if the Lord answered the prayers, grounded on his covenant with David; he will never turn away his face from us, when we plead the covenant made with his anointed Prophet, Priest, and King. In him the promises, which were ratified to David, have their full completion: his church is that Zion, which he has chosen and desired for his habitation, in which he will rest and be glorified for ever. While he blesses the spiritual provisions of his house, to the nourishment of the souls of his people; he will not withhold from his poor the food convenient for their bodies: and blessed are they, who are employed to dispense either the bread of life, or bodily sustenance to his needy servants, out of love to him, and to them for his sake; receiving his salvation themselves, and contributing to the comfort of his saints. But while the crown shall flourish in the person of the Son of David, and his people rejoice in his honour and felicity; all his enemies will be clothed with everlasting shame and misery.

sant *it is* for brethren to dwell ° to-^a gether in unity! ^{Heb. even together.}

2 *It is* ° like the precious ointment ^c upon the head, ^d that ran down upon the beard, *even* Aaron’s beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; ^e

3 As the dew of ° Hermon, *and as the dew* that descended upon the mountains of Zion: ° for there the LORD commanded the blessing, ° *even* life for evermore.

^c cxli. 5. Prov. xxvii. 9. Cant. i. 3. John xii. 3. ^d Ex. xxx. 25—30. Lev. viii. 12.

^e Deut. iii. 8, 9. iv. 48. Josh. xiii. 11.

^f xlii. 8. Lev. xxv. 21. Deut. xxviii. 8.

^g xvi. 11. xxi. 4. John iv. 14. v. 24, 29. vi. 50, 51. 68. xi. 25, 26. Rom. v. 21. vi. 23. 1 John ii. 25. v. 11. Rev. i. 18.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXIII. *Title.* This psalm seems to have been penned, when all the tribes of Israel had concurred in placing David on the throne, or rather after their subsequent prosperity had evinced the happy effects of that union: when instead of the tribes wasting each other by civil contests, they all harmoniously joined in removing the ark to mount Zion, and in celebrating the sacred ordinances of their religion.—‘It was as fitly used by the first Christians, to express their joy for the blessed union of Jews and Gentiles; and may now serve the uses of all Christian societies, whose happiness lies in holy peace and concord.’ *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 1. ‘Many things are good, which are not pleasant; and many pleasant, which are not good. But unity among brethren, whether civil or religious, is productive both of profit and pleasure. Of profit, because therein consisteth the welfare and security of every society; of pleasure, because mutual love is the source of delight, and the happiness of one becomes, in that case, the happiness of all. It is unity alone, which gives beauty, as well as strength, to the state; which renders the church at the same time “fair as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners.” Cant. vi. 10.’ *Bp. Horne.* (Notes, cxxii. 6—9. P. O.—Notes and P. O. Eph. iv. 1—6. Note, Phil. ii. 1—4.)

V. 2. The sacred ointment, which God had prescribed for the unction of his priests to their office, being poured upon the head of Aaron, flowed thence upon his beard, and down on the collar of his vestment, near the place where he bare the names of the twelve tribes, diffusing fragrancy around. (Note, Ex. xxx. 22—33.) This was an emblem of the graces of the Holy Spirit, which, through our great High Priest, are communicated to all believers: and it also aptly represented the pleasant and beneficial effects of harmony in society, when, united under one common head, every member in his proper station shares and contributes to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the whole community. (Notes, 1 Cor. xii. 12—31. 1 Pet. i. 22—25.)

V. 3. This verse may be rendered, “As the dew of ° Hermon, *so is this*, which descends upon the mountains ° of Zion;” and thus mean, that, as the gentle dews, descending on mount Hermon, rendered it fruitful and delightful; so the dew of heavenly love, distilling upon the worshippers on mount Zion, would render them fruitful in good works, happy in themselves, and blessings to all around them. For on that mount, (the type of the true church, which is all one in Christ Jesus,) the Lord has

PSALM CXXXIV.

The Psalmist exhorts the watchers in the sanctuary to bless the Lord; and they pray for a blessing on him, 1—3.

^a A Song of degrees.

BEHOLD, ^b bless ye the LORD, all ye servants of the LORD, ^c which by night stand in the house of the LORD.

2 ^d Lift up your hands ^e in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.

3 The ^e LORD, that made heaven and earth, ^f bless thee out of Zion.

PSALM CXXXV.

Exhortations to praise God for his goodness, his

special kindness to Israel, his power shewn in the works of creation and providence, and his judgments on the enemies of his people, 1—14. The vanity of idols, and the folly of idolaters exposed, 15—18. All orders of men in Israel are called on to praise the Lord, 19—21.

^a **PRAISE** ye the LORD. ^b Praise ye the name of the LORD; praise ^c him, ^d O ye servants of the LORD.

2 Ye ^e that stand in the house of the LORD, in ^f the courts of the house of our God.

3 Praise ye the LORD; ^f for the LORD is good: sing praises unto his name; ^g for *it is* pleasant.

a xxxiii. 1, 2. xcvi. 1—4. cvi. 1. cvii. 8. 15. cxi. 1. cxii. 1. cxiii. 1. cxvii. cl. 6.
b vii. 17. cii. 21. cxiii. 2. 3. cxlviii. 13. See on Ex. xxxiv. 5—7.
c cxiii. 1. cxxxiv. 1. cxlix. 1—3.
d 1 Chr. xvi. 37—42. xxiii. 30. Neh. ix. 5. Luke ii. 37.
e xcii. 13. xcvi. 8. cxvi. 19.
f cvi. 1. cvii. 1. cxviii. 1. cxix. 68. cxxxvi. 1. cxlv. 7, 8. Matt. xix. 17.
g xxxiii. 1. lxiii. 5. xcii. 1, 2. cxlvii. 1.

“commanded his blessing, and life for evermore.” How do they read such passages, which continually occur, who contend that the Israelites expected temporal blessings alone? (*Marg. Ref.*)—Hermon was situated far to the north-east of Zion, on the other side of Jordan. (*Marg. Ref.* e.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

No encomiums or illustrations can sufficiently display the excellence, pleasantness, and manifold benefits of harmony among brethren, in families, in civil society, in nations, and especially in the church of Christ: for “love is of God; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.” (*Notes*, 1 *John* iv. 7—12.) It is the fruit of the Spirit, the image of Christ, the evidence of our union with him, and the ornament of his gospel. With it human happiness begins on earth, and will be completed in heaven. (*Notes* and *P. O.* 1 *Cor.* xiii. *Note*, *Gal.* v. 22—26.) It tends to fruitfulness in all good works, and to the spread of vital godliness: it inhabits especially, as a visitant from heaven, those favoured spots, where the Lord commands his blessing, and gives eternal life: and, while it prepares the soul for further communications from above, it is the certain effect of the pouring out of the Spirit, to give success to the preaching of the Gospel. (*Notes*, *Acts* ii. 42—47. iv. 32—35.) Surely the professed followers of the meek and lowly Jesus have long enough experienced the painful and fatal effects of discord, and angry controversy; by which Christianity has been disgraced, and wounded in the house of its friends! May all that love the Lord at length make trial, “how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity,” “forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven them.” (*Note*, *Eph.* v. 1, 2.) Then will they find their own hearts joyful, and the truth diffuse its blessed influence on every side; and heaven will, as it were, come down and dwell on earth. And may God be pleased to send ‘peace, unity, and concord,’ together with the gospel of peace and love, to all the nations of the world!

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXIV. V. 1—3. It seems, that David appointed some of the priests and Levites to watch all night in the sanctuary, by regular courses: (*Note*, 1 *Chr.* ix. 31—33:) and they are here exhorted to spend the hours in joyful songs of praise. Thus the service of the sanctuary

would be a shadow of the unceasing worship of heaven. It is probable, that this Psalm was composed to be sung each night, when the watch was set: and that the first two verses were sung by the precentor of those, who were about to leave the sanctuary; and the third verse by the Levites, who succeeded them.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

If our hearts were filled with the love of God, as his holy law commands, our mouths would be filled with his praises: and though our frail bodies would need rest, yet our souls would never be weary of his pleasant service. No time would then be a burden to us; nor would it be needful to waste the hours by trifling conversation and vain amusements, or by inordinate animal indulgence: but all the time, which could be spared from needful business and recreation, would be delightfully employed in meditation, and in celebrating the praises of our God. All that comes short of this, is equally distant from perfection; it is the effect of the fall, and the remainder of depravity: and without some portion of this delight in praising the Lord, we are not Christians. But the servants of God, who minister in his sanctuary, are peculiarly bound to set an example of this cheerful and constant engagement of heart, in the worship and work of God. They, as well as others, should be thankful to be reminded of their duty, and exhorted “to lift up their hands in the sanctuary, and “praise the LORD:” and we should especially pray for a blessing out of Zion on those, who excite us to attend on our duty. Ere long all the true servants of God shall praise him in the sanctuary above, and bless his name, and be blessed in him, uninterruptedly, for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXV. V. 1, 2. ‘This perhaps was the ‘morning hymn, which the precentor, (*ver.* 4, 5,) called ‘upon the Levites to sing, at the opening of the gates of ‘the temple; as the former was sung at the shutting up of ‘the gates in the evening. ...Let all here present praise the ‘most wise omnipotent goodness of the Lord: let him ‘especially be praised by you his priests, who minister unto ‘his Majesty: ...and by the Levites, who attend upon him ‘in his house.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, cxxxiv.)

V. 3. ‘As his nature is most excellent, so He is the ‘Fountain of all the good we enjoy: and no employment

^h xxxiii. 12. Deut. vii. 6, 7. x. 15. i Sam. xii. 22. Is. xli. 8. xliii. 20, 21. Zech. ii. 10—12. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

4 For ^h the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for ⁱ his peculiar treasure.

ⁱ Ex. xix. 5, 6. Deut. xxxii. 9. Mal. iii. 17. Tit. ii. 14.

5 For ^k I know that the LORD is great, and that our Lord is above all gods.

^k xlvi. 1. lxxxvi. 8—10. lxxxix. 6. xc. 3. xcvi. 4, 5. xcvi. 9. Deut. x. 17. Is. xl. 22, 25. Jer. x. 10, 11. Dan. iii. 29. vi. 26, 27.

6 ^l Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, ^m in the seas, and all deep places.

^l cxv. 3. Is. xlv. 10. Dan. iv. 35. Am. iv. 13. ix. 6. Matt. xxviii. 18.

7 He ⁿ causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth; ^o he maketh lightnings for the rain; ^p he bringeth the wind out of his treasures.

^m cxxxvi. 13—15. Matt. viii. 26, 27. xiv. 25.

8 Who ⁿ smote the first-born of Egypt, ^q both of man and beast.

ⁿ cxlviii. 8. Gen. ii. 5, 6. 1 Kings xviii. 1. 41—45. Job v. 10. Jer. x. 13. ii. 16. Zech. x. 1.

9 Who ^r sent tokens and wonders into the midst of thee, O Egypt, ^s upon Pharaoh, and upon all his servants.

^o Job xxviii. 25, 26. xxxviii. 25—28.

10 Who ^t smote great nations, and slew mighty kings;

^p cvii. 25. cxlviii. 8. Job xxxviii. 22, 23. Jon. i. 4. John iii. 8.

11 ^u Sihon king of the Amorites, and Og king of Bashan, ^v and all the kingdoms of Canaan:

^q lxxviii. 51. cv. 36. cxxxvi. 10. Ex. xii. 12, 29, 30. xlii. 15.

12 And ^w gave their land for an heritage, an heritage unto Israel his people.

^r lxxviii. 43—50. cv. 27—29. Ex. vii—xv. Deut. iv. 34. Neh. ix. 10. Is. li. 9, 10. Jer. xxxii. 20, 21. Acts vii. 36. s cxxxvi. 15. t xlv. 2, 3. cxxxvi. 17—22. u Num. xxi. 21, 35. Deut. ii. 30—37. iii. 1, &c. Neh. ix. 22. x Josh. x—xii. y lxxviii. 55. cxxxvi. 21, 22. Num. xxxiii. 54. Josh. xi. 23.

^z viii. 1. 9. lxxii. 17. cii. 12, 21. Ex. iii. 15. xxxiv. 5—7. Hos. xi. 5. Matt. vi. 9, 13.

13 ^a Thy name, O LORD, endureth for ever; and thy memorial, O LORD, ^b throughout all generations.

^b Deut. xxxii. 36. Judg. x. 16. 1 Chr. xxi. 15. Hos. xi. 8, 9. Am. vii. 3, 6. Jon. iv. 2.

14 For ^a the LORD will judge his people, and ^b he will repent himself concerning his servants.

^c cxv. 4—8. Deut. iv. 28. Is. xxxvii. 19. xl. 19, 20. xlv. 9—20. xlv. 6, 7. Jer. x. 3, &c. Hab. ii. 16, 19. Acts xvii. 29.

15 The ^c idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

^d Is. vi. 10. Matt. xiii. 14—16.

16 They have mouths, but they speak not; ^d eyes have they, but they see not;

^e cxvii. 7. cxv. 8. Is. xlv. 18—20. Jer. x. 8. 2 Cor. iv. 4.

17 They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths.

18 ^e They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.

^f cxv. 9—11. cxviii. 1—4. cxlv. 10. cxlvii. 19, 20. cxlviii. 14. Rev. xix. 5.

19 ^f Bless the LORD, O house of Israel: bless the LORD, O house of Aaron:

20 Bless the LORD, O house of Levi: ye that fear the LORD, bless the LORD.

^g lxxvi. 2. cxxxiv. 3. 2 Chr. vi. 6. h xlviii. 1, 9. cxxxii. 13, 14. Is. xii. 6.

21 Blessed be the LORD ^g out of Zion, ^h which dwelleth at Jerusalem. Praise ye the LORD.

'is so delightful, as to acknowledge his perfections, and commemorate the benefits we have received from him, by singing psalms and hymns of praise and thanks unto him.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 4. Notes, Ex. xix. 5, 6. Mal. iii. 13—18, v. 17, marg. Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.

V. 5, 6. Other nations indeed praised their gods, and celebrated their imaginary exploits: but the Psalmist, in the most decided manner, declared that he knew JEHOVAH was far above them all; and alone worthy to be thus adored and honoured, as the great Creator and absolute Sovereign of the universe. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, cxv. 1—7. Is. xlv. 10, 11. Dan. iv. 34—37. Eph. i. 3—8.) 'His one will alone gives bounds to his power: for as none act without his leave, so none can hinder him from doing what pleases himself.' Bp. Patrick. This absolute sovereignty, however, is always exercised in perfect wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness.

V. 7. (Notes, Job xxviii. 23—28. xxxviii. 22—30. Jer. x. 12—15. Zech. x. 1.) 'Among the Greeks and Romans, we meet with a Jupiter possessed of the thunder and lightning, and an Æolus ruling over the winds. The Psalmist teacheth us to restore the celestial artillery to its rightful Owner. ...It is a great instance of the divine wisdom and goodness, that lightning should be accompanied by rain, to soften its rage, and prevent its mischievous effects.' Bp. Horne.

V. 8—12. Notes, lxxviii. 42—50. Ex. vii—xv. Num. xxi. 21—34.

V. 13. (Notes, viii. 1. lxxii. 17—19. cii. 12. cxi. 4. Ex. iii. 14, 15. xxxiv. 5—7. Matt. vi. 9.) 'O Lord, how

'astonishing is this thy Omnipotent goodness! the fame of which shall never be forgotten: but an illustrious memory, O Lord, shall be continued of it, from generation to generation.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 14. Repent.] If he judge his people, or punish them, he will compassionate their sorrows. He will be pacified towards his people. (Notes, Deut. xxxii. 36. Judg. x. 15, 16. Am. vii. 1—6.)

V. 15—21. (Notes, cxv. 3—13.) In the scripture referred to, the exhortation is to "trust in the LORD;" here it is "to bless the LORD." Those who trust in the Lord, honour him, and shall daily have more and more cause to praise and thank him.—'The honour the heathens give to their lifeless images ought to excite you all, with the greater devotions, to praise the Lord of the world.' Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, lxxvi. 1, 2. cxxxii. 2—9.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

How lamentable it is, that we should need so much exciting to praise our God, and yet be so negligent and formal as we often are, in this reasonable and delightful employment! But his servants must on earth be trained up to that holy exercise, in which they are to be occupied for ever in heaven: and in his courts especially, ministers must instruct and go before them, in this sacred worship.—The essential goodness and excellency of the Lord would entitle him to our utmost love and praise, were it possible for us to be free from other obligations to him: and the pleasantness of the work would endear it to us, if our hearts were free from the dire disease of sin. But to the Lord we owe our being, our rational powers, and all our outward comforts, which demand our warmest gratitude;

PSALM CXXXVI.

Exhortations to praise the Lord for his everlasting mercy; for all the blessings of creation, providence, and redemption; and for his glory displayed in them,

a cvi. 1. cvii. 1. and redemption; and for his glory displayed in them, 1—26.

O ^a GIVE thanks unto the LORD: for he is good: ^b for his mercy endureth for ever.

2 O give thanks unto ^c the God of gods: for his mercy endureth for ever.

3 O give thanks to ^d the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth for ever.

4 To him ^e who alone doeth great

wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.

5 To ^f him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth for ever.

6 To ^g him that stretched out the earth above the waters: for his mercy endureth for ever.

7 To ^h him that made great lights: for his mercy endureth for ever:

8 ⁱ The sun ^{*} to rule by day: for his mercy endureth for ever:

9 ^k The ^{*} moon and stars to rule by night: for his mercy endureth for ever.

xxxiii. 6. civ. 24. Gen. i. 1. Prov. iii. 19, 20. viii. 22—29. Jer. li. 15.

xxiv. 2. civ. 2, 3. Gen. i. 9. Job xxxvi. 7. xxxvii. 18. Is. xl. 22. xlii. 24. Jer. x. 12. Zech. xii. 1. 2 Pet. iii. 5—7. h lxxiv. 16, 17. civ. 19. Gen. i. 14—19. Deut. iv. 19.

i cxlviii. 3. Jer. xxxi. 35. Matt. v. 45.

* Heb. for the rulings by day. k viii. 3. lxxxix. 36, 37. Job xxxi. 26.

and the peculiar favours vouchsafed to Britons, both in providence, and in the spiritual advantages afforded us, place us in the same relation, and under the same obligations to him, as the Israelites of old were.—Whilst his moderate rains fructify our land, and we are generally exempted from fatal tempests and inundations: how often has “the wind out of his treasures” dispersed the preparations of our formidable enemies! How inexcusable then is our national infidelity, impiety, and licentiousness! “O foolish people, and unwise, do ye thus requite the “LORD!” He has, however, a remnant among us, “whom “he has chosen unto him, through sanctification of the “Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of “Jesus.” (Note, 1 Pet. i. 1, 2.) These are indeed his “peculiar treasure” which he values, by whom he is loved and adored on earth, and in whom he will be eternally glorified. Happy then are they! their unchangeable Friend is equally great and good; and equally able and willing to defend, uphold, and bless them. “He doeth what he “pleaseth in heaven and earth, in the seas, and in all deep “places.” It has pleased him to make them his people; and it is his “good pleasure to give them the kingdom.” (Note, Luke xii. 22—34, v. 32.) The tokens and wonders which he wrought for Israel, and the heritage that he gave them, were feeble shadows of the mercy which he has shewn to his true Israel, the redemption wrought out, and the inheritance prepared for them: and every past and present favour is a token and earnest of his future and eternal love. For he is immutably perfect, and the memorial of his wonders for his people shall endure throughout all generations. He will plead their cause, and judge between them and their enemies: and, though he afflict and correct them, he will repent concerning them, and not be wroth with them for ever. (Note, xc. 13—17.) While therefore we detest and mourn over the idolatries and impiety of the world around us, let us remember with gratitude who has made us to differ: let us pity and pray for benighted heathens and deluded sinners: and let us, whether ministers or private Christians, trusting and fearing the Lord, bless him in his church on earth; rejoice in hope of praising him in his holy habitation in heaven; and endeavour to glorify his name and recommend his truth, not only with our lips, but in our holy lives, and by copying the example of his righteousness, goodness, and truth, in all our dealings with our brethren and neighbours.

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXVI. V. 1—3. This psalm in many things resembles the preceding: but it is rendered remarkable, by the repetition of the sweet sentence, “for his mercy “endureth for ever,” at the end of every verse. By *mercy* we understand the Lord’s disposition to compassionate and relieve those, whom sin has rendered miserable and base; his readiness to forgive and be reconciled to the most provoking of transgressors, and to bestow all blessings upon them; together with all the provision which he has made, for the honour of his name, in the redemption of sinners by Jesus Christ. The counsels of this mercy have been from everlasting; the effects of it will be eternal to all who are interested in it: and the Lord continues, from age to age, equally ready to shew mercy to all who seek to him for it. (Marg. Ref.—Note, ciii. 15—18.) The frequent repetition of this sentence shews how greatly the Lord delights in mercy, and deems himself honoured by the exercise of it: and it teaches us that this attribute should be peculiarly dear to us, being the source of all our hopes and comforts.—‘At every half verse, one half of the choir “answers to the other in these words: “For his mercy endureth for ever:” a form of acknowledgment prescribed by David to be used continually in the divine service.’ Bp. Patrick.—‘A form highly proper for creatures, “and sinful creatures to use, whose great employment it “is now, and will be for ever, to magnify the mercy and “loving-kindness of their God.’ Bp. Horne.—‘This was a “common kind of thanksgiving, which the whole people “used, when they had received any benefit of God;’ (Marg. Ref. a, b;) “meaning that God was not only merciful to their fathers, but also continued the same to their “posterity.’

V. 4. ‘He it is and he alone, whose works are so great, “that they surprise all those who seriously consider them, “with wonder and astonishment.’ Bp. Patrick. ‘How “many of those, for whom the wonders of creation, providence, and redemption have been wrought, think none “of them worthy their attention! Angels admire and “adore, where man will not deign to cast an eye, or employ a thought.’ Bp. Horne. (Note, lxxii. 17—19.)

V. 5—9. Marg. Ref.—Notes, civ. 19—23. Gen. i.—‘Look upon the heavens, and behold with admiration and “praise, the splendour and order, wherein his wisdom hath “contrived and settled them. ... Witness those great lights,

¹ lxxviii. 51. cv. 36. cxxxv. 8. Ex. xi. 5, 6. xii. 12. 29. Heb. xi. 28. 10 To ¹ him that smote Egypt in their first-born: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

^m lxxviii. 52. cv. 37. Ex. xii. 51. xiii. 3. 17. 1 Sam. xii. 6—8. 11 And ^m brought out Israel from among them: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

ⁿ Ex. vi. 6. xiii. 14. xv. 6. Deut. xi. 2—4. 1s li. 9, 10. Jer. xxxii. 21. Acts vii. 36. 12 ⁿ With a strong hand, and with a stretched-out arm: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

^o lxxv. 5, 6. lxxiv. 13. lxxviii. 13. cv. 9—11. Ex. xiv. 21, 22. 29. 1s. lxiii. 12, 13. Heb. xi. 29. 13 To ^o him which divided the Red sea into parts: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

14 And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

^p lxxviii. 53. Ex. xiv. 27, 28. xv. 4, 5, 10, 11. Neh. ix. 10, 11. 15 ^p But ^{*} overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: ^q for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

^r lxxvii. 20. Ex. xiii. 18. xv. 22. Num. ix. 17—22. Deut. viii. 2. Neh. ix. 12. 19. 1s. xlix. 10. lxiii. 11—14. 16 To ^r him which led his people through the wilderness: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

^s cxxxv. 10, 11. Josh. xii. 17 To ^s him which smote great kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

18 And slew famous kings: for his mercy *endureth* for ever:

19 ^t Sihon king of the Amorites: ^t for his mercy *endureth* for ever: Num. xxi. 23. Deut. ii. 30—36. xxix. 7.

20 And ^u Og the king of Bashan: ^u for his mercy *endureth* for ever: Num. xxi. 33. Deut. iii. 1, &c.

21 And ^x gave their land for an heritage: for his mercy *endureth* for ever: x xlv. 2, 3. lxxviii. 55. cv. 44. cxxxv. 12. Num. xxxii. 33, &c. Deut. iii. 12—17. Josh. xiii. 22—24. Neh. ix. xlvii. 4.

22 Even ^y an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.

23 Who ^z remembered us ^a in our low estate: for his mercy *endureth* for ever: z cii. 17. cvi. 43—45. Gen. viii. 1. Deut. xxxii. 36. 1s. lxiii. 9. Ez. xvi. 3—13. Luke i. 48, 52.

24 And ^a hath redeemed us from our enemies: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. a lxxii. 12—14. cxiii. 7. cxvi. 6. cxlii. 6. 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8.

25 Who ^b giveth food to all flesh: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. b Ex. xv. 13. Deut. xxi. 10, 11. 1s. lxiii. 9. Luke i. 68—74. Tit. ii. 14.

26 O give thanks unto ^c the God of heaven: for his mercy *endureth* for ever. c civ. 27. cxlv. 15, 16. cxlvii. 9. d 1—3. cxv. 3. cxliii. 1. Jon. i. 9. Rev. vi. 13.

‘which never go out, but always call on us to praise ‘and give thanks to him, who made them to illuminate the ‘world, and to be emblems of his kindness.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 10—22. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xii. 29—39. xiv. xv. 1—21. Num. xxi. 24—34. Deut. viii. 1—3. Josh. xii.) The destruction of the Egyptians, Amorites, and Canaanites, with their kings, was a display of the awful justice of God towards them; but of his abundant mercy and goodness to his people. And the memorial of them, while it called for the gratitude of Israel, gave a pledge and assurance of his ever enduring goodness and mercy to his true and faithful servants; and of their final triumph over all their enemies. (Notes, lxxviii. 41—54. Neh. ix. 7—22. 1s. lxiii. 7—14.)

V. 23—26. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, cxiii. 7—9. Ex. xv. 13. 1s. li. 1—3. Ez. xvi. 6—14. Luke i. 46—55.) ‘When ‘for our sins we were severely afflicted, and in danger ‘to be thrown out of this good land, ... (Judg. ii. iii. iv.) ‘he was pleased graciously to relieve us. For his kindness pardoned our ingratitude, ... and rescued us many a ‘time, when we cried unto him, from the power of those ‘who tyrannized over us. ... Whose bounty is not confined ‘to us alone, but supplies the wants of all mankind, yea ‘of all living creatures. For his kindness hath no bound. ‘... O raise your hearts to give him thanks with the highest ‘praises, whose power extends itself beyond his earth even ‘unto the highest heavens. For his kindness is so unwearied, that we may hope thence to be ever receiving ‘more and more of his blessings.’ Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Repetitions, disgusting to the fastidious, are often salutary and necessary, because we are prone to overlook or forget the Lord’s goodness and mercy: yet they convey a severe reproof, and should cause us to unite humiliation

with our gratitude to our condescending Instructor. (Note, 1s. xxviii. 9—11. P. O. 1—13.)—The works of creation proclaim the wisdom, power, and goodness of JEHOVAH, the “God of gods, and Lord of lords:” while the continuance of the settled course of nature, and the blessings thus communicated, by a kind providence, to a rebellious world, are proofs of his patience and mercy that endureth for ever. Nay, his denunciations of vengeance against impenitent sinners should be considered as tokens of his mercy, and improved as warnings to repent, and “to flee “from the wrath to come:” and his judgment upon persecutors and oppressors is evidently the effect of his mercy to his church. (Notes, Zech. i. 12—21.) The destruction of opposing kings and nations, “with a strong hand and “an out-stretched arm,” was as conducive to the good of Israel, as the manna, the water from the rock, and the conducting cloud. And in like manner, the crucifixion of our lusts, and the sharp corrections by which the Lord promotes our sanctification, are as blessed tokens of his mercy, as the forgiveness of our sins, and the consolations of his Holy Spirit: and our complete salvation will be connected with the final destruction of all the enemies of God and of our souls.—Blessed be his name who has remembered us lost sinners, in our low estate, and has provided salvation for us through his Son, and revealed it in his holy word. May we experience his redeeming power in our hearts, that being “saved from our enemies, we “may serve him in holiness and righteousness all our “days:” (Note, Luke i. 67—75:) and may he, “who “giveth food to all flesh,” feed our souls unto eternal life; (Notes, xxii. 26. John vi. 47—58;) and enliven our affections by his grace, that we may give thanks and praise to his holy name, “because he is good, and because his mercy “endureth for ever.” Amen.

PSALM CXXXVII.

The pious captives at Babylon bewail Zion's desolations, complain of the insults of their oppressors, and declare their strong and inviolable attachment to Jerusalem, 1—6. They pray that God would remember the conduct of Edom; and they predict the doom of Babylon, 7—9.

BY ^athe rivers of Babylon, ^bthere we sat down, yea, ^cwe wept, when we remembered Zion.

2 We ^dhanged our harps upon the willows, in the midst thereof.

3 For ^ethere they that carried us away captive required of us ^fa song; and they that ^gwasted us *required of us* mirth, *saying*, Sing us *one of* ^hthe songs of Zion.

4 ⁱHow shall we sing the LORD's song in a ^jstrange land?

5 If ^kI forget thee, O Jerusalem, ^llet my right hand forget *her cunning*.

6 If I do not remember thee, ^mlet my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; ⁿif I prefer not Jerusalem above ^omy chief joy.

7 ^pRemember, O LORD, ^qthe children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, ^rRase *it*, rase *it*, *even* to the foundation thereof.

8 O ^sdaughter of Babylon, ^twho art to be ^udestroyed; ^vhappy *shall he be*, that ^wrewardeth thee as thou hast served us.

9 Happy *shall he be*, that taketh ^xand dasheth thy little ones against ^ythe stones.

^zxxxiv. 1, 2. 10. cii. 13, 14. cxxii. 5—9. Neh. i. 2—4. ii. 2, 3. Is. lxii. 1, 6, 7. Jer. li. 50.

^h lxxxiv. 1, 2. 10. cii. 13, 14. cxxii. 5—9. Neh. i. 2—4. ii. 2, 3. Is. lxii. 1, 6, 7. Jer. li. 50.

ⁱ Zech. xi. 17.

^k xxii. 15. Is. xli. 27. Lam. iv. 4. Ez. iii. 26.

^l Matt. vi. 33. Acts xx. 24. Phil. i. 20—25. 1 Thes. iii. 7—9.

^m Heb. *the head of my joy*.

ⁿ lxxxiv. 18. lxxxix. 8—12. Ex. xvii. 14. 1 Sam. xv. 2. Hos. vii. 2.

^o Is. lxiii. 1—6. Jer. xlix. 7, &c. Lam. iv. 21, 22. Ez. xxv. 12—14. Ob. 10—14. 18—21.

^p Heb. *Make bare*.

^q Is. xlvii. 1—5. Jer. l. 42. li. 33. Zech. ii. 7.

^r Is. xlii. xiv. 4—24. xxi. 1—10. Jer. xxv. 12—14. 1. li. Rev. xiv. 8—11. xviii. xviii.

^s Heb. *wasted*.

^t q clix. 6—9. Is. xlviii. 6—9. Is. xlviii. 6—9. Is. xlviii. 6—9.

^u Heb. *recompenseth unto thee*.

^v Is. xlii. 16. Hos. x. 14. xlii. 16.

^w Heb. *the rock*.

^x lxxxiv. 1, 2. 10. cii. 13, 14. cxxii. 5—9. Neh. i. 2—4. ii. 2, 3. Is. lxii. 1, 6, 7. Jer. li. 50.

^y lxxxiv. 1, 2. 10. cii. 13, 14. cxxii. 5—9. Neh. i. 2—4. ii. 2, 3. Is. lxii. 1, 6, 7. Jer. li. 50.

^z lxxxiv. 1, 2. 10. cii. 13, 14. cxxii. 5—9. Neh. i. 2—4. ii. 2, 3. Is. lxii. 1, 6, 7. Jer. li. 50.

NOTES

PSALM CXXXVII. V. 1—6. It is not known by whom this Psalm was written: but the occasion is evident; and the pathetick abruptness, so suited to that occasion with which it opens, is admirably beautiful. The captive Jews, by the rivers of Babylon, sat down and wept, while they recollected their former prosperity; and especially, they remembered with tears the desolate state of the holy city and the temple of God, their own destitution of sacred ordinances, and the apparently ruined state of the church and people of Israel: for these calamities were brought on them by their national transgressions, to which they had all contributed. No longer able therefore to divert their melancholy, by singing songs of praise, they hanged their harps upon the willows, growing in abundance in that moistened soil, which perhaps they were employed in cultivating. But their insulting victors and oppressors required them to gratify their curiosity, or administer to their entertainment, by singing “one of the songs of Zion:” by which they also meant to deride their confidence in JEHOVAH, and to express their triumph over the religion, as well as over the city and country, of the poor captives. (Note, cxxiii. 3, 4.) But they were not only indisposed (probably too much,) for joyful praise; but they would not, they could not, profane their sacred songs, to increase the insolence of their idolatrous masters: and therefore they said one to another, or to those who demanded this of them, “How shall we sing the LORD’s song in a strange land?” “Neither fear nor favour could extort this service from our Levites, but they resolutely answered; As those songs were not made for pastime or sport, but in honour of the great Lord of the world; so how can you imagine that miserable slaves are disposed to sing? and to sing those songs in the land where we are exiles, which recount the mercies of God to us, in our once most flourishing country.” Bp. Patrick. Yet Jerusalem and the interests of religion, were still uppermost

in their thoughts and affections: and the Psalmist, in the name of his brethren, declared that he would rather be deprived of his skill in musick, and have “his tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth,” than forget the songs of Zion; or do otherwise than prefer the interests of Jerusalem and of the church to every personal advantage or pleasure. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, lxxxiv. 1, 2. cii. 13—22. cxxii. 6—9.)—The persons immediately concerned seem to have been Levites, who had been singers at the temple, and who had brought their instruments along with them. (Notes, 1 Chr. vi. 31—48. xvi. 4—6. xxv.) ‘I have followed a conjecture of St. Chrysostom’s, that the captives were not suffered (at their first coming thither) to dwell within any of their towns or cities, but were dispersed all along several rivers of the country; where they built cottages for themselves: and perhaps were forced to drain those moist places, to make them wholesome.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 7—9. The Edomites, though of the same stock with the Jews, were inveterate in their hatred of them, and excited the Chaldeans utterly to destroy their city and temple: and for this and other injuries their ruin had repeatedly been predicted. (Notes, Is. xxxiv. lxiii. 1—6. Jer. xlix. 7—23. Lam. iv. 21, 22. Ez. xxv. 12—14. xxxv. Ob. 10—14.) The destruction of Babylon, with every circumstance of terror and misery, had also been foretold. (Notes, Is. xlii. xiv. xlvii. Jer. l. li.) This was therefore a prayer of the church for deliverance, in the predicted manner, with the extermination of her implacable enemies, root and branch, as Israel had been commissioned to destroy the Canaanites: and a declaration, that the persons employed in executing this vengeance on Babylon, and effecting this deliverance of his people, would be peculiarly favoured and prospered by Providence; though the work should be accompanied with the retaliation of those cruelties, which had been committed upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem.—Babylon was a type of the antichristian corrupters and oppressors of the New-Testament church,

PSALM CXXXVIII.

David praises the mercy and truth of God, who had answered his prayers, 1—3. He prophesies, that all kings shall praise God and rejoice in his ways, 4, 5. He shews the Lord's dealings with the humble, and with the proud; and professes full confidence in him, 6—8.

A Psalm of David.

^a ix. 1. lxxxvi. 12. 13. cii. 1, 2. cxi. 1. 1 Cor. xiv. 15. Eph. v. 19. **I** WILL praise thee with my whole

heart: ^b before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

^c 2 I will worship ^e toward thy holy temple, ^d and praise thy name for thy loving-kindness and for thy truth: ^e for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

³ In the day when I cried thou an-

^{8, 9.} ^e lvi. 4. 10. ^{1s.} xlii. 21. ^{Matt.} v. 18. xxiv. 35. ^{John} x. 35. ^{xxxiv.} 4—6. ^{lxxvii.} 1, 2. ^{1s.} lxxv. 24. ^b lxxxii. 1. 6. cxix. 46. ^{Ex.} xxii. 28. ^{John} x. 34—36. ^{Acts} xxiii. 5. ^{Heb.} i. 14. ^{v.} 7. xxviii. 2. ^{xcix.} 5. ^{9.} 1 Kings viii. 29. ^{30.} Dan. vi. 10. ^d xxxvi. 5, 6. ^{lxxxv.} 10. ^{lxxxvi.} 15. ^{lxxxix.} 1, 2. ^{c.} 4, 5. ^{cxx.} 1. ^{1s.} lxiii. 7. ^{Mic.} vii. 18—20. ^{Luke} i. 68—72. ^{John} i. 17. ^{Rom.} xv. f xviii. 6.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

When we are suffering the effects of our personal or national transgressions; we should recollect, with godly sorrow, our forfeited mercies, and our sins by which we have lost them; that by repentance and prayer we may seek deliverance, and the restoration of our privileges and comforts. Whilst worldly men grieve for the loss of their outward prosperity; the believer mourns over his banishment from the ordinances of God, and for the despised and desolate state of religion: especially when he hears the insults and blasphemies of infidels, and profane scoffers; who, being employed to correct the offending people of God, triumph, as if he could not, or would not, plead their cause. (*Notes*, xlii. 9, 10. xlii. 9—16. lxxiv. 18—23. lxxix. 8—13.)—In such circumstances, it is hard to preserve the mind in tranquillity, and to be duly thankful for remaining unmerited mercies.—Sacred things, however, must on no consideration be profaned to please ungodly men; nor the songs of Zion sung to gratify their humour, or embolden their insolence. (*Note*, *Matt.* vii. 6.) In such an evil day it is best to keep silence, or to complain unto God and among his people. Yet no calamity, no strange land, no prevalence of ungodliness, no despised and oppressed state of the church, should induce us to forget Jerusalem. If personal advantages and prosperity ever render a professor of the gospel satisfied at a distance from the ordinances of God, ashamed of his despised cause, or indifferent about the interests of the church, so as not to “prefer them to his chief joy;” a far worse calamity has befallen him, than if his “right hand withered,” or his “tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth.” For the Lord will not forsake his church in her low estate; he will execute predicted vengeance on all her persecutors, principals and accessaries; and if professed Christians unite with them in their prosperity, they will be joined with them in the day of wrath. We cannot pray for promised success to the church of God, without implying a prayer for the ruin of her implacable enemies: and the instruments of good to the people of God, will, in one way or other, concur in the condemnation and punishment of impenitent sinners. It is, however, far more agreeable to be instruments of good to the people of God, or to our fellow sinners, than executioners of vengeance on his enemies: though the latter may be accepted and blessed, if men act in obedience to his command, and out of zeal for his glory. (*Note*, cxlix. 7—9.) Let us, however, be decidedly on the Lord's part, for his cause will at length prevail, and

destruction will be to the workers of iniquity: but though his true people are here, as in a strange land, often insulted, despised, hated, and grieved, and put out of frame for singing the Lord's song; yet they shall soon come to Zion, and resume their harps, and rejoice in their God for evermore. (*Note*, *Is.* xxxv. 8—10, v. 10.)

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXVIII. *Title.* The Septuagint entitle this, ‘A Psalm of,’ or for, ‘David, Haggai, and Zechariah;’ perhaps meaning, that these prophets taught the congregation to use it, in giving thanks for Israel's return from captivity.

V. 1. *Before the gods.*] ‘Thy holy angels shall be witnesses of my gratitude, which I will express in psalms and hymns, in the presence of the great assembly of the judges, ... that they may remember to whom they owe their power and authority.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, lxxxii. 1. 6, 7. xevi. 5. xevii. 3—7.)—Perhaps the Psalmist also meant, that he would praise JEHOVAH in the presence of the most powerful heathen princes, in contempt of the objects of their idolatrous worship, and as a protest against it.

V. 2. *Marg. Ref.—Thou hast magnified, &c.*] The accomplishment of the promises which God had made to David, notwithstanding all opposition and difficulties, honoured his word of grace and truth. This accomplishment appeared so fully and clearly, that the glory reflected from the other works of God, as displaying his omnipotence and omniscience, his awful justice and holiness, and other perfections, appeared to be here surpassed; or, that discovery of the glorious God, which has been made in his promises to fallen man in general, or particularly to Abraham, and Israel, and David, and in the accomplishment of them, exceeds, and as it were eclipses, the glory of all his other works. The giving and fulfilling his promises of a Saviour, the only begotten Son of God, and redemption through his propitiation and death to sinners, especially redounds “to the praise of his glory,” even “the glory of his grace and truth, wherein he hath abounded towards us, in all wisdom and prudence.” (*Notes*, lvi. 3, 4. lxxxv. 10—13. *John* i. 17. *Eph.* i. 1—12. *1 Pet.* i. 10—12. *1 John* iv. 9—12.)

V. 3. When God strengthens the faith, hope, love, patience, and holy fortitude of his afflicted servants, he strengthens them with strength in their souls: and though their outward trials and sufferings continue, yet their prayers are answered in the most desirable manner. (*Notes*, *Is.* xl. 27—31. *2 Cor.* xii. 7—10. *Eph.* iii. 13—19, v. 16. *Phil.* iv. 10—13. *Col.* i. 9—14.)

g xxvii. 14. xxix. 11. lxxiii. 8. Is. xii. 2. xl. 29—31. xli. 10. Zech. x. 12. 2 Cor. xii. 8—10. Eph. iii. 16. vi. 10. Phil. iv. 13. Col. i. 11. 1 Pet. v. 10. h lxxii. 11. cii. 15. 22. Is. xlix. 23. lx. 3—5. 16. Rev. xi. 15. xxi. 24. i xxii. 22. 27. li. 13. lxxix. 30—32. lxxi. 18. k Is. lii. 7—10. lxxv. 14. lxxvi. 10—14. Jer. xxxi. 11, 12. Zeph. iii. 14, 15. Matt. xxi. 5—9. Luke xix. 37, 38. lxxi. 5. Ex. xv. 11. xxxiii. 18, 19. Is. vi. 1—3. Mal. i. 11. John xiii. 31, 32. xvii. 1. 2 Cor. iv. 6. Eph. i. 6. 12. Rev. iv. 11. v. 12—14. vii. 12. xix. 1. m li. 17. cxiii. 5, 6. 1 Sam. ii. 7, 8. Prov. iii. 34. Is. lvii. 15. lxxvi. 2. Luke i. 51—53. xiv. 11. xviii. 14. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.

V. 4, 5. Perhaps David expected, that his example and instructions, and the merciful and faithful dealings of God with him, would have a salutary effect on the neighbouring princes. (Notes, lxxxvi. 9, 10. cxix. 46.) These verses, however, are an evident and remarkable prophecy of the calling of the Gentiles, and of such a prevalence of true religion as has not yet taken place on earth. (Notes, xxii. 27—31. lxxii. 8—11. Rev. xi. 15—18.)—The Lord Jesus, in his agony, prayed more fervently; and he was strengthened with strength in his soul: he was in due time raised from the dead; and then the gentile nations, and at length some of their princes, heard and embraced the gospel, and sang psalms of joyful praise, while walking “in the ways of the LORD;” “for great was the glory of the LORD.” What will it then be, when “all kings shall fall down before him, all nations shall do him service?”—*When they hear,* &c. (4) Notes, Rom. x. 12—17. 1 Thes. ii. 13—16, v. 13.

V. 6. The infinite majesty and sovereign power of God are combined with equal condescension and mercy, to the meanest of his subjects. It is especially the established rule of his government over the race of Adam, to regard with favour, to accept and comfort, the lowly; and to stand as it were at a distance from the proud, as abhorring and detesting them, and to “know” them only as his enemies. (Notes, li. 17. cxiii. 4—8. 1 Sam. ii. 4—8. P. O. Is. ii. 10—22. Notes, lvii. 15, 16. Dan. iv. 34—37. Luke xiv. 7—11. xviii. 9—14. Jam. iv. 4—6.)—“Let” then, “this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, ... who humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross: wherefore God hath highly exalted him.” (Notes, Phil. ii. 1—11.)

V. 7. Marg. Ref.—Revive.] Or, Quicken. (Note, cxix. 25.) Either preserve alive, restore to life, or render lively and cheerful, “giving life more abundantly.” David was kept alive, rendered lively, and made more earnest in religion by his trials and afflictions: but Christ, after all his unspeakable sufferings, and his death for our sins, was restored to life, as the first-fruits of the resurrection, of which all his people shall participate.

V. 8 ‘Though mine enemies rage never so much, yet the Lord, who hath begun his work in me, will continue his grace to the end.’ (Notes, c. 3. Eph. ii. 4—10. Phil. i. 3—6.)

- Grace shall complete what grace begins,
 - To save from sorrows or from sins:
 - The work that wisdom undertakes,
 - Eternal mercy ne’er forsakes.’
- Watts.

hath he respect unto the lowly: ^a but ⁿ the proud he knoweth ^o afar off.

7 ^p Though I walk in the midst of trouble, ^q thou wilt revive me: ^r thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, ^s and thy right hand shall save me.

8 The LORD will ^t perfect *that which* concerneth me: ^u thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever: ^x forsake not the works of thine own hands.

Ex. xviii. 11. Job xl. 11, 12. Is. ii. 11. 17. Ez. xxxviii. 2—9. Dan. iv. 37. v. 20—24. Acts xii. 22, 23. o cxxxix. 2. Matt. xxv. 41. 2 Thes. i. 9. p xxiii. 3, 4. xlii. 7, 8. lxxvi. 10—12. Job xiii. 15. xix. 25, 26. q lxxi. 20, 21. lxxxv. 6. cxix. 49, 50. r xxxv. 1—3. lvi. 1, 2. 9. lxxiv. 7, 8. lxxvii. 10. cxlii. 1, 2. Is. v. 25. ix. 12. 17. 21. x. 4. Mic. vii. 8—10. s xvii. 7. xviii. 35. t lvii. 2. Is. xxvi. 12. Jer. xxxii. 39, 40. John xv. 2. Rom. v. 10. viii. 28—30. Phil. i. 6. u c. 5. ciii. 17. x lxxi. 6—9. 17, 18. Job x. 3. 8. xiv. 15. Is. xlii. 16. xliii. 21. 1 Pet. i. 3—5. iv. 19. Jude 1.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

We ought to glory in ascribing glory to our God; and when we can “praise him with our whole heart,” we need not be reluctant for the whole world to witness our gratitude and joy in him.—Those, who rely on his loving-kindness and truth through Jesus Christ, will be sure to find him faithful to his word. In performing his promises, he more magnifies his perfections, than in all his other works; of which he has given us an illustrious specimen and earnest, in sending the promised Saviour “to be the propitiation for our sins:” and “if he spared not his own Son, ... how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” In the day when the Redeemer cried in the agony of his soul, he heard him, and strengthened him to finish the arduous work assigned to him: and, having humbled himself even to the death upon the cross, he is now exalted to the throne of glory. For his sake the Lord will strengthen all who fervently pray in his name, that they may be carried through all their trials: their experience will more and more embolden them in saying, “Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou wilt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.” Yea, the Lord will perfect the salvation of every true believer: and though he has been often provoked to destroy the works of his hands, as Creator; (Notes, Is. xxvii. 7—11. xliii. 14—21, v. 21;) yet he will never forsake those whom he has created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works. Let then all, who trust in and call upon him, praise him with joyful hearts. “Let them sing in the ways of the LORD; for great is the glory of the LORD;” in order that sinners may hear, and be convinced that they are a happy people, and be induced to seek his face. (Note, Zech. viii. 20—23.) And they will not seek in vain: “for though the LORD be high, yet he hath respect to every lowly,” humbled sinner: but the proud, the impenitent and unbelieving, are known by him as his enemies, and will be banished far from his blissful presence. Nor will the most powerful kings and princes be excepted from this general rule. They too must hearken to the words of his mouth, and humble themselves before his mercy-seat; that, being made partakers of his grace, they may rejoice in his ways, and use their pre-eminence in advancing his glory; otherwise where the Saviour is, thither they cannot come. (Note, Jam. i. 9—11.) Lord hasten that time, which thy word teaches us confidently to expect, when all the kings of the

PSALM CXXXIX.

^a 23 xi. 4, 5. xvii. 3. xlv. 21. 1 Kings viii. 39. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. Jer. xii. 3. xvii. 9, 10. John xxi. 17. Heb. iv. 13. Rev. ii. 18. 23. ^b lvi. 8. Gen. xvi. 13. 2 Kings xix. 27. Prov. xv. 3. Is. xxxvii. 28. Zech. iv. 10. ^c xciv. 11. Matt. ix. 4. Luke ix. 47. John ii. 24. 25. 1 Cor. iv. 5. ^d Ez. xxxviii. 10, 11. 17. ^e Or, *winnowest*. Job xiii. 26, 27. xiv. 16, 17. xxxi. 4. Matt. iii. 12. ^f 18. cxxi. 3—8. Gen. xxviii. 10—17. 2 Sam. viii. 14. xi. 2—5. 27.

David contemplates, with adoring surprise, the omniscience and omnipresence of God, 1—12. He praises him, as his all-wise and bountiful Creator, and for his numberless mercies, 13—18. He avows his abhorrence of the wicked; and prays to be searched, proved, and directed in the right way, 19—24.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

O LORD, "thou hast searched me, and known me.

2 Thou ^b knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising; thou ^c understandest my thought ^d afar off.

3 Thou ^e compassest ^e my path and

my lying down, 'and art acquainted with all my ways.

4 For ^g there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, ^h thou knowest it altogether.

5 Thou hast ⁱ beset me behind and before, ^k and laid thine hand upon me.

6 Such ^l knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.

7 ^m Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?

8 If ⁿ I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed ^o in hell, behold, thou art there.

xxxiv. 21, 22. Prov. xv. 11. Jon. ii. 2.

earth shall praise thy name, and be obedient to the words of thy mouth!

NOTES.

PSALM CXXXIX. *Title.* It is probable that David wrote this Psalm, when accused of traitorous designs against Saul; as a solemn appeal to God that he was, in that respect, entirely innocent. (*Notes*, 19—24. vii. 3—11.)

V. 1. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'I am accused, O Lord, of grievous crimes; but my comfort is, thou seest I am not guilty of them.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, 2 Cor. i. 12—14.)—The language, employed in this and the following verses, is taken from the affairs of men; who by diligent search find out those things, which had been carefully concealed from them. (*Notes*, Gen. xi. 5. xviii. 20, 21.)

V. 2. *Marg. Ref.—Thought.* 'He confesseth that neither our actions, thoughts, nor any part of our life, can be hid from God, though he seem to be afar off.'—'My inclinations are so perfectly understood by thee, that before I have conceived any design it is visible to thee.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, xvii. 1—3. xlv. 17—22.)

'My thoughts, before they are my own,

'Are to my God distinctly known;

'He knows the words I mean to speak,

'Ere from my op'ning lips they break.'

Watts.

V. 3. Men are most tempted to sin, either when, being from home, they are no longer under restraint from those of their neighbours or relations, whose censure they dread; or when in secret, as in the bed-chamber, they have no apprehension of being detected by any human eye: but the Psalmist recollected, that God saw him, and was present with him, in every situation; as he "compassed his path and bed, and was acquainted with all his ways," even those which he most carefully concealed from his fellow-creatures. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, Job xxxi. 1—4.)

Compasseth. Or, "winnowest," (*marg.*) 'distinguishing most exactly, and without the least possibility of mistake, between what is right, and what is wrong, in my most secret conduct, or in the temper and motives of my heart.'

V. 4—6. (*Marg. Ref.*) 'Thou knowest before I open

'my mouth, every thing I intend to utter. ... I am so environed by thee, and so absolutely in thy power, that I cannot possibly escape thy notice, nor so much as stir without thy leave. O amazing height of knowledge! It is in vain to think I can hide any thing from it; which so far surpasses all I can say or conceive, that it excels even my admiration.' *Bp. Patrick.* 'When we reflect, that "all things are naked and open to him with whom we have to do;" that although he dwelleth in the highest heavens, he surveyeth not only the outward acts, but even the very hearts and imaginations of men upon earth; must we not each of us cry out, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me! it is high, I cannot attain unto it:" I cannot admire it enough; for I cannot conceive of it aright!' *Bp. Horne.* (*Note*, xl. 1—5, v. 5.)—'The actual, constant consideration of God's presence, would be the readiest way in the world to make sin to cease from among the children of men, and for men to approach to the blessed estate of the saints in heaven, who cannot sin; for they always walk in the presence, and behold the face of God.' *Bp. Taylor, quoted by Bp. Horne.*—It should however be noted, that even if it were possible for unregenerate men thus habitually to think of the eye of God always upon them, it would no more change their carnal enmity into love, than it does that of evil spirits. Nothing but regeneration, and the sanctification of the Holy Spirit, can make fallen men holy; and the efficacy of all means depends on his powerful operation to render them successful.

V. 7, 8. *Note*, Gen. iii. 8, 9. Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. Jonah i. 2, 3. Acts v. 1—11.—*Make my bed in hell, &c.* (8) 'An uncomfortable place to make a bed in, where there is no rest day or night; yet thousands will make their bed for ever in those flames.' *Henry.*—Should any one murder himself to terminate his sorrows, and escape the remorse of conscience, or the consequences of his sins, he must certainly be disappointed. Yet the presence of God, with the senseless corpse in the grave, could not in any degree cause this disappointment, or produce the least effect: but his presence with the disembodied spirit, in the invisible world, as an angry Judge, must in that case be as dreadful, as it is unexpected.—This then is one passage, where the

p xviii. 10. xix. 6. **9** If I take ^p the wings of the morn-
 Mal. iv. 2. ing, and ^a dwell in the uttermost parts
 q lxxiv. 16, 17. Is. xxiv. 14-16. of the sea;

r lxxiii. 8. lxxiii. **10** Even ^r there shall thy hand lead
 23. cxliii. 9, 10. me, and thy right hand shall hold me.
 Is. xli. 13.

s x. 11-13. xciv. **11** If I say, ^s Surely the darkness
 7. Job xxii. 12 shall cover me; ^t even the night shall
 -14. Is. xxix. be light about me.
 15. Jer. xxiii. 24.
 t Job xii. 22.

u Ex. xiv. 20. xx. **12** Yea, ^u the darkness ^{*} hideth not
 21. Job xxvi. 6. from thee; but the night shineth as the
 xxxiv. 22. Dan. day: [†] the darkness and the light are
 ii. 22. Heb. iv. both alike *to thee*.
 13.
 * Heb. darkeneth
 † Heb. as is the
 ‡ Heb. as is the
 † Heb. as is the
 ‡ Heb. as is the

x Job x. 9-12. **13** ¶ For ^x thou hast possessed my
 y xxii. 9, 10. lxxi. reins: thou hast ^y covered me in my
 6. Job xxxi. 15. mother's womb.
 Is. xlv. 2. xlv. 3. Jer. i. 5.
 z Gen. i. 26, 27.

a xci. 4. 5. civ. **14** I will praise thee; ^a for I am
 24. cxi. 2. Job v. 9. Rev. xv. 3. fearfully and wonderfully made: ^a mar-

vellous are thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth [†] right well.

15 My ^b substance was not hid from ^b thee, ^b when I was made in secret; ^b and curiously wrought ^c in the lowest parts of the earth.
 † Heb. greatly.
 Or strength, or body.
 b 13. Job x. 9-11.
 Ec. xi. 5.
 c lxxiii. 9. Eph. iv. 9.

16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and ^d in thy book ^d all my members were written, ^e which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.
 d lvi. 8. Mal. iii. 16. Rev. xx. 12.
 e Heb. all of them.
 Or what days they should be fashioned.

17 How ^e precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! ^f how great is the sum of them!
 e xl. 5. Prov. viii. 31. Is. lv. 8, 9.
 Jer. xxix. 11.
 Eph. iii. 9, 10.
 f xxxi. 19. xxxvi. 7.

18 If I should count them, ^g they are more in number than the sand: ^h when I awake, I am still with thee.
 g xl. 12.
 h 3. iii. 5. xvi. 8 -11. xvii. 15. lxxiii. 6, 7. Is. xxxvi. 19. Dan. xii. 2. 1 Thes. v. 10.

original word (הַיָּמִי) cannot mean exclusively *the grave*, without rendering the sacred writer's argument absurd or frivolous. (Note, xvi. 8-11.)

V. 9, 10. *Marg. Ref.—Wings of the morning.* (9) Or, *sun-beams*. 'Could I travel as fast as the rays of light.' The peculiar sublimity of the simile is worthy notice and admiration: nothing implying *swiftness* has ever been used, as far as I have known or heard, by any poet, at all comparable with it.—Could they 'fly abroad upon the wings of the morning-light, which diffuseth itself with such velocity over the globe from east to west; the arm of the Almighty will still at pleasure prevent, and be ready to arrest the fugitives in their progress. ... The same consideration, which should restrain us from sin, should also encourage us to work righteousness, and comfort us under all our sorrows; namely, the thought, that we are never out of the sight and protection of our Maker. The piety and charity which are practised in cottages; the labour and the pain which are patiently endured in the field, and on the bed of sickness; the misery and torment inflicted by persecution, in the mines, the gallies, and the dungeons; all are under the inspection of JEHOVAH, and are noted down by him against the day of recompence.' *Bp. Horne*. The same considerations are applicable to the cases of exile, and journeying and voyaging, in distant, inhospitable, unhealthy regions, either by compulsion, as poor slaves are treated, or in the path of duty, as missionaries. In short they may be used, both for warning and comfort, with reference to the place of our death, and burial, and the general resurrection, with the day of judgment, and all its infinitely important consequences. (Notes, lxxiii. 23-28. Is. xli. 10-14. xlii. 13-17.)

V. 11, 12. 'Darkness may, indeed, conceal us and our deeds from the sight of men; but the divine presence, like that of the sun, turns night into day, and makes all things manifest before God.' *Bp. Horne*. (Notes, Job xxii. 5-14. xxvi. 5-13. xxxiv. 20-30. 1 Cor. iv. 3-5. Heb. iv. 12, 13.)

V. 13. 'My most retired thoughts and contrivances, and my most secret desires, are apparent to thee; whose

'I am, and by whom I was wrapt up ... in my mother's womb, than which there is nothing more hidden and dark.' *Bp. Patrick*. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Job x. 8-13.*)

V. 14. 'A work so astonishing, that before the Psalmist proceeds in his description of it, he cannot help breaking forth in rapture at the thought.' *Bp. Horne*.—'I was, I know not how, in such a wonderful manner formed, that the thoughts of it strike me with astonishment. Thy operations in that work are most admirable; and of that I am exceeding sensible; but I can say no more; for they are incomprehensible.' *Bp. Patrick*. (Note, civ. 24.)

V. 15. 'By the lowest parts of the earth, is undoubtedly to be understood the womb, where the foetus is gradually formed, and matured for the birth, like plants and flowers under ground. The process is compared to that in a piece of work wrought with a needle, or fashioned in the loom; which, with all its beautiful variety of colour, and proportion of figure, ariseth by degrees unto perfection, under the hand of the artist, framed according to a pattern lying before him, from a rude mass of silk, or other materials. ... But ... whereas the human artificer must have the clearest light, whereby to accomplish his task; the divine work-master ... effecteth all his wonders within the dark and narrow confines of the womb.' *Bp. Horne*.

V. 16. 'When the matter, out of which I was made, was without any form, it was visible to thee, how every muscle, vein, and artery, with all the rest of my body, should be wrought, out of the pattern of them which was in thy mind: and accordingly in time, when there was not so much as one of them, they were all fashioned for the several uses to which they were designed, and not the smallest of them omitted or left imperfect.' *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 17, 18. David delighted to meditate upon the works and perfections of God; such thoughts and contemplations on these subjects were precious to him; (Note, civ. 34, 35;) the glory displayed in them was infinite, the mercies communicated to him were innumerable as the sand; they were new every morning, and were increased with every re-

19 'Surely thou wilt slay the wicked,
O God: ^kdepart from me therefore, ye
bloody men.

20 For ^lthey speak against thee
wickedly, and ^mthine enemies take *thy*
name in vain.

21 ⁿDo not I hate them, O LORD,
that hate thee? ^oand am not I grieved

with those that rise up against thee? ^pci. 2-8. Luke

22 I ^qhate them with perfect hatred; ^rI count them mine enemies.

23 ^sSearch me, O God, and ^tknow
my heart; try me, and know my
thoughts:

24 And ^usee if *there be any* ^vwicked
way in me, ^wand lead me in ^xthe way
everlasting.

turning day. (Notes, xl. 1-5. Prov. viii. 30, 31. Is. lv. 8, 9. Lam. iii. 21-23. Eph. iii. 9-12.) 'The "thoughts" and counsels of JEHOVAH, concerning David, his appointment to the throne, his troubles, and his preservation in the midst of them, were "precious" and delightful subjects of meditation and praise, never to be exhausted of the rich matter they contained. With these in his mind he lay down at night to rest; and, when he awoke in the morning, his thoughts naturally recurred to the pleasing theme: he began where he had left off; and found himself, in heart and soul, still present with God, still ruminating on him and his works. The mercies of heaven, in the redemption of the church, by the sufferings and exaltation of the true David, according to the divine decree concerning him—how precious are they to believers! How great is the sum, how far exceeding all human arithmetick to number them! Let them be to us the constant subjects of contemplation, admiration, and thanksgiving, day and night; and let death, that last sleep, find us engaged in an employment, which, when we awake, and arise from the grave, we shall resume, and prosecute to eternity, in the presence of God.' Bp. Horne.

V. 19-22. It is probable, that when David composed this Psalm, his character lay under a load of calumny: (Note, title :) but he could appeal to God that he would have no fellowship with ungodly and cruel men, whom he knew God would destroy: he detested their characters and conduct, and could not endure their company. (Notes, xxvi. 5-11.) Being enemies and blasphemers of God, he considered them as his enemies. For the godly man has the same friends and enemies with the Lord, as far as he knows the real characters of men: (Note, Rom. v. 1, 2 :) yet this is entirely consistent with loving their persons, praying for them, and being kind to them; for we do not know, but they may yet be converted and reconciled to God. 'A good man hates, as God himself doth; he hates not the persons of men, but their sins; not what God made them, but what they have made themselves. We are neither to hate the men, on account of the vices they practise; nor to love the vices for the sake of the men who practise them. He who observeth invariably this distinction, fulfilleth the perfect law of charity; and hath the love of God and of his neighbour abiding in him.' Bp. Horne. "Shall I not hate the haters of thee, JEHOVAH? and shall I not be grieved at them that rise up against thee?" (Notes, Mark iii. 1-5, v. 5. 2 John 7-11. P. O.) The clause rendered, "Thine enemies take thy name in vain," may mean, that they called God to witness the truth of their lying accusations.

V. 23, 24. The Psalmist began by professing his belief,

that God had searched him out and known him: (Note, 1 :) and he concluded by praying, that he would search him, and know his heart and his thoughts. He did not wish to decline the investigation: he desired to have his real character ascertained, and the springs of his conduct laid open; that he might know himself, and discover every sinful part of his conduct, and repent of it; and that he might be led in the good old way, unto everlasting life; as well as be vindicated from calumnies and suspicions. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xvii. 1-3, v. 3. Deut. viii. 2. Is. lxiv. 5. Jer. vi. 16, 17, v. 16. Matt. vii. 13, 14. John xiv. 4-6, v. 6.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1-12.

It is far more profitable to meditate on divine truths, with application to our own cases, and with hearts lifted up to God in prayer; than with a speculative, curious, and disputing frame of mind. The omniscience and omnipresence of God are generally acknowledged: yet they seldom produce their practical effect upon the hearts and conduct of mankind, because they are not apprehended by a true and realizing faith. Hence great numbers allow that their Judge is witness to their whole conduct; and yet they are careful to save appearances with their fellow criminals, while they transgress in secret, and amuse their depraved imaginations with every kind of speculative wickedness! Nay, even true believers, through weakness of faith, are often very wavering in obedience, and easily discouraged from it, by the trivial circumstances of time, place, company, or solitude. We should therefore, by meditation and prayer, seek to have our minds suitably affected with the firm belief, and habitual recollection, that the just, the holy, the almighty God fully searches us out, and knows us, however our fellow creatures may mistake or misrepresent our characters. We should seriously consider, when we are alone, or in company, in the shop, the market, the place of worship, or the closet, that the eye of God is upon us; "that he observeth our down-sitting and our up-rising, and understandeth our thoughts," whether good or bad, before they become distinctly observed by our own minds, or influential upon our conduct; that he compasses and investigates our path, and is accurately acquainted with all our ways; and that he will bring every secret work into judgment, with every word of our lips, and every thought of our hearts. (Notes, Matt. xii. 33-37. Rev. xx. 11-15.) For our God surrounds us continually, and so lays his hand upon us, that we cannot move or think, without his cognizance and consent. Such meditations are suited to restrain us from sin, even in seasons when secrecy and present advantage give force to Satan's temptations; and to counteract the sinful inclination, as soon as it begins to

PSALM CXL.

David prays for deliverance from his malicious persecutors, and predicts their ruin, 1—11. He pro-

move. Who would dare, if thus suitably impressed, to defraud or deceive his neighbour; to gratify in secret his lust, or his malice; or to assume a mask of piety to cover his avarice, injustice, ambition, or sensuality?—Recollections of this kind are equally calculated to encourage the believer, in his secret prayers, meditations, self-denial, and almsgiving; in his well meant but misrepresented endeavours to do good; and in his conscientious obedience amidst slanders and reproaches, or in the most obscure station in society. We soon indeed find, that we cannot comprehend the manner, in which the infinite God knows all things: but while faith apprehends the truth upon his “sure testimony,” humility adores the mystery, and confesses, that “such knowledge is too wonderful for her, and “is so high she cannot attain unto it.”—The belief of God’s omnipresence is intimately connected with that of his omniscience, and is of similar efficacy. Should the guilty wretch desire to shun the presence of that God, whose power he cannot resist, and whose mercy he scorns to supplicate; whither shall he flee from him, who is an infinite and all pervading Spirit? Were it possible for him to find admission into heaven, the displays of the glorious holiness of JEHOVAH would be intolerable to him. The grave, nay, the centre of the earth, could not place him at a distance from his righteous Judge: the presence of a God of vengeance kindles the flames of hell. Were it possible for him to fly with the velocity of the sun-beams to the most distant regions, or through the immensity of space, he would still meet the presence of his offended God, from whom no darkness can conceal him: “for the darkness and the “light to him are both alike.” On the other hand the believer cannot be removed or banished from the supporting and comforting presence of his almighty Friend; who was with Joseph in the prison, with the three young Jews in the fiery furnace, and with Daniel in the lion’s den. Should the persecutor’s rage take away his life, his soul will the sooner ascend into heaven, and be more sensibly present with his Father and Friend, to his unutterable joy. The grave cannot separate his body from the love of his Saviour, who will raise it incorruptible and glorious. Could he even enter the place of torment, the presence and love of God would prevent his feeling misery. A desolate island, or the remotest region inhabited by the worst of savages; the sultry heat of the torrid zone, or the benumbing cold of polar regions; the deep dungeon, cavern, or mine; can by no means exclude him from his God.—While he is in the path of duty, he may be happy in any situation, by the exercise of faith, and hope, and prayer. But should he sinfully shift his duty, and, like Jonah, attempt to flee from the presence of the Lord; his arm would arrest him, his frown dismay him, and his rod correct him, in every place. We should then enquire what the Lord would have us to do, and whither we ought to remove; and pray that his gracious presence may always attend us: and then we shall have every thing to hope, and nothing to fear, in life, in death, or in the eternal world. (*Notes, Ex. xxxiii. 12—16. P. O. 12—23. Note, Prov. iii. 5, 6.*)

fesses his confidence, that God would rescue and bless all his afflicted people, 12, 13.

To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.

V. 13—24.

The omnipresent God is our Creator, and has a right to possess and dispose of us as his property: he comprehends our whole frame, which is his marvellous workmanship. The wise and kind contrivance, with which our bodies are formed, should excite our reverent admiration and gratitude; and surely we ought not to use our members and senses, which the Lord so curiously fashioned in the womb, as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin. (*Notes, Rom. vi. 12—19. xii. 1. 1 Cor. vi. 18—20.*) But our immortal and rational souls are a still more noble work and gift of God. Yet had it not been for his “precious thoughts” of love to us, our reason and immortality would, through our sins, have proved the occasion of our eternal misery. How should we then delight to meditate on his love to sinners in Jesus Christ, the sum of which exceeds all computation! the mercies thence derived are numberless as the sands of the sea. (*Note, Eph. iii. 14—19.*) Every morning we awake more indebted, and ought to be more grateful, than before: but when we shall awake in the world of glory, how shall we admire and bless our God for this invaluable salvation!—Yet this God of infinite mercy will most surely destroy all the impenitent workers of iniquity. We should therefore warn our fellow sinners “to flee from the wrath to come;” and protest against their crimes by separating from their company. (*Notes, 2 Chr. xix. 1, 2. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. Eph. v. 8—14.*) But those bloody men, who persecute the people of God, and thus join cruelty to their impiety and blasphemy, are most eminently the enemies and haters of God himself; and should be shunned with marked abhorrence by all, who love him and his cause: yet we should still pray for their conversion and salvation, and wait for opportunities of shewing them kindness, and attempting to “overcome evil with good.”—As the Lord knows us perfectly, and we are such strangers to ourselves; we should earnestly desire and pray to be searched and proved, in his providence, and by his word and Spirit: thus we shall best be preserved from self-deception, gradually purified from our remaining sinfulness, and led in the way of everlasting life: and these our desires and prayers will evidence our sincerity, and increase our comfortable assurance, that we are the children of God. (*Note, John iii. 19—21.*)

NOTES.

PSALM CXL. *Title.* It is evident that David composed this Psalm, when persecuted by Saul, slandered by Doeg, and betrayed by the Ziphites and others. (*Notes, lii. cxx.*) ‘When he came to his kingdom, and had settled the service of God, in that manner which we read, 1 *Chr.* xvi. xxiii. &c. he delivered it to the master of musick, to be sung at certain times in the tabernacle. But it was not found, I suppose, (any more than the two foregoing, and the four following,) till some time after the other books of Psalms were published; and so were placed here all together, by him that collected this book.’ *Bp. Patrick.*

^a xlii. 1. lix. 1—^a **DELIVER** me, O LORD, from the evil man: preserve me from the ^{*} violent man;

^b **2** Which ^b imagine mischiefs in *their* heart: ^c continually are they gathered together *for* war.

^c **3** They have ^d sharpened their tongues ^e like a serpent; ^f 'adders' poison is under their lips. Selah.

^d **4** ^g Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; ^h preserve me from the violent man; who have purposed to ⁱ overthrow my goings.

^e **5** The ^k proud have hid a snare for me, and cords; they have spread a net by the way-side; they have set gins for me. Selah.

^f **6** ^l I said unto the LORD, Thou art

my God: ^m hear the voice of my supplications, O LORD.

7 O GOD the LORD, ⁿ the Strength of my salvation, ^o thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.

8 ^p Grant not, O LORD, the desires of the wicked: further not his wicked device; ^q lest they exalt themselves. Selah.

9 As for the head of those that compass me about, ^r let the mischief of their own lips cover them.

10 Let ^s burning coals fall upon them: ^t let them be cast into the fire; ^u into deep pits, that they rise not up again.

11 ^v Let not ^w an ^x evil speaker be established in the earth: ^y evil shall

[†] Or, Let not an evil speaker, a wicked man of violence, be established in the earth; let him be hunted to his overthrow. [‡] Heb. a man of tongue. [§] u xii. 3, 4. Prov. vi. 17. xii. 13. xvii. 20. xviii. 21. ^x vii. 14—16. ix. 16. xxxiv. 21. Prov. xiii. 21. Is. iii. 11.

V. 1, 2. Saul, or Doeg, was "the evil man," and "the man of violences:" but there were many others who concurred in all the designs formed against the life of David, and who were employed in devising plans for that purpose; (Notes, 1 Sam. xxi. 7. xxii. 7—19. xxiii. 19—29:) as Caiaphas and Judas had many helpers, in their machinations against the life of the holy Jesus. (Marg. Ref.)

V. 3. 'Slander and calumny must always precede and accompany persecution, because malice itself cannot excite people against a good man, as such; to do this he must first be represented as a bad man. What can be said of those who are busied in this manner, but that they are "a generation of vipers," the brood of the old serpent, that grand accuser and calumniator of the brethren; having under their tongues a bag of poison, conveying instant death to the reputation on which they fasten? Thus David was hunted as a rebel, Christ was crucified as a blasphemer, and the primitive Christians were tortured as guilty of incest and murder.' Bp. Horne. 'The tongue of the serpent, or the teeth of the adder or viper, doth not more effectually convey their poison into men's bodies, than they have infused their venomous slanders into the people's minds.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, lvii. 3—5. lix. 7. xiv. 2—5. Prov. xii. 18, 19. Jer. ix. 3—6. Jam. iii. 3—6.)

V. 4—6. (Notes, 1. x. 2—13. xvii. 6—15. cxli. 8—10. cxlii. 1—3.) 'There is no hunter or fowler more industrious and cunning in laying snares and toils, in spreading nets, or setting gins and traps, for the beasts or the birds, in the places which they are wont to frequent, than they are to trace me in all my motions, (1 Sam. xxiii. 23,) and to invent all manner of wiles and subtle arts to surprise me.' Bp. Patrick.—'Oh, how refined the policy, and unwearied the application, of our spiritual adversaries to overthrow our goings in the path of life and salvation, to circumvent and to destroy us for ever! How are the snares, the nets, and the gins placed for us, by that cunning and experienced artist, who takes care, that nothing should appear in view, but the alluring baits of honour, pleasure and profit, while of the toils we have no notice, till we

'find ourselves entangled and caught in them. Who shall preserve us thus walking in the midst of dangers? He to whom David... preferreth his prayer, and teacheth us to do likewise.' Bp. Horne.

V. 7, 8. Notes, xciv. 20, 21. cxliv. 10. 2 Sam. xv. 31. —Covered my head, &c. (7) 'He calleth to God with lively faith, being assured of his mercies: because he had before time proved, that God helped him ever in his dangers.'—God is the Strength of our Salvation; 'nor will he, for the glory of his name, grant their desires, or permit their more secret "devices" and machinations to work the destruction of his people; lest they exalt themselves, as having frustrated his counsels for the redemption of his servants.' Bp. Horne. (Notes, 1 Sam. xvii. 34—37. 45—53. 2 Cor. i. 8—11.)

V. 9. Some render this verse "The poison of those that compass me about, even the mischief of their own lips, shall cover them." (Note, 3.) The original word translated "the head" signifies also *poison*; especially the poison of serpents, which is collected in their heads.

V. 10. 'Their lips, which uttered mischief against others, shall be the means of covering themselves with confusion, when out of their own mouths they shall be judged. Those tongues, which have contributed to set the world on fire, shall be tormented with the hot burning coals of eternal vengeance; and they who, with so much eagerness and diligence, have prepared pits for the destruction of their brethren, shall be cast into a deep and bottomless pit, out of which they will not rise up again any more for ever.' Bp. Horne. All the verbs are future. —Let them be cast.] Literally, "He shall cause them to fall into the fire." (Notes, xi. 6. cxx. 4. Mark ix. 43—50.)

V. 11. "A lying lip is but for a moment:" it serves a present purpose, and often proves for a while very successful; but at length it defeats its own purposes, and never effects established prosperity. (Note, Prov. xi. 18, 19.) The original is, "A man of tongue shall not be established, &c." that is, one who does not bridle his tongue. (Notes, xxxix. 1—4, v. 1. Jam. i. 26. iii. 1—6.)—The similitude of

hunt the violent man to overthrow him.

12 I know that ^v the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, *and* the right of the poor.

13 ^z Surely the righteous shall give thanks unto thy name: ^a the upright shall dwell in thy presence.

PSALM CXLI.

David earnestly requests that his prayers may be accepted; and to be preserved from sinful words, works, and indulgences, 1—4. He desires the reproofs of the righteous, whom he will recompense by his pray-

ers; and hopes to win on his people when afflicted, 5, 6. He complains, that his friends were cruelly slain, professes confidence in God, and predicts the fall of the wicked, 7—10.

A Psalm of David.

LORD, I cry unto thee: ^a make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee.

2 Let ^b my prayer be ^c set forth before thee ^d as incense; *and* ^e the lifting up of my hands ^f as ^g the evening sacrifice.

3 ^h Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; ⁱ keep the door of my lips.

^a xl. 13. lxix. 17, 18. lxx. 5. xxxi. 12. cxliii. 7. Job vii. 21.
^b Prov. xv. 8.
^c Heb. directed. v. 3.
^d Ex. xxx. 7—9. 34—38. Lev. x. 1, 2. xvi. 11—13. Num. xvi. 35. 46—48. Mal. i. 11. Luke i. 9, 10. Per. v. 8. viii. 3, 4.
^e xxviii. 2. lxiii. 4. cxxxiv. 2. 1 Tim. ii. 8.
^f Ex. xxix. 39—42. 1 Kings xviii. 36. Ezra ix. 4. Dan. ix. 21. Acts iii. 1.
^g xvii. 3—5. xxxix. 1. lxxi. 8. Jam. i. 26. iii. 2.
^h Mic. vii. 5.

evil, or punishment, hunting the violent man, as the hounds do the fleeing animal, through all its windings and doublings, till they seize upon it and destroy it, is very emphatical. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Prov. xiii. 21.*)

V. 12, 13. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, x. 17, 18. cii. 13—22.*)
^v The Almighty is the Patron of the injured and oppressed.
^z He will plead the cause of the meek and lowly, who are used by the world, as their blessed Master was used before them. A day will come, when, delivered out of all their troubles, they shall “give thanks unto thy name,” O Lord, and “dwell in thy presence” for evermore. *Bp. Horne.* (*Notes, xvi. 8—11, v. 11. John xiv. 2, 3.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The seed of the old serpent, instigated by their father, will unite subtlety with violence, in executing the mischiefs which they have imagined in their hearts against the children of God: slanders will be devised to cloke their unprovoked malice: they will sharpen their tongues to ruin the reputation of the righteous, as the serpent's fatal bite envenoms the blood; for “adders' poison is under their lips.” Especially they will lay artful stratagems to overthrow their goings, and to betray them into some real or seeming crime, which may furnish a plausible accusation against them. All this we have seen illustrated in the history of David the type; but it is still more manifest in the history of Christ, the great Antitype. In such circumstances therefore we should especially watch and pray, that the Lord would “hold up our goings in his ways, that our foot-steps slip not.” He is “the Strength of salvation” to all, who trust and worship him as their God: he will hear their prayers, and cover their head in the day of battle: every former deliverance is an earnest of future and final victory: and they may unreservedly pray, that he would not grant the desires of the wicked, nor further their wicked devices, lest they grow more insolent. We may also be confident, that false accusers will, by their lies and perjuries, bring mischief upon themselves, even the burning coals of divine vengeance, which will sink them into the fire and deep pit of hell, to rise no more; except timely repentance prevent the fatal doom. For “an evil speaker shall not be established in the earth: evil shall hunt the violent man to overthrow him.” But when the Lord has proved the faith and patience of his afflicted people, he will maintain their cause, and do them

justice against their oppressors. And beyond all doubt, “the upright shall dwell in God's presence,” and give him thanks for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM CXLI. *Title.* This Psalm is generally allowed to have been written by David, when driven among the Philistines, by the implacable persecution of Saul. (*Notes, 1 Sam. xxvii.*)—“Nobody need wonder, that there are so many prayers founded upon the same subject; for that persecution endured long, and they were made upon different occasions, or for different purposes.” *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 1, 2. *Note, lxxi. 12.—Let my prayer, &c. (2) Or, “My prayer shall be set before thee, as incense, &c.”*—When driven from the courts of the Lord, and the communion of his people, the Psalmist purposed to be as regular and constant at his devotions, as the priests were in burning incense, and offering the sacrifices morning and evening: and he prayed, that his fervent supplications might be accepted, even as if presented at the sanctuary; being offered with a believing reference to the typical expiation and intercession there made. (*Notes, 1 Kings viii. 28—30.*) It is probable, that this psalm was composed at the time of the morning or of the evening sacrifice, or intended to be used at these hours of prayer. “He begs that God would accept of all that it was in his power to perform, namely, the devotion of his heart, and the elevation of his hands; ...that the one might ascend to heaven fragrant and well-pleasing, as the cloud of incense, ...and the other in conjunction with it, prevail instead of the evening oblation, for the deliverance of himself and his companions.” *Bp. Horne.* The word *instead*, in this quotation, seems inappropriate. David intended to present his sacrifices of praise and prayer, *through*, not *instead* of, the instituted typical atonements and burning of incense. Thus our ‘spiritual sacrifices,’ of which similar language is used in the New Testament are “acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” (*Phil. iv. 18. Notes, Col. iii. 16, 17. Heb. xiii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. ii. 4—6, v. 5.*) The original word indeed does not generally mean the burnt-offering itself, but the meat-offering which accompanied it. (*Num. xxviii. 4, 5.*)

V. 3, 4. David, surrounded by idolaters, (who would watch all his words and actions, suspect him as a spy or an enemy, or want to draw him into idolatry,) besought

4 ^b Incline not my heart to *any* evil thing, ⁱ to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity: ^k and let me not eat of their dainties.

5 Let ^l the righteous ^{*} smite me; *it shall be* a kindness: and let him reprove me; *it shall be* an excellent oil, *which* shall not break my head: ^m for yet my prayer also *shall be* in their calamities.

6 When ⁿ their judges are over-

n cxix. 36. Deut. ii. 30. xxix. 4. 1 Kings viii. 58. xxii. 22. Is. lxiii. 17. Matt. vi. 13. Jam. i. 13. i 1 Cor. xv. 33. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Rev. xviii. 4. k Num. xxv. 2. Prov. xxiii. 1—3. 6—8. Dan. i. 5—8. Acts x. 13. 14. 1 Cor. x. 27, 28, 31. l 1 Sam. xxv. 31—34. 2 Sam. xii. 7—13. 2 Chr. xvi. 7—10. xxv. 16. Prov. vi. 23. ix. 8, 9. xv. 5. 22. xix. 25. xxv. 12. xxvii. 5, 6. Gal. ii. 11—14. vi. 1. Rev. iii. 19. * Or, smite me kindly and reprove me; let not their precious oil break my head, &c. m li. 18. cxxv. 4. Matt. v. 44. 2 Tim. i. 16—18. Jam. v. 14—16. n 1 Sam. xxxi. 1—8. 2 Sam. i. 17, &c. 1 Chr. x. 1—7.

thrown in stony places, ^o they shall hear my words, ^p for they are sweet.

7 Our ^q bones are scattered at the grave's mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth *wood* upon the earth.

8 But ^r mine eyes *are* unto thee, O God the Lord: in thee is my trust; ^s leave not ^t my soul destitute.

9 Keep me ^u from the snares *which* they have laid for me, and the gins of the workers of iniquity.

10 Let ^v the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst that I withal ^w escape.

Esth. vii. 10. Prov. xi. 8.

God to enable him so to bridle his tongue, that he might not give them any advantage against him; (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxxix. 1—4*;) and so to govern and rule his heart, that he might not be seduced into any sinful compliances. In such company he feared lest he should be tempted to trifle, to dissemble, or to speak inconsistently with his character, as a zealous worshipper of the true God; or, as some think, lest he should be led to express his sense of the ill usage which he had received from Saul, in an unbecoming manner: and therefore he prayed for a guard to be placed before his mouth. He was also aware that corrupt examples, continually before his eyes, might gradually draw him aside; and he prayed that his heart might not be inclined to any evil thing, or to join the impieties and iniquities of the Philistines; and that he might not be tempted, by their idolatrous feasts, or hospitable and luxurious entertainments, to eat of such things as were forbidden by the law of God. 'A Christian living amongst unbelievers and sensualists, ... hath abundant reason to put up the same prayers, and to use the same precautions.' *Bp. Horne. (Notes, Prov. xxiii. 1—3. 6—8.)—Incline not, &c. (4)* This evidently means, 'Keep my heart so, that I may not be suffered to incline to evil.' (*Notes, cxix. 36. Deut. ii. 30. 1 Kings viii. 55—61, v. 58. Is. lxiii. 15—19.*)

V. 5. Jealous of himself in so ensnaring a situation, the Psalmist prayed, that some pious friend might ever be present to reprove him sharply, if he yielded to temptation. This he would take as a kindness; sensible that it would neither break his head, nor cause him to hang it down in dejection: but, being insinuating and healing, like an excellent oil, it would be very useful to him; and he would requite the benefit by praying for them in their calamities, if he had no other way of expressing his gratitude. (*Notes, 1 Sam. xxv. 23—33.*) Or it may mean, that this would enable him more fervently, and as with renewed vigour, to pray against *their wickedness*, (that of the idolaters,) which he had been almost induced to imitate. Perhaps David obliquely hinted at the slanders of Saul and his party; from which he distinguished the censures of the pious Israelites, who might blame him for going into the land of the Philistines. (*Marg. Ref.*)

An excellent oil, *שמן רם*; the principal oil, or that used in anointing the head.

V. 6. This verse may mean, according to our translation, that David, foreseeing the ruin of Saul and his party, the present "judges" of Israel; as if they had been cast

from the sides of a rock, or cut in pieces in rocky places by the enemy, without being able to escape; hoped, that the Israelites would then hearken to his salutary admonitions, which they now disregarded.—'The people which followed their wicked rulers in persecuting the prophet, shall repent and turn to God, when they see their wicked rulers punished.'—'When literally rendered from the Hebrew, it runs thus:—"Their judges have been dismissed in the sides of the rock, and have heard my words, that they were sweet." David, reflecting on Saul's cruelty in driving him out of his country, ... mentions his own different behaviour towards that implacable enemy, whose life he had spared at two several times, when he had it in his power to destroy him. ... Their judges, or princes, leaders, generals, &c. according to the frequent usage of the word in Scripture, *שופטים*, "have been dismissed" (the common signification of the verb *שפט*;) "in the sides of the rock," when I had them at an advantage there, ...and ... they only heard me expostulate with them in a manner so mild and humble, that even Saul himself was overcome, and "lift up his voice" "and wept." ... Such hath been my conduct towards the servants of Saul. Yet how have my people, alas, been by them most miserably butchered!' *Bp. Horne. (Notes, 1 Sam. xxiv. xxvi.)*

V. 7. This probably refers to the slaughter of the hundred and eighty-five priests, and their families, by Doeg at Saul's command, because they were supposed to favour David. The bones of this company, murdered on his account, were thrown at the grave's mouth, as plentifully, and as disregarded, as the chips are scattered about by one that "cleaveth wood upon the earth." (*Notes, xlv. 17—22. 1 Sam. xxii. 7—19. Rom. viii. 35—39.*)—In this verse the word *קבר* certainly means the grave.

V. 8, 9. 'The principle upon which David acted, and supported himself under his troubles, was a firm trust in God, and a steady resolution to obey him.' *Bp. Horne. (Marg. Ref.—Note, cxxiii. 1, 2.)*—'Not only preserve me from the snares, which my persecutors have laid for me; but likewise from the allurements of all other wicked men, especially the idolatrous Philistines among whom I sojourn.'

V. 10. David 'escaped all the snares that were laid for him on every side; he lived to see the death of Saul, who fell in a battle with the Philistines, and those Philistines subdued by himself and his subjects.' *Bp. Horne. —"The wicked shall fall, &c." (Marg. Ref.)*

PSALM CXLII.

David complains of his persecutors, and expresses his confidence and joy in God, 1—7.

* Or, A psalm of David giving instruction. xxxii. liv. titles. *** Maschil of David; A Prayer ^a when he was in the cave.**

I Cried unto the LORD, with my voice: ^a 1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2. xxiv. 8. Heb. xi. 38. **with my voice unto the LORD did I make my supplication.** ^b xxviii. 2. lxxvii. 1, 2. cxli. 1.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The believer maintains communion with his God, wherever he goes; the greater his trials become, the more fervent will his prayers be; and when they are presented through the Saviour's oblation and intercession, they are as acceptable to God, as the daily sacrifices and burning of incense were of old.—We always need to pray that the Lord would “set a watch before the door of our lips;” but especially when we are constrained to associate with ungodly men; where we shall continually be urged to speak, and tempted to speak improperly, out of fear, shame, or complaisance; and where we can scarcely speak at all, without giving them some cause of error, prejudice, or offence. If surrounded by contagious examples, we shall likewise have especial cause to “keep our hearts with “all diligence,” and to pray continually, that they may not be “inclined to any evil thing, or to practise wicked “works with men that work iniquity.” Our appetites also must be bridled; lest they be bribed by their luxuries, or we be prevailed upon by seducing solicitations, to sanction their excesses or iniquities, by the least approach to inordinate indulgence. (*P. O. Prov.* xxiii. 1—18, *vv.* 1—3. 6.)—If it be our trial to be cast into such a situation, we may expect that the Lord will preserve us in it; though it will require extraordinary watchfulness, and constancy in prayer, and though we are generally most remiss on such occasions: but if any from carnal motives run themselves into such temptations, they seldom escape unpolluted or unwounded. In all places, however, we should fear sin more than suffering; and rather be desirous to honour God, than to recommend or advance ourselves. Such desires will not only dictate our prayers; but induce us to welcome the rebukes of our heavenly Father, and also the reproofs of our brethren. We should indeed study to profit by the *reproaches* of our enemies, and by the severe rebukes of those who mean well, but are unskilful: but that *reproof*, which is given with prudence, meekness, piety, and affection, insinuates and lubricates like a healing ointment; it causes little pain or irritation, and produces abundant good: and no benefactors are more entitled to our gratitude and our prayers, than reprovers of this character; because none serve us in a more disinterested and self-denying manner. Yet alas! flatterers are generally more favoured, even by professed Christians and by many who may be looked upon in the main, as real Christians! and this plain dealing is lamentably sunk into disuse, to the unspeakable detriment of true piety.—We should be unwearied in our endeavours to do good: those instructive and affectionate words, which sinners despised in their prosperity, may perhaps be attended to in adversity; or when the ruin of ringleaders or associates in iniquity, con-

2 I ^c poured out my complaint before him; ^d I shewed before him my trouble. ^e xlii. 4. cii. title 1 Sam. i. 15, 16. Is. xxvi. 16. Rom. viii. 26. d xlviii. 4—6. Phil. iv. 6, 7. Heb. v. 7.

3 When ^e my spirit was overwhelmed within me, ^f then thou knewest my path. ^g In the way wherein I walked have they privily laid a snare for me. ^h i. 6. xvii. 3. cxxxix. 2—4. Job xxiii. 10. g xxxi. 4. xxxv. 7, 8. lvi. 6. cxl. 5. cxli. 9. Jer.

4 [†] I looked on *my* right hand, and [†] Or, Look on the right hand and see. xviii. 22. Matt. xxii. 15.

curs in shewing them their danger and misery: and we ought patiently to watch for such opportunities. Nor should any injuries make us reluctant to do good to our opponents; even though they have wasted the church, as king Saul, and as Saul of Tarsus did, till the bones of the ministers and people of God lie scattered abroad, as the chips around him who hews wood. Indeed, if we be not exposed to such calamities, our bones will soon lie scattered at the mouth of the grave; and others will moralize over them, as we are wont to do, when we traverse a burying ground, and behold an opened grave. Let us then lift our eyes unto God the Lord, and trust in him that our souls shall not then be left destitute or “made bare:” (*Marg. Note, 2 Cor. v. 1—4:*) and let us intreat him to rescue us from the snares of Satan and of all the workers of iniquity, that we may escape, and be blessed for ever, while the wicked fall into their own nets and perish.

NOTES.

PSALM CXLII. *Title.* On one occasion David, driven from the court of Achish, with only a very small company, hid himself in the cave of Adullam; where at length he was joined by a considerable number of adherents. (*Note, 1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2.*) On another, he was hidden in a cave when Saul and his army came to seek for him: thus he was in extreme danger, till Saul, by inadvertently entering the cave, put himself in his power, and gave him an opportunity of shewing his determination not to injure his prince, and also of escaping for the present. (*Notes, 1 Sam. xxiv.*) It is not certain, to which of these events this psalm belongs.—But, however that may be, David seems to have formed the substance of the prayer which he made before God, in the extremity of his danger, into a psalm when he had obtained deliverance: though some think that it ought to be rendered in the present tense, as the very prayer, which he made in the cave. (*Notes, Is. xxxviii. 9—13, v. 9. Jon. ii. 1, 2.*)

V. 1—3. ‘Though I am destitute of human help, I will ‘not despair of safety; but with the more fervent cries implore the divine succour. ... I will lay before him,’ (the Lord) ‘all the sad thoughts which perplex my heart; and representing the inextricable straits and difficulties wherein I ‘am, expose myself unto him, as an object of his pity. ‘Now that I am utterly at a loss, and ready to faint away ‘in the confusion of my thoughts; thou knowest very ‘well a way for my escape: though by the intelligence ‘they hold with my enemies, (1 Sam. xxiv. 1,) they have ‘blocked up all the passages which I am acquainted ‘withal, and laid ambushes for me in every road.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, i. 4—6, v. 6. lxi. 1, 2.*)

V. 4. The original is in the imperative, “Look thou

h xxxi. 11. lxix. 20. lxxxviii. 8. 18. Job xix. 13. —19. Matt. xxvi. 56. 2 Tim. iv. 16. 1 Sam. xxiii. 11. —13. 19. 20. xxvii. 1. Heb. *perished from me; no man sought after my soul.* k xlvii. 1. 7. 11. lxii. 6, 7. xci. 2. 9, 10. John xvi. 32. 2 Tim. iv. 17. l xvi. 5. lxxiii. 26. cxix. 57. Lam. iii. 24. m xxvii. 13. lvi. 13. n xlv. 24—26. lxix. 8. cxvi. 6. cxxxvi. 23. cxliii. 3. 7. o iii. 1. xxxviii. 19. lvii. 3. 4. lix. 3. 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. p vii. ix. 13, 14. xxxi. 8. lxxxviii. 4—8. cxliii. 11. Acts ii. 24. q vii. 6, 7. xxii. 21—27. xxxiv. 2. cvii. 41, 42. cxix. 74. r xiii. 6. cxvi. 7. cxix. 17. Jam. v. 11.

beheld, ^h but *there was* no man that would know me: ⁱ refuge ^{*} failed me; no man cared for my soul.

5 I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, ^k Thou art my Refuge and ^l my Portion ^m in the land of the living.

6 Attend unto my cry; ⁿ for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; ^o for they are stronger than I.

7 Bring ^p my soul out of prison, that I may praise thy name: ^q the righteous shall compass me about; for ^r thou shalt deal bountifully with me.

“on my right hand, &c.” (*Marg.*) Some consider it as a prayer to God, to look on the extremity of his case. Others suppose it to be a kind of soliloquy:—‘Look about thee, O my soul, and see if thou canst spy any hope of relief from thy best and most powerful friends. There are none of them that dare own thee, nor do I know whither to fly for safety.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xi. 1—5. *Lam.* iii. 24, 25.) When every other refuge and patron failed or deserted David, he became the more fervent in prayer to his unchanging, faithful, and Almighty Friend and Protector; and he the more simply confided and gloried in him, as his Refuge and Portion, while he lived on earth, and in heaven for ever.—‘Death will ... strip us of all our earthly connexions and dependences: but even at that hour, may we, each of us, cry unto thee, O Lord, and say, “Thou art my Refuge, and my Portion in the land of the living.”’ *Bp. Horne.*

V. 6. ‘O let my importunate cry prevail for some relief, which will come most seasonably in this exceeding great necessity. Rescue me now, that I may not fall into the hands of my persecutors, who are every way (except in these cries unto and confidence in thee,) much too strong for me.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.*—*Note*, cxvi. 6.)

V. 7. (*Note*, title.) The cave, in which David was hidden, was like a prison to confine him, till Saul should come and put him to death; unless God would mercifully deliver him, according to his word, of which he did not allow himself to doubt. Nay, he anticipated the season, when his grateful praises would attract the notice of all the pious Israelites; and when he should be as much surrounded by admiring congratulating multitudes, uniting with him in adoring grateful praises, as he was now shunned by all. (*Notes*, vii. 6, 7. xiii. 5, 6.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

There can be no situation so distressing, perilous, or disgraceful, in which faith will not derive comfort from God by fervent prayer. (*Notes*, 1 Sam. xxx. 6. Acts xvi. 25—28.) In our greatest perplexities, when our spirits are overwhelmed by distress, and filled with confusion and discouragement, and all our own wisdom and resources exhausted and swallowed up; and when we see snares laid

PSALM CXLIII.

David earnestly deprecates the severity of God’s judgment, complains of his enemies and distresses, and encourages his faith by meditating on the works of God, 1—5. He fervently prays for comfort, guidance, quickening, and deliverance; and foretels the destruction of his enemies, 6—12.

A Psalm of David.

HEAR my prayer, O LORD, give ear to my supplications: ^a in thy faithfulness answer me, and in thy righteousness.

2 And ^b enter not into judgment

for us on every side, we may reflect with comfort, “that the LORD knoweth our path:” and if we aim to walk in his way, he will protect and guide us, and extricate us from every danger and difficulty.—Indeed few men choose to know their afflicted and persecuted acquaintance, which might expose them to expense, inconvenience, and peril: (*Notes*, xxxviii. 11, 12. Job. vi. 15—23. xix. 5—22:) and “refuge” may in this sense “fail us,” and no one appear to care either for our lives or souls. But the Lord will be the Refuge of his people on earth, and their Portion in heaven, that “land of the living.” Thus he delivered David from his powerful persecutors, after he was “brought very low;” he raised him from the cave, in which he seemed to be imprisoned as a condemned criminal for execution; he advanced him to the throne, compassed him about with the righteous, dealt bountifully with him, and turned his complaining prayers into joyful praises. Thus he raised the crucified Redeemer, from the prison of the grave to the throne of glory, and made him “Head over all things for his church.” Thus the poor convinced sinner when every other refuge fails, and he is shut up under sin, cries for help, and is brought forth out of prison to praise the Lord, in the company of his redeemed people: and thus every believer will be finally delivered from this evil world, from Satan, sin, and death; that, with mutual congratulations, the whole company of the redeemed may rejoice, and praise their God and Saviour for evermore.

NOTES.

PSALM CXLIII. V. 1. ‘There are...passages which will incline us to...apply this psalm to David’s flight from Absalom: for then he had most reason to fear, lest God should deal with him according to his sins; which he deprecates (v. 2.) with such a deep sense of his unworthiness, that it hath made this to be numbered among the penitential psalms, and is the last of them.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—David had the “faithfulness” of God to depend on, according to the promises made to him by name, and to Solomon and his posterity by him, notwithstanding his personal unworthiness: and his cause was righteous, when called on to withstand Absalom’s most wicked and unnatural rebellion. (*Notes*, vii. 8—11. lxxi. 2. lxxxix. 1—4. 19—37. 2 Sam. vii. 12—16. 1 John i. 8—10.)

V. 2. The psalmist, having appealed to the justice of

^c Job iv. 17. ix. 2. xv. 14. xxv. 4. Ec. vii. 20. Rom. iii. 20. Gal. ii. 16. 1 John i. 10. with thy servant; for ^e in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

^d vii. 1, 2. xvii. 9 —13. xxxv. 4. ^e liv. 3. cxlii. 6. ^f vii. 5. 2 Sam. ii. 22. xviii. 11. 3 For ^d the enemy hath persecuted my soul: ^e he hath smitten my life down to the ground: ^f he hath made me to dwell in darkness, as those that have been long dead.

^g lv. 5. lxi. 2. lxxvii. 3. cii. title. cxiv. 4. cxlii. 3. Job vi. 27. 4 Therefore ^g is my spirit overwhelmed within me: ^h my heart within me is desolate.

^h xxv. 16. cii. 3. 4. cxix. 81—83. Luke xxii. 44. 5 I ⁱ remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

ⁱ xlii. 6. lxxvii. 6. 10—12. cxi. 4. Deut. viii. 2. 3. 1 Sam. xvii. 34—37. 45—50. Is. lxiii. 7—14. Mic. vi. 5. 6 I ^k stretch forth my hands unto thee: ^l my soul *thirsteth* after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.

God, to decide between him and his enemies, as well as to his “faithfulness” to his promises, called to mind, that neither he, nor any other man, could stand in judgment before God, according to the tenour of his righteous law. ‘The thoughts of such a trial are enough to appal the soul of the best man living, to make his flesh tremble, and all his bones shake, as if he stood at the foot of Sinai, and beheld JEHOVAH ready to break forth upon him, in the flame of devouring fire.’ *Bp. Horne*.—‘If thou shouldst proceed according to the rigour of the law, the best man living (much less so great a sinner as I,) will not be acquitted at thy tribunal.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—The connexion of this verse with the preceding and the following verses, in which it is evident the Psalmist was referring the cause, between him and his adversaries, to the decision of the just Judge of the world, renders it peculiarly important in the argument concerning a sinner’s justification before God. (*Notes*, cxxx. 3, 4. *Job*. iv. 17—21. *Rom*. iii. 19, 20. *Gal*. iii. 10—22.)

V. 3. Absalom, Ahithophel, and their zealous adherents, pursued David with unrelenting malice: they drove him from his city and palace, and at once turned his singular prosperity into desolation, almost like death; as a warrior at one stroke beats his enemy to the ground. Thus he was driven into obscure corners in disgrace and distress: and at the same time consciousness of guilt, and inward disconsolation and temptation, served to shut him up, as in a dark dungeon; while the triumphs of his enemies made his cause to be considered as lost: so that he seemed to himself no more noticed by the Israelites in general, than if he had been dead and laid in the dark grave, with those who had died ages before. (*Notes*, vii. 3—5. xxxi. 10—13. lxxxviii. 5. 2 *Sam*. xv. 13—30.)

V. 4. *Notes*, lxxvii. 3. cii. title. cxlii. 1—3.

V. 5. The Psalmist may be supposed, in this extremity, to have revolved in his mind all the circumstances of his own eventful life, from the time when “the LORD delivered him from the paw of the lion and the bear,” and then from the sword of Goliath, and from the javelin of Saul, through all his subsequent persecutions, and every danger, till the time when he composed the psalm. But he also, no doubt, meditated on all the displays of the

7 ^m Hear me speedily, O LORD: ⁿ my spirit faileth: ^o hide not thy face from me; ^p lest I be ^q like unto them that go down into the pit.

8 Cause me ^r to hear thy loving-kindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: ^s cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; ^t for I lift up my soul unto thee.

9 Deliver me, O LORD, from mine enemies: ^u I ^v flee unto thee to hide me.

10 ^w Teach me to do thy will; ^x for thou art my God: ^y thy Spirit is good; lead me into ^z the land of uprightness.

⁵ Prov. xviii. 10. Heb. vi. 18. [†] Heb. *hide me with thee*. 12. cxix. 5—7. 12. 35. cxxxix. 24. Matt. xxviii. 20. Col. i. 9, 10. 1 Thes. iv. 1, 2. Heb. xiii. 21. ^x xxii. 1. xxxi. 14. lxiii. 1. cxviii. 28. cxi. 6. ^y Neh. ix. 20. Is. lxiii. 14. John xiv. 26. xvi. 13—15. Rom. v. 5. viii. 2. 14—16. 26. xv. 13. 30. Gal. v. 22, 23. Eph. iv. 30. v. 9. 2 Tim. i. 7. ^z Is. xxvi. 10.

power, truth, and mercy of God to his people, from the beginning of the world; in order to encourage his drooping hope and revive his desponding soul. (*Notes*, xlii. 6—8. lxxvii. 5—20. Is. li. 1—3. 9—11. lxiii. 7—14. Mic. vi. 3—5.) ‘“Remembering the days of old, and meditating on all the works” of love and mercy, which JEHOVAH then wrought towards those who were sinners like ourselves; ... the reflection is obvious, Is he not still the same gracious God? Will he not do as much for us, upon our repentance, as he hath formerly done for others upon their’s? “Let us arise and go to our Father.”’ *Bp. Horne*. V. 6. ‘Though I despair of human help, I make my prayer unto thee, with a cheerful confidence, for thy relief, which I long for, and expect with as eager desire, as the parched ground gasps for the refreshing shower.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—“The joy of God’s salvation,” however, seems to have been far more prominent in the Psalmist’s mind, than any outward deliverance, when he used this most striking similitude.—‘Prayer is the voice of faith. The sinner, who views his situation, and believes, ... will soon “stretch forth his hands” in supplication to heaven: His soul will gasp and pant after that grace and mercy, which descend from above, like the rain in its season, to bestow refreshment, beauty, and fertility, on a parched and “thirsty land.”’ *Bp. Horne*. (*Notes*, xlii. 1—3. lxiii. 1—4. lxxxiv. 1, 2. cxix. 81, 82. *John* vii. 37—39.)

V. 7. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 3. xlii. 1—4. lxix. 1—3. Is. lvii. 15, 16.—*Go down, &c.*] *Note*, xxviii. 1.

V. 8. ‘Though this night be very sad; yet let me hear “better news ... in the morning.”’ *Bp. Patrick*. Perhaps this was written when David heard of Ahithophel’s counsel to slay him. (*Notes*, 3. 2 *Sam*. xvii. 1—22.) In this emergency he earnestly lifted up his soul to God, and prayed to be directed what methods to adopt for his safety; or rather, how it behoved him to act in consistency with his duty. (*Marg. Ref.* q, r.—*Notes*, 10. v. 7, 8. xxv. 4, 5.)—*Lift up, &c.*] *Marg. Ref.* s.—*Note*, xxv. 1.

V. 9. *Marg.*—*Notes*, cxlii. 4, 5. Prov. xviii. 10, 11.

V. 10. ‘Whose guidance I beseech, as well as defence, that I may do nothing, (no, not for my preservation,) but “what is perfectly agreeable to thy laws.”’ *Bp. Patrick*.—*My God.*] *Notes*, xxxi. 14. 2 *Chr*. xxviii. 5.

^a lxxxv. 6. cxix. 25. 37. 40. 88. 107. cxxxviii. 7. Eph. ii. 4, 5. ^b l. ix. 7, 8. xxxi. 1. lxxi. 2. ^c xxv. 17. xxxiv. 19. xxxvii. 39. 40. xci. 15, 16. Rev. vii. 14—17. ^d liv. 5. lv. 23. cxxxvi. 15—20. 1 Sam. xxiv. 12—15. xxv. 29. xxvi. 10. ^e cxvi. 16. cxix. 94.

11 ^a Quicken me, O LORD, for thy name's sake: ^b for thy righteousness' sake ^c bring my soul out of trouble.

12 And ^d of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul; ^e for I am thy servant.

PSALM CXLIV.

David praises God for his goodness to him, and his condescension to the human race, 1—4. He prays

for the powerful interposition of **JEHOVAH** to deliver him from his enemies, 5—8. He promises to praise God, 9, 10. He renews his prayers for personal and public prosperity, and shews the happiness of those “whose God is the LORD,” 11—15.

A Psalm of David.

BLESSED be the LORD ^{*} my Strength, which ^{*} teacheth my hands [†] to war, and my fingers to fight;

^{*} Heb. my Rock. xviii. 2. 31. lxxi. 3. xcv. 1. Deut. xxxii. 30, 31. 1s. xxvi. 4. marg. ^a xlv. 3, 4. lx. 12. 2 Sam. xxii. 35. 2 Cor. x. 4. Eph. vi. 10, 11. [†] Or, to the war, &c.

Thy Spirit is good.] ‘He intreateth the good Spirit of God, to lead him out of the mazes of error, and the pollutions of vice, into the pleasant “land” of truth and holiness.’ *Bp. Horne*. When we consider the darkness and pollution of the sinner’s heart, and recollect how men “resist the Holy Spirit;” and how even believers often quench his emotions, grieve him by their perverseness, and pollute his temple by their sins: and also reflect that he not only enters the soul as a Sanctifier to prepare us for future happiness, but as a Comforter, and as the first-fruits of that happiness; and how he perseveres in his work of love and power, notwithstanding our folly and ingratitude; we shall perceive a peculiar propriety in this epithet of “good,” as applied to God the Spirit. His condescension, compassion, and kindness, can be equalled by nothing but the bleeding love of Emmanuel, and the mercy of God the Father in sending us such a Redeemer, and such a Sanctifier. The “goodness” of the Spirit formed a very encouraging plea to the broken hearted Psalmist, who, conscious of his unworthiness, could scarcely hope, that this divine Comforter, whom he had so shamefully grieved, would return any more to rejoice his drooping heart. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, li. 11—13. *Neh.* ix. 20.)

V. 11, 12. ‘The verbs in these two last verses, as Dr. Hammond hath noted, should be rendered in the future; “Thou shalt quicken, &c.” and then the psalm will end, as usual, with an act of faith and assurance, that all those mercies which have been asked shall be obtained.’ *Bp. Horne*. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 1, 2. liv. 5. cxix. 25. cxxxvi. 10—22.)—*Thy servant*. (12) ‘I am thy minister, and though never so unworthy, am appointed by thee to govern thy people; in which office I will do thee all faithful service.’ *Bp. Patrick*. (*Note*, cxxiii. 2.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The believer has not only the “faithfulness,” but the “righteousness” of God engaged in his behalf; because he is “made the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus:” much more then may he be confident, that he has justice on his side in those causes which are pending, between him and his persecutors, before the supreme Judge. But he will not forget, that in himself, and in his best actions, he is a sinner; and that he cannot in any degree, be justified at God’s tribunal by his own obedience: and this consideration will keep him as a humble penitent, pleading guilty, crying for mercy, living by faith, and perceiving more and more preciousness in Christ and his salvation, to the end of his days. Nor need the trembling sinner, who has lately discovered that he cannot stand in judgment before God, be discouraged on that account: for the greatest of saints have confessed the same. But what must be the

presumption and delusion of those, who despise free grace and “the gift of righteousness,” and expect heaven as the wages of their scanty, formal services! Nay, strange to say, some of them have even arrogantly thought of meriting for others also!—The justified believer, having peace with God, must experience the enmity of the world, and the temptations of Satan. This enemy, at least, will never fail to persecute our souls; and he often smites our life to the ground, by his seducing and discouraging suggestions. When he can prevail with us to commit sin, and the Lord is provoked to hide his face, he next insinuates that God will no more be gracious: and thus he causes us to indulge despondency and hard thoughts of God, and we dwell in darkness as if we were cast off to perish. But meditation and prayer will recover us from these distresses: while we “muse on the works of God,” we shall be encouraged to hope in him; and then the mourning soul strives to return to him, and thirsts for his consolations, as the parched ground for refreshing rain. And if the eminent peril of death renders men vehement in calling out for speedy relief; much more will the believer call upon God, to hear him speedily, when “his spirit faileth,” and, through the hiding of his face, he seems “like them that go down into the pit.” But this night of distress and discouragement shall usher in a morning of consolation and praise. They who trust in the Lord, shall “hear of his loving-kindness:” and he will “cause those to know the way wherein they should walk, who lift up their souls unto him.” Let us then flee to the Lord, to hide us from every enemy; intreating him to teach us to do his will, and to guide us by his “good Spirit,” in the straight way of holiness, to the land of perfect righteousness and peace. And the more we are slandered and persecuted, the more fervently should we pray, that we may not only find peace and comfort; but that “by well-doing we may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.” Nor will the good Spirit of our God disdain to be the Guide, Sanctifier, and Comforter of those poor sinners, who seek these blessings in the Redeemer’s name.—The Lord counts all those his enemies, who are enemies to his people; and, in mercy to their souls, he will cut off all that afflict and injure them: but we should especially seek the destruction of our sins, our worst enemies, that we may be more devotedly God’s servants, and fill up our several stations in the family, the community, and the church of God, to the glory of his name; and then his righteousness and mercy will concur in securing an answer to our prayers for complete and eternal deliverance.

NOTES.

PSALM CXLIV V 1. This psalm was, no doubt,

^a Or, mercy.
^b 2 Sam. xxii. 2.
^c 3. 40—48. Jer.
xvi. 19.

^c xviii. 47. ex. 3.
^d viii. 4. Job vii.
17. xv. 14. Heb.
ii. 6.

^e cxlvi. 3, 4.
^f xxxix. 5, 6. lxii.
9. lxxxix. 47.
Job iv. 19. xiv.
1—3. Ec. i. 2.
14. xii. 8.

^g cii. 11. ciii. 15.
16. cix. 23.
2 Sam. xiv. 23.
1 Chr. xxix. 15.
Job viii. 9. Ec.
viii. 13.

^h xviii. 9. Is. lxiv.
2.

ⁱ civ. 32. Ex. xix.
18. Nah. i. 3—
6. Hab. iii. 3—6.
Heb. xii. 18.

^k xviii. 13, 14.
lxviii. 17, 18.
2 Sam. xxii. 12
—15.

^l vii. 12. xxi. 12.
xliv. 5. Deut.
xxxii. 23. 42.

2 My ^a Goodness, ^b and my For-
tress; my high Tower, and my Deli-
verer; my Shield, and *he* in whom I
trust; ^c who subdueth my people un-
der me.

3 LORD, ^d what *is* man, that thou
takest knowledge of him! ^e or the son
of man, that thou makest account of
him!

4 ^f Man is like to vanity: ^g his days
are as a shadow that passeth away.

5 ^h Bow thy heavens, O LORD, and
come down: ⁱ touch the mountains,
and they shall smoke.

6 ^k Cast forth lightning, and scatter
them: ^l shoot out thine arrows, and
destroy them.

7 ^m Send thine ⁿ hand from above; ^o rid me, and ^p deliver me out of great
waters, from ^q the hand of strange
children;

8 Whose ^r mouth speaketh vanity,
and ^s their right hand *is* a right hand
of falsehood.

9 I will ^t sing a new song unto thee,
O God: ^u upon a psaltery *and* an in-
strument of ten strings will I sing
praises unto thee.

10 *It is he* ^v that giveth ^w salvation
unto kings: ^x who delivereth David his
servant from the hurtful sword.

11 Rid me, ^y and deliver me from ^z
the hand of strange children, whose

^m xviii. 16. 2 Sam.
xxii. 17. Matt.
xxvii. 43.

ⁿ Heb. hands.
^o lxix. 2. 14, 15.
xciii. 3, 4. Rev.
xii. 15, 16. xvii.
15.

^p 11. liv. 3. Neh.
ix. 2. Mal. ii. 11.
^q x. 7. xii. 2. xli.
6. lviii. 3. lxii. 4.
cix. 2, 3. Is. lix.
5—7.

^r Is. xlv. 20.
Matt. v. 30.
Rev. xiii. 16, 17.

^s xxxiii. 2, 3. xl.
3. xcvi. 1.
cxlix. 1. Rev. v.
9, 10. xiv. 3.

^t lxxxi. 1—3.
cviii. 2, 3. cl. 3
—5. 1 Chr. xxv.
1—6.

^u xviii. 50. xxxiii.
16—18. 2 Sam.
v. 19—25. viii.
6. 14. 2 Kings v.
1.

^v Or, victory. Is.
xlv. 1—6. Jer.
xxvii. 6—8.

^w cxi. 7. 1 Sam.

xvii. 45, 46. 2 Sam. xxi. 16, 17.

x 7, 8. 2 Sam. x. 6, &c. xvi. 5, &c. xvii. 1, &c.

written by David, after his accession to the throne over all Israel; and when he had gained some of his first victories over the neighbouring nations; but before he had finished his wars against them. (*Notes*, 5—8. 2 Sam. v.)—“Blessed be the LORD my Strength,” “who of a poor shepherd hath made me a valiant warrior and mighty conqueror.” (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xlv. 1—3. 2 Sam. xxii. 34, 35. Is. xli. 2—4.)

V. 2. *Notes*, 2 Sam. xxii. 1—3. 31—33. 43—51.—*My Goodness.*] “The God, on whose goodness and mercy I depend; or, ‘My supreme Good;’ or, ‘The Author of all that is good in me.’—*My Deliverer.*] ‘Heb. *My Deliverer unto me*: for the prophet cannot satisfy himself with ‘any words.’

V. 3, 4. (*Marg. Ref.—Note*, viii. 4—9. *P. O.—Note*, Heb. ii. 5—9.)—“Lord, what indeed is man, ... who is now ‘become like vanity, or instability itself; whose days are ‘fleeting and transient as a shadow, which glides over the ‘earth, vanishes, and is seen no more! Such was human ‘nature: but the Son of God has taken it upon himself, ‘rendered it immortal, and exalted it to heaven,’ whither ‘all will follow him hereafter, who follow him now in the ‘paths of righteousness and holiness.’ *Bp. Horne.*

‘ Now what is man, when grace reveals
‘ The virtue of a Saviour’s blood?
‘ Again a life divine he feels,
‘ Despises earth, and walks with God.

‘ And what, in yonder realms above,
‘ Is ransom’d man ordain’d to be?
‘ With honour, holiness, and love,
‘ No Seraph more adorn’d than he.

‘ Nearest the throne, and first in song,
‘ Man shall his hallelujahs raise;
‘ While wond’rings angels round him throng,
‘ And swell the chorus of his praise.’

Newton, Olney Hymns.

V. 5—8. The Psalmist perceived, that war was again preparing against him on every side: and the number and power of his enemies were so formidable, that, like a dreadful inundation, they seemed ready to bear down and swallow up all before them. (*Notes*, xciii. 3, 4. Nah. i. 7, 8. Rev. xii. 13—17.) But they were “strange children,”

aliens to Israel; so that their “mouth spake vanity, and “their right hand was a right hand of iniquity:” they were the avowed worshippers of idols, and blasphemed the God of Israel, and employed themselves in working wickedness; nay, if they made any league, and confirmed it by giving the right hand as a token of amity, they made no scruple of breaking it. David therefore expected and prayed, that God would appear for him against these idolaters, with such tokens of his presence and power, as Israel had witnessed in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and at mount Sinai. (*Notes*, 2 Sam. viii. 3—14. xxii. 7—16.)—The deliverance and victories, which David expected and experienced from the immediate interposition of God, were typical of the Redeemer’s resurrection and exaltation, in which the miraculous power of God was gloriously manifested; and also of his victories over those who oppose the universal establishment of his kingdom, and of his “putting all “enemies under his feet;” of which event such passages may be considered as in some respects prophetic. (*Notes*, xviii. 49. 2 Sam. xxii. 43—51. *P. O.* 34—51.)

V. 9. *Note*, xxxiii. 2, 3.

V. 10. The preservation and success even of idolatrous princes are, in scripture, ascribed to God. “The LORD “strengthened Eglon the king of Moab against Israel.”—“By Naaman the LORD had given deliverance to Syria.” (*Notes*, Judg. iii. 12. 2 Kings v. 1.)—“Nebuchadnezzar, “my servant, will I bring against this land.”—“The God “of heaven hath given thee,” (Nebuchadnezzar,) “a king- “dom, power, and strength, and glory: and wheresoever “the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and “the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, “and hath made thee ruler over them all.” (*Notes*, Jer. xxv. 8, 9. xxvii. 4—9. Dan. ii. 37. v. 18—24.)—“Thus “saith the LORD to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right “hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him, &c.” (*Notes*, Is. xlv. 25—28. xlv. 1—6.)—“Though wicked “kings be called God’s servants, as Cyrus, Is. xlv. 1, for “as much as he useth them to execute his judgments: yet “David, because of God’s promise, and they that rule “godly, are properly so called; because they serve not their “own affections, but set forth God’s glory.”

V. 11. (*Note*, 5—8.) The word “Rescue,” in the old

^y cxxv. 14, 15. mouth speaketh vanity, and their right
^{cxxviii. 3, 1s.} hand is a right hand of falsehood:

^{iv. 2.} 12 That our sons *may be* ^z as plants
^{Joh xlii. 15.} grown up in their youth; *that* our
^{Prov. xxxi. 10—} daughters *may be* ^{27. 1s. iii. 16—} as corner-stones,
^{24.} *polished after* ^{* Heb. cut.} the similitude of a pa-
^{a Cant. viii. 8, 9.} lace:

^{1 Pet. iii. 3—6.} 13 *That* ^b our garners *may be* full,
^{c cvii. 37, 38.} affording ^{Lev. xxvi. 5.} all manner of store; *that*
^{10. Deut. xxviii.} ^{8. Mal. iii. 10.} ^{Luke xii. 16—}
^{+ Heb. from kind to kind.}

^{c Gen. xxx. 29—} our sheep may bring forth thousands
^{31. Deut. vii.} and ten thousands in our streets:

14 *That* our oxen *may be* ^z strong
<sup>Heb. able to bear burdens, or load-
en with flesh.</sup> to labour; *that there be* ^d no breaking
^{Deut. xxviii. 7.} in, nor going out; *that there be* no
^{25. Judg. v. 8.} complaining in our streets.

15 Happy is *that* people, that is in
such a case; *yea*, ^e happy is *that* peo-
ple, whose God is the LORD.

^{xxviii. 4.}
^{vi. 3—6. 1 Sam.}
^{xiii. 17—23.}
^{xxxi. 7. Jer.}
^{xiii. 17—19. xiv.}
^{18. Lam. i. 4—}
^{6. Zech. viii. 3}
^{—5.}
^{xxxiii. 12. 1xv.}
^{4. cxlvi. 5. Deut.}
^{xxxiii. 29. Eph.}
^{i. 3.}

translation, is more expressive than the term “Rid,” for which it is exchanged.

Right hand.] ‘When they shake hands with others, as if they were their friends, they intend thereby to deceive them.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 12—15. (Notes, Lev. xxvi. 3—12. Deut. xxviii. 1—14.) The prosperity of Israel, according to the promises of the national covenant, was one great end for which David was raised to the throne; and in all his undertakings and successes he kept this in view. When the surrounding idolaters were subdued, Israel would be at peace; and being united under the equitable administration of a pious king, they would adhere to the worship of God, and by his blessing they would multiply exceedingly. Their sons would grow, as plants in a fruitful soil, in vigour and courage, to be the stability of the country: and their daughters, prudent, virtuous, healthful, industrious, and amiable, fitted to fill the important relations of wives and mothers, would be the ornament of their families and of those into which they were married, and the bond of union between them; as polished corner-stones both beautify, and connect together, the parts of a magnificent structure. (Notes, Prov. xxxi. 10—31.) Having peace abroad and harmony at home, their land, being well cultivated, might be expected to be very productive in corn, wine, oil, and every thing valuable; and their cattle to multiply exceedingly. No invader would break in among them; none would go forth into captivity, or be induced to emigrate; nor would there be, or at least there would not be cause for, any complaining of oppression or penury, in their streets. These were the blessings engaged to Israel while they adhered to the service of JEHOVAH; and of which David hoped to put them in possession: in the ordinary course of providence they are generally conferred upon nations, where princes and people unite in maintaining the worship of God, and obedience to his laws: and they are also typical of those blessings, which the Son of David bestows upon his faithful subjects.—‘If God give not to all his children all these blessings, yet he recom- penseth them with better things.’ (Notes, xxxiii. 10—12. lxxv. 9—13. lxxxiv. 11, 12. cxlvi. 5.) ‘The good things of this world may fall to the lot of the righteous; who are distinguished from the wicked, by the use which they make of them, when given, and by their meek resignation of them when taken away.’ Bp. Horne.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

If men become eminent for those things, to which they were not regularly educated, and for which they have wanted many advantages, and which are of real value; they

should be the more deeply sensible, that God himself has been their Teacher.—Courage, strength, and military skill, are indeed gifts of the Creator, and all success is from him: yet they are seldom so used, as to warrant the successful warrior to say, “The LORD, my Strength, hath taught my hands to war, and my fingers to fight:” for alas! too frequently “the great murderer from the beginning” instigates ambitious, revengeful, and rapacious men, to destroy their fellow-creatures without any adequate cause. But those, who are really disposed to give God the glory of their endowments and success, will seek grace from him to make a proper use of them; and will praise him as “their Goodness,” and their merciful God, more than as their Fortress, their Protector, and the Giver of their authority and prosperity. Happy are they, whom the Lord teaches to “fight the good fight of faith,” and to whom he gives that noblest victory and rule, the conquest and dominion over their own spirits! (Notes, Prov. xvi. 32. xxv. 28. 1 Tim. vi. 11, 12.) In the highest earthly exaltation, they will still recollect, how mean, sinful, and guilty they are in themselves; they will be filled with admiring gratitude for the condescension of the great God to such rebellious sinners, and for every instance of his regard to them; and thus they will be preserved from self-importance and presumption in prosperity. They will not forget that “man is like unto vanity; his days are as a shadow, that passeth away;” (Note, ciii. 15—18;) that the transition from a throne to the grave, or even to the depths of hell, is frequent, and often almost instantaneous; that deliverance from the wrath to come, and a crown of unfading glory, are infinitely the most important concerns; and that living to the honour of God, and the benefit of his church, is far more desirable than all human exaltation and renown. Even in this life, success and authority rather expose men to trials and conflicts, than secure exemption from them. But whilst we are doing the duty of our station, we may depend on God to defend and prosper us: and when our enemies are infidel, impious, or licentious, our encouragement to hope in him for help against them may proportionably increase. He “who bows the heavens and comes down,” and “touches the mountains and they smoke,” can find innumerable ways to confound the devices, dissolve the confederacies, and scatter the forces of his most potent foes; to deliver his people from dangers as imminent, as if they were sinking in the depths of the ocean; and thus to turn all their fears and prayers into new songs of joyful praise.

V. 10—15.

It is the Lord who gives temporal deliverances to kings; and continues or restores their health, in answer to the

PSALM CXLV.

David zealously praises the greatness, power, goodness, and mercy of God, 1—8. He celebrates the glory of his kingdom, and the bounty of his providence, 9—16; his justice, holiness, regard to the

prayers, or for the benefit, of their people: and he alone can give them eternal salvation, which they as much need as the meanest of their subjects, while they are commonly placed far more out of the way of it: and yet to be saved from the hurtful sword, or the wasting sickness, without being delivered from the dominion of sin, and from “the wrath to come,” is no enviable advantage.—The higher any one is placed in society, the more entirely ought he to seek the publick good, in preference to his own personal emolument, reputation, or indulgence: yet how very seldom is this undeniable truth duly and practically considered! No war ought to be undertaken, no victories desired, but for the sake of securing peace; the blessings of which are far more valuable than the most brilliant successes: even without bringing into the computation the thousands who are slain in war, and who too generally die in their sins.—Wise, equitable, and pious princes and magistrates conduce much to the prosperity of nations; for these blessings we should pray, and when granted we should return thanks for them; as well as for our liberty, plenty, and other publick benefits.—It is a very pleasant sight to behold a nation increasing in population; families brought up in industry, honesty, and plenty, and fitted for their several stations in publick and domestick life; not cut off by war, or wasted by famine or pestilence, or carried captives and exiles, or compelled by strong necessity to emigrate into foreign regions; and when all manner of abundance is stored in our garners, and clothes our fields and pastures. In many of these things we are a happy people: yet alas! our numerous youth do not generally afford a pleasing prospect. Too many of the young men of all ranks, in this favoured land, grow up noxious plants; being early debauched in their principles and morals, and justly to be denominated infidel, profane, licentious, and dissipated; contracting and disseminating both mental and bodily diseases; and prepared to communicate vice, and ruin, and enfeebled constitutions, to the next generation. The daughters of the land are indeed sufficiently polished, with exterior beauty and embellishment, and every superficial accomplishment: but few of them have the polishing of a corner-stone, as qualified to be the ornament of families, the cement of society, and a blessing to the land and to the next generation, by an attentive, judicious, and virtuous performance of the duties of domestick life; and still fewer are possessed of that adorning, which the word of God almost exclusively recommends. While we abound in luxury and excess, and are free from the irruptions of invaders, and the oppression of tyrants; there is still much complaining in our streets: yea, there is much extreme distress, through the vice, sloth, and extravagance, which prevail among the lower ranks in society; and through the enormous encouragement given by the affluent, to those worthless minions, who minister to their amusements, decorations, or excesses; attended with the neglect of the honest and industrious poor. Thus in

prayers of the upright, and care of those that love him; ^{a c. titie.} and his vengeance upon the wicked, 17—21.

David's ^a *Psalm* of praise.

I WILL ^b extol thee, ^c my God, O

b xxx. 1. lxviii. 4.
lxxi. 14. &c. ciii.
1, 2. Dan. iv. 37.
c xlv. 4. xlv. 1. 6.
xlvii. 6—8. xlviii.
2, 3. xcvi. 3.
cxlix. 2. Is.
xxxiii. 22. Mal.
i. 14. Matt. xxv.
34. Rev. xix. 16.

proportion as we do not adhere to the worship and service of God, we cease to be a happy people, notwithstanding all our advantages. But, blessed be God, there is a considerable remnant of another character, the subjects of the Son of David; who share the blessings of his authority, and the fruits of his victories; and are a happy people, because “they have the LORD for their God.” They dwell among the ungodly, as among “strange children, whose “mouth speaketh of vanity, and whose right hand is a “right hand of falsehood;” but they desire to be preserved from the contagion of their example. Their happiness is not placed in outward prosperity, nor even in flourishing families: but their endeavours are used, and their prayers offered daily, that “their sons may in their “youth” be planted and grow up “in the courts of the “LORD;” that their daughters may be an ornamental part of God’s spiritual temple, and be fitted in due time to be “mothers in Israel,” to train up a godly seed for the ensuing generation; that the number of Christians may increase, as the flocks in the fertile pastures of Canaan; that those who labour in the word and doctrine, may be strong in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ; that the good seed of the word may yield a very large increase; that persecutions, heresies, and divisions may be terminated; and that the church may be in peace, and prosper, without any murmurings, envyings, or contentions, to disgrace and weaken the cause of Christianity. These objects may we ever keep in view; that, as one united phalanx, all who love Christ, may oppose the irruption of infidelity and iniquity, and promote the diffusion of truth and righteousness: for “happy is that people, that is in such a case; “yea, happy is that people whose God is the LORD.”

NOTES.

PSALM CXLV. *Title.* “Praise from David.” From this Psalm to the end of the book, we find unmingled praise and thanksgiving, without one complaint or petition. ‘Hitherto ... the voice of complaint hath sometimes been ‘succeeded by that of thanksgiving; and praise, at other ‘times, hath terminated in prayer. But now, as if the ‘days of mourning in Zion were ended, we hear no more ‘of Messiah as “a man of sorrows;” or of his church as ‘despised and afflicted. ... Henceforth we seem not to be ‘upon earth but in heaven, mingling with celestial spirits ‘around the throne.’ *Bp. Horne.* Probably David composed most of these psalms, and towards the close of his life; when, as the setting sun breaks forth from behind intervening clouds, he shone forth, and set in mild majesty and splendour; anticipating the employment and felicity of heaven, as he approached the mansions of the blessed. (*Note, 1 Chr. xxix. 26—28. P. O. 20—30.*)—The Psalm is composed alphabetically, each verse beginning with one of the Hebrew letters, in order, except that the letter *nun* is omitted.

V. 1, 2. (*Notes, xlv. 1—7. xlvii.*) The words (לְיוֹלָם וְנָקִי),

^d 21. xxx. 12. lli. King; and ^d I will bless thy name for
⁹ cxi. 1, 2. ever and ever.

^e lxxii. 15. cxix. 2 Every day will I bless thee, and I
^f 164. Rev. vii. 15. will praise thy name for ever and ever.

^g cxxix. 6. Job 3 Great is the LORD, and greatly
^{xi} 11. 7-9. xxvi. to be praised; ^g and his greatness ^h is
¹⁴ 14. Is. xl. 28. unsearchable.

^h xlv. 1, 2. lxxi. 4 One ^h generation shall praise thy
¹⁸ lxxviii. 3-7. works to another, and shall declare thy
²⁷ Ex. xii. 26. mighty acts.

ⁱ xl. 9, 10. lxxvi. 3, 5 I ⁱ will speak of the glorious
⁴ lxxi. 17-19. honour of thy majesty, and of thy
²⁴ cxi. 3. civ. wondrous ^h works.

[†] Heb. things, or words. lxxii. 18. 6 And ^k men shall speak of the
^k xii. 22, 23. 27. might of thy terrible acts: and ⁱ I will
³¹ xcvi. 2, 3. declare thy greatness.

[†] Heb. thy greatness I will declare it. xcii. 1, 2. cvii. 21, 22, 31, 32. 7 They shall ^l abundantly utter the
¹¹ ix. 9, 10. memory of thy great goodness, and
²⁸ Dan. iii. 28. shall ^m sing of thy righteousness.

[†] Heb. thy greatness I will declare it. xcii. 1, 2. cvii. 21, 22, 31, 32. 1 xxxvi. 5-8. Is. lxiii. 7. Matt.
^{xii} 34, 35. 2 Cor. ix. 11, 12. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10. m xxxvi. 10. li. 14. lxxi. 15, 16. 19.
^{lxxii} 1-3. lxxxix. 16. Is. xlv. 24, 25. Jer. xxxiii. 6. Phil. iii. 7-9. Rev. xv. 3, 4. xix. 1-3.

8 The ⁿ LORD is gracious, and full ⁿ lxxxvi. 5. 15. c.
⁵ ciii. 8. cxvi. of compassion; slow to anger, and
⁶ Ex. xxxiv. 6. of great mercy.

9 The LORD is ^o good to all; and
⁷ Num. xiv. 18. his tender mercies are over all his
⁸ Dan. ix. 9. Jon. works.

10 ^p All thy works shall praise thee,
^{iv} 11. Matt. v. O LORD; ^q and thy saints shall bless
⁴⁶ Acts xiv. 17. thee.

11 They shall speak of ^r the glory
^p xix. 1. xcvi. 11. of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;

12 To ^s make known to the sons of
¹⁹ 20. Rom. i. 19, 20. men his mighty acts, and the glorious
^{xxii} 23. xxx. 4. majesty of his kingdom.

13 Thy ^t kingdom is an ^u everlasting
^{xxii} 11. xcvi. 12. kingdom, and thy dominion *endureth*
²² cxxv. 19-22. throughout all generations.

10-13. xcvi. 1, &c. xcix. 1-4. 1 Chr. xxix. 11, 12. Is. ix. 6, 7. xxiv. 23. xxxiii. 21,
²² Dan. vii. 13, 14. Zech. ix. 9. Matt. vi. 13. Mark xi. 9, 10. Rev. v. 12, 13. xi. 15
¹⁷ s xcvi. 1. cv. 5. cvii. 2. cx. 2, 3. cxxxv. 6-12. cxxxvi. 4, &c. Dan. iv.
³⁴ 35. Matt. xxviii. 18. Acts ii. 8-11. Eph. i. 19-21. iii. 7, 8. Rev. xii. 10. xix. 15, 16.
^t cxxvi. 10. Is. ix. 7. Dan. ii. 44. vii. 14. 27. 1 Tim. i. 17. Rev. xi. 15. ^u Heb.
^{kingdom} of all ages. 1 Cor. xv. 21-23.

rendered in these verses, "for ever and ever," are pecu-
 liarily emphatical, and imply *endless duration*, if human
 language can convey that idea. Accordingly the Septua-
 gint translate them by the most expressive terms, that the
 copious Greek contains for an eternity to come (εις τον
 αιωνα, και εις τον αιωνα τε αιωνος).—No doubt, therefore, the
 Psalmist expected to be employed for ever, yea, for ever
 and ever, in the high praises of his God, his King and
 Saviour. (Notes, 21. cxlvi. 2. Rev. vii. 13-17.)

V. 3. 'Hereby he declareth, that all power is subject
 'to God, and that no worldly promotion ought to obscure
 'God's glory.' (Notes, xcvi. 3, 4. cxxxix. 4-6. Job xxvi.
 14. Rom. xi. 33-36.) 'The Lord is immensely great, in
 'power and dominion, ... and therefore to be honoured with
 'our highest, and with our endless praises. But when we
 'have said all we can, our best praise of him will be to
 'confess, that his transcendent excellencies cannot be
 'comprehended.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 4. 'As the greatness of God our Saviour hath no
 'bounds, so his praises should have no end, nor should
 'the voice of thanksgiving ever cease in the church. As
 'one generation drops it, another should take it up, and
 'prolong the delightful strain.' Bp. Horne.—'For as
 'much as the end of man's creation, and of his preserva-
 'tion in this life, is to praise God; therefore he requireth
 'that not only we ourselves do it, but cause all others to
 'do the same:—that is, as far as our influence can by any
 means extend. (Notes, lxxi. 17, 18. lxxviii. 3-8. Is.
 xxxviii. 17-20.)

V. 5-7. 'It shall be my business, in this present age,
 'to speak of the dazzling splendour and beauty of thy
 'majesty, which I want words to express, but appears in
 'thy stupendous works: which they that come after shall
 'rehearse; and ... declare to their posterity what dreadful
 'things were done by thy irresistible power, for the sub-
 'version of our enemies: and with the same diligence
 'shall they continue the constant memory of thy numer-
 'ous benefits to us; which they shall no more cease to

'celebrate with their praises, than a spring doth to pour
 'out water; but publish in their perpetual hymns, how
 'just and faithful thou art to thy word.' Bp. Patrick.
 (Marg. Ref.)

V. 8. Notes, lxxxvi. 14, 15. ciii. 6-9. Ex. xxxiv. 5-
 7. Mic. vii. 18-20.

V. 9-13. The God of love and mercy does good, in
 various ways, to every one of the fallen human race; and,
 being "full of compassion," he is ready to pardon, relieve,
 and bless, all that penitently and in faith seek his salva-
 tion, without respect to their past conduct. (Note, 1 John
 iv. 7, 8.) He is also exceedingly attentive to the wants and
 sufferings even of animals, according to their several tribes,
 and requires men to be so. (Marg. Ref. o.) All his crea-
 tures, according to their several natures, in one way or
 other, though many of them unconsciously or involun-
 tarily, subserve the display of his glory: but his "saints,"
 his redeemed people, who have obtained his mercy and
 devoted themselves to his service, are the royal priesthood
 in this august temple of the visible creation, who, with
 admiring and grateful hearts, zealously offer him the spi-
 ritual sacrifices of adoring praise and thanksgiving. (Notes,
 Gen. i. 31. Heb. xiii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. ii. 4-6. 9, 10. Rev. i.
 4-6. v. 8-10.)—They are the subjects of the mediatorial
 kingdom of the Redeemer on earth, and heirs of the king-
 dom in heaven, "which God hath prepared for them that
 "love him:" and it is their chief business and plea-
 sure to celebrate the power and glory of that kingdom,
 as the grand subject of their praises. Thus, by their
 means, the sons of men, who had not before known the
 works and kingdom of God, become acquainted with them:
 and in this manner the "kingdom of God comes," and is
 set up more diffusively on earth, and perpetuated from
 generation to generation, and will be so till the end of
 time; when, being translated to heaven, it will endure
 for ever and ever. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Is. ix. 6, 7. Dan.
 ii. 44, 45. vii. 13, 14. 1 Cor. xv. 20-28.)—The Septua-
 gint here add another verse, (probably to complete the

u xxxvii. 24. xciv. 18. cxix. 117. Luce xxii. 31. 32.
x xxxviii. 6. xlii. 5. cxlvi. 8. Luke xiii. 11—13.
y 9. civ. 21. 27. cxxxvi. 25. cxlvii. 8. 9. Gen. i. 30. Job xxxviii. 39 —41. Joel ii. 22. Matt. vi. 26. Luke xii. 24. Acts xvii. 25.
* Or, look unto thee.
z. civ. 28. cvii. 9. cxxxii. 15. Job xxxviii. 27.
a i. 6. lxxxix. 14. xcvi. 2. xcix. 3. 4. ciii. 6. Gen. xviii. 25. Deut. xxxii. 4. 1 Sam. ii. 2, 3. Is. xlv. 21. Zeph. iii. 5. Zech. ix. 9. Rom. iii. 5, 6. 25, 26. Rev. iv. 8. xv. 3. 4. xvi. 5—7. xix. 2. 11. + Or, merciful, or bountiful. b xxxiv. 18. xlv. 1. 5. Deut. iv. 7. 1 Kings xviii. 27, 28. Is. lviii. 9. John xiv. 23. Jam. iv. 8.

14 The LORD ^u upholdeth all that fall, and ^x raiseth up all *those that be bowed down.*

15 The ^y eyes of all ^{*} wait upon thee; and thou givest them their meat in due season.

16 Thou ^z openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

17 The LORD ^a is ⁱ righteous in all his ways, and ^h holy in all his works.

18 The LORD ^b is ^g nigh unto all them

c xvii. 1. cxix. 2. Prov. xv. 8. Is. i. 15, 16. Jer. xxix. 12, 13. Hos. vii. 14. Matt. vi. 5—8. xxiii. 14. John iv. 24. 1 John iii. 20—22.
d xx. 4. xxxiv. 9. xxxvi. 7, 8. xxxvii. 4. 19. Matt. v. 6. Luke i. 53. John xv. 7. 16. xvi. 24. Eph. iii. 16—20. 1 John v. 15.
e xxxv. 17. xxxvii. 39, 40. xci. 15. f xxxi. 23. xxxvii. 28. xcvi. 10. John x. 27—29. Rom. viii. 28—30. Jam. ii. 5. 1 Pet. i. 5—8.
g i. 6. ix. 17. Matt. xxv. 41. h 1, 2. 5. xxx. 12. li. 15. lxxi. 8. 15. 23, 24. lxxxix. 1. i lxvii. 3, 4. lxxxvi. 9. ciii. 22. cxvii. cl. 6. Rev. v. 11—14.

that call upon him, to all that ^c call upon him in truth.

19 He will ^d fulfil the desire of them that fear him: ^e he will also hear their cry, and will save them.

20 The LORD ^f preserveth all them that love him; but ^g all the wicked will he destroy.

21 ^h My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD: and ⁱ let all flesh bless his holy name for ever and ever.

number of verses according to the Hebrew alphabet,) which is not found in the original: 'The Lord is faithful 'to all his words, and holy in all his works.' The first word of this verse would, indeed, in the Hebrew, begin with the letter *nun*, which is omitted: but, though the sentiment it contains is entirely scriptural, it so much resembles the seventeenth verse, that it is supposed by the best critics not to be genuine.

V. 14. "JEHOVAH is the Supporter of all who are "falling, and the Refresher of all who are dejected."—"Who being in misery and affliction would faint and fall "away, if God did not uphold them: and therefore they "ought to reverence him that reigneth in heaven, and suffer "themselves to be governed by him." (Notes, cxlvi. 8. Luke xiii. 10—17.)—This is also a direction to those who are ready to fall before temptation, or to sink under affliction, where to apply for help and comfort: even to that "God who comforteth those that are cast down." (Note, 2 Cor. vii. 5—7.)

V. 15, 16. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, civ. 27—30. Matt. vi. 11.) 'He makes a constant provision also for them: 'which every creature, when their necessities call for sup- 'ply, daily receive from thee, O Lord. ...And thou art 'not sparing of thy blessings, but dispensest them with 'such a bountiful hand, that there are none of them 'live without satisfactions, but have all their appetites 'filled, by thy liberality to the smallest of them.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 17. Perfect justice, truth, purity, wisdom, and love, invariably govern all the dispensations and works of God. And the more any man studies them, in humble faith and piety, the fuller conviction of this leading and satisfying truth will he receive. (Marg. Ref. a.) The harmony of justice and mercy in the dispensations of God, who is "a "just God and a Saviour" seems especially intended. "Merciful or bountiful." Marg.

V. 18. 'It is our happiness to have a King, that is not, 'like earthly princes, difficult of access; but one, of whom 'his meanest subject may at any time obtain an audience, 'and be certain of having his request granted, if it be 'made "in truth," without wavering and without hypo- 'crisy, with humble confidence and unwearied constancy; 'expecting salvation from God, from none but him, and 'from him only in the way of duty and obedience.' Bp. Horne.—This is a just description of a right state of heart; but the Psalmist seems to have intended the encourage-

ment of all sincere supplicants, as distinguished from hy- pocrites, however low and imperfect their attainments were. (Notes, xxxiv. 18. Deut. iv. 6—8. Prov. xv. 8, 9. Jer. xxix. 11—14. Matt. vii. 7—11. Jam. iv. 1—3. 1 John iii. 18—24.)

V. 19, 20. All those who call on God in truth "fear "him:" and he will "fulfil their desire;" as they desire above all things that which he has promised. (Notes, xxxvii. 4. 1 John v. 14, 15.)—They call upon him in faith, and that "faith worketh by love." As "the called according "to his purpose," they love him, and become conscious that they love him: and, amidst all trials and tempta- tions, "the LORD preserveth all them that love him." (Notes, Rom. viii. 28—39.) And "they are kept by the "power of God, through faith unto salvation." (Notes, 1 Pet. i. 2—5. 1 John v. 16—18.) But the wicked, the impenitent, whether profane or hypocritical, he will de- stroy.

V. 21. 'All men ought to praise God to eternity, and may all do this.' The Psalmist thus concludes, as he had begun; except that he here called on others to do, what himself had before determined on. (Notes, 1, 2. lxvii. 4— 7. lxxii. 17—19. lxxxvi. 9, 10. cxvii. cl. 6.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Those, who under troubles and temptations abound in fervent prayer, shall in due season abound in grateful praise, which is the genuine language of holy joy. We can never extol our glorious God and Saviour in an adequate manner: we should therefore exert all our powers, and make new efforts to bless his name every day: and we may thus be delightfully employed for ever and ever, without exhaust- ing the infinitely copious subject. For the great Head of the church is "the King of all the earth;" yea, "he is "great, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness is "unsearchable." Animated by our glorious theme, we should communicate all which we have learned of his per- fections and his works, to our children; that when we join the songs of the church triumphant, the solemn ser- vice on earth may not be suspended, or at all remitted, for a moment; but that "one generation may praise his "works unto another, and declare his mighty acts." Whe- ther our sphere be extensive or contracted, we should in it be continually "speaking of the glorious honour of his "majesty;" especially of his wondrous work of redemp-

PSALM CXLVI.

The Psalmist resolves to praise God, while he has any being, 1, 2. He dissuades all from trusting in man, 3, 4. He encourages confidence in God, from a view of his power and goodness, as displayed in all his works, 5—10.

* Heb. *Hallelujah*. cv. 45.
 a ciii. 1. 22. civ. 1. 35.

PRAISE ye the LORD. ^a Praise the LORD, O my soul.

tion; in order to stir up other "men, to speak of his "power and terrible acts," whilst we "declare his greatness." For neither Egypt's desolating plagues, nor the destruction of the devoted Canaanites, so proclaim the terror of the avenging justice of our God, as the cross of Christ does to the enlightened mind. But, while we endeavour to make sinners know "the terror of the Lord," that they may "flee from the wrath to come;" we should still more aim to lead them into the experience of his mercy, that "they may abundantly utter the memory of "his great goodness, and sing of his righteousness:" for in the salvation of Christ we see it displayed in perfect harmony with mercy, and perceive that a just God is also "gracious, full of compassion, and slow to anger."

V. 9—21.

"The LORD is good to all, and his tender mercies are "over all his works;" and even impenitent sinners on earth are living monuments of his patience, and of his goodness to his enemies. All his works shew forth his praises: but his saints bless his name with joyful hearts, and render him the reasonable service of love and gratitude. Being brought into his kingdom, as governed by the divine Redeemer on his mediatorial throne, they delight to discourse of the glory of his kingdom, and the power and grace of the King. His glorious excellences, the honour of God the Father in his salvation, the privileges and characters of his subjects, and their impregnable security; the reasonableness of his laws, and the mercy and equity of his administration; the favour which he has shewn, and is ever ready to shew, to rebels who submit to him, the benefits which they themselves have received, the inheritance prepared for them, and the price paid for their ransom;—these things form their favourite topics. Fain would they "make known to all the sons "of men his mighty acts," and "the glorious majesty of "his kingdom;" that none might any longer refuse submission to so gracious a Prince, whose authority is established to all generations. The Lord's condescension likewise excites their liveliest gratitude: he regards the mean and abject; he upholds all such as feel themselves falling into sin and misery and ready to perish, and apply to him for help; and he raises up all those who are bowed down with conscious guilt or deep distress. All creatures wait upon him, and are satisfied with meat in due season; and he says to his believing poor, "Your Father knoweth what "things ye have need of." (Notes, Matt. vi. 25—32. Luke xii. 22—34.) His justice and purity are always exercised in full perfection, whether he save or punish; yet he most delights that sinners should repent and live. He is therefore accessible at all times, and in all places, to the

2 ^b While I live will I praise the LORD: I will sing praises unto my God, while I have any being.

3 ^c Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom *there* is no [†] help.

4 His ^d breath goeth forth, ^e he returneth to his earth; in that very day ^f his thoughts perish.

^b lxiii. 4. lxvii. 14. 15. civ. 33. cxlv. 1, 2. Rev. vii. 9—17.
^c lxii. 9. cxviii. 8. 9. Is. ii. 22. xxxi. 3. xxxvi. 6. Jer. xvii. 5, 6.
[†] Or, *salvation*.
^d civ. 29. Gen. ii. 7. vi. 17. Job xiv. 10. xvii. 1. xxvii. 3. Dan. v. 23.
^e xc. 3. Gen. iii. 19. Ec. xii. 7.
^f Job xiv. 21. xvii. 11. Is. ii. 22. Lam. iv. 20. 1 Cor. ii. 6.

most guilty of our fallen race; and he is nigh to hear, to pardon, and to save, "all who call upon him in truth:" so that none who hear the gospel are excluded from its blessings, but profane despisers, careless transgressors, and hypocrites. "For he will fulfil the desire of them that fear "him: he will hear their cry, and will help them." And, having taught them to love his name and his holy ways, he will preserve them from the destruction of the wicked, who shall perish for ever. (Note, 1 Pet. i. 3—5.) May we then fear his wrath, and seek his grace; may we love his name, and walk in his ways: then shall we speak from a full heart, whilst our lips utter his praise; and while we desire that "all flesh should bless his holy name "for ever and ever." (Note, cxlvi. 2.)

NOTES.

PSALM CXLVI. V. 1. The Septuagint and the vulgate Latin ascribe this Psalm to Haggai and Zechariah: from an opinion, perhaps, that it suited the times of those prophets; when the Jews found little encouragement to trust in the kings of Persia; but when, simply trusting in God, they were prospered. It is, however, far more probable, that it was written by David, towards the close of his reign.—It begins and ends with the word "Hallelujah." (Notes, ciii. 1, 2. 20—22.)

V. 2. (Note, cxlv. 1, 2.) No doubt the following stanza gives the genuine meaning of the Psalmist:

' I'll praise my maker with my breath,
 ' And when my voice is lost in death,
 ' Praise shall employ my nobler powers:
 ' My days of praise shall ne'er be past
 ' While life and thought and being last,
 ' And immortality endures.' *Watts*.

V. 3, 4. (Note, ii. 10—12. If he, who commonly styled himself "the Son of man," had not also been the Son of God, he must have been included in this general caution, or dissuasive: but on the contrary, the particulars mentioned in the subsequent part of the Psalm, were remarkably verified in him.—"Earthly princes, if they have the will, "often want the power even to protect their friends. And "should they want neither will nor power to advance them, "yet still all depends upon the breath in their nostrils, "which, perhaps at the very critical moment, goeth forth, "they return to their earth; their thoughts, and all the "thoughts of those who had hoped to rise by their means, "fall into the same grave and are buried with them for "ever." Bp. Horne.—How often is this exemplified in this land, by the disappointed expectations of those, who are strongly attached to some eminent statesman, and are confident of preferment from him: but he dies and their hopes expire with him. (Notes, lxii. 8—10. Is. ii. 22. Jer.

5 ^s Happy is he that hath ^h the God of Jacob for his help, ⁱ whose hope is in the LORD his God;

6 Which ^k made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that therein is: which ^m keepeth truth for ever;

7 Which ⁿ executeth judgment for the oppressed; ^o which giveth food to the hungry. The LORD ^p looseth the prisoners:

8 The LORD ^q openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD ^r raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD ^s loveth the righteous:

9 The LORD ^t preserveth the strangers: he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but ^u the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

10 The LORD shall ^v reign for ever, even ^w thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.

8 The LORD ^q openeth the eyes of the blind: the LORD ^r raiseth them that are bowed down: the LORD ^s loveth the righteous:

9 The LORD ^t preserveth the strangers: he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but ^u the way of the wicked he turneth upside down.

10 The LORD shall ^v reign for ever, even ^w thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD.

Is. xxxv. 5. xlii. 16. 18. Matt. 5. 30. xi. 5. Luke xviii. 41, 42. John ix. 7. 32, 33. Acts xxvi. 18. Eph. i. 18. r cxi. 14. cxi. 1. 6. Luke xiii. 1. —13. 2 Cor. vi. 6. s xi. 7. Deut. xxxiii. 3. John xiv. 2. —23. xvi. 27. t lxxviii. 5. Deut. x. 18, 19. xvi. 11. Jer. xlix. 11. Hos. xiv. 3. Mal. iii. 5. Jam. i. 27. u xviii. 26. lxxviii. 13—17. cxi. 20. cxi. 6. 2 Sam. x. 16. y cxi. 12.

xvii. 5—8.)—No help. (3) “No salvation.” Marg.—His thoughts. (4) חֲשׁוֹתָיו: his splendid thoughts.

V. 5. ‘He, and he alone, is the truly happy man, who expects help from the mighty God by whom Jacob was fed all his life long; (Gen. xlviii. 15;) who trusts him that is Lord of the world, and hath made him his Friend so much, that he can call him his God.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, lxxiv. 11, 12. Is. xxvi. 3, 4.)

V. 6. ‘He encourageth the godly to trust only in the Lord, both for that his power is able to deliver them from all danger; and for his promise sake, his will is most ready to do it.’ (Marg. Ref.)—He keepeth truth for ever.] Notes, cxxxviii. 2. Matt. xxiv. 32—35, v. 35. Luke i. 67—75, vv. 70—73. John i. 17. Rom. xv. 8—13, v. 8. Heb. vi. 13—20.

V. 7. ‘If one part of the Psalmist’s description belong to Christ’ (8), ‘the other members of it must do so likewise, it being evident that the whole is spoken of the same person. “He therefore is the God of Jacob, who “made heaven and earth, the sea and all that therein is:” and upon his appearance among men in the body of our flesh, he shewed himself possessed of power to relieve all the wants, corporeal and spiritual, of poor lost mankind. When he rescued men from the bondage of Satan, he “executed judgment for the oppressed;” when he fed thousands by a miracle, or when he preached the word to such as desired to hear and receive it, he “gave food to the hungry:” when by pardon and grace he released those who were bound with the chains of their sins, he “loosed the prisoners.”’ Bp. Horne. (Notes, x. 14, 15. lxxii. 4—7. ciii. 6—8. Prov. xxii. 22, 23. Is. lxi. 1—3. Zech. ix. 11, 12. Luke iv. 16—22.)

V. 8. This verse ‘was most exactly and literally fulfilled in our Lord Christ, when he came to give salvation to us.’ Bp. Patrick. ‘When he poured light into the sightless eye-ball, or illuminated with saving knowledge the understanding of the ignorant, he “opened the eyes of the blind:” when he made the crooked woman straight, or rectified the obliquity of a depraved will, he “raised those that were bowed down.”’ Bp. Horne. (Notes, xi. 7. cxi. 14. Is. xxix. 17—19. xxxv. 5—7. Matt. xi. 2—6. Luke xiii. 11—17.)

V. 9. Marg. Ref.—Notes, i. 4—6. cxi. 19, 20. Job. v. 11—16.—Strangers, &c.] ‘Meaning all them that are destitute of worldly means and succour.’ (Notes, lxxviii. 5, 6. Deut. x. 18, 19.)

V. 10. ‘He assureth the church, that God reigneth for

‘ever, for the preservation of the same.’ (Notes x. 16. cxi. 9—13. Is. xii. 4—6. lii. 7, 8. Rev. xi. 15—18.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

In heaven, when one Hallelujah closes, another commences: and sometimes the believer on earth is so carried above his fears, sorrows, and sins, as to emulate the incessant thanksgivings of “the saints in light.”—If we desire to praise the Lord while we live, as our most delightful occupation, we shall certainly praise him “while we have any being,” even to all eternity. With these glorious prospects before our eyes, how mean do the pursuits of ambition, or connexions with the great, seem to us! and how needful does it appear to dissuade men from this common, but destructive idolatry! The fickleness, jealousies, selfishness, and weakness of man, and the intrigues and cabals of courts, render all dependence on princes delusory, even as to this present world. But were this dependence as stable as it is slippery, the uncertainty of life must expose to perpetual anxieties and disappointments, all those who confide in such dying patrons. How little then could the friendship of all the princes of the earth do for us, in respect of judgment and the eternal world! “Happy is he” alone, “who hath the God of Jacob for his help, and whose hope is in the LORD his God.” He who “made the heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is,” cannot want power to bless us; and his goodness is illustrious in every part of his providential government. But lest we should question his love to sinners, or his eternal truth and faithfulness to his word, behold the God of heaven assumes our human flesh, that he may “become our Salvation!” (Notes, Is. xii. 1—3.) The eternal and coequal Son of God becomes “the Son of man!” not to be “without help,” as the other children of men are, but to bring effectual help and eternal salvation unto us. And though he expired upon the cross for our sins, and was laid in the grave; yet his glorious and gracious thoughts of love did not then perish, but he arose again to accomplish them. He reigneth in Zion, her Lord and King, to all generations, to the praise and glory of God the Father, and when we trust in Emmanuel, then our faith and hope are rested on the God of Jacob. (Note, 1 Pet. i. 17—21, v. 21.) To evince that he was the Creator and Lord of all, when in his state of humiliation on earth; he rescued those who were oppressed by Satan, and executed judgment on that oppressor; he created food to bestow on the hungering multitudes; he

PSALM CXLVII.

a lxiii. 3—5. xcii. 1. cxxxv. 3.
 b xxxiii. 1. xlii. 4. cxxii. 1—4. Rev. v. 9—14. xix. 1—6.
 c li. 18. cii. 13—16. Neh. iii. 1, &c. vii. 4. Is. xiv. 32. lxii. 7. Jer. xxxi. 4. Dan. ix. 25. Matt. xvii. 18.
 d cii. 20—22. Deut. xxx. 3. Ezra ii. 64, 65. viii. 1, &c. Is. xi. 11, 12. xxvii. 13. lvi. 8. Jer. xxxii. 37. Ez. xxxvi. 24, &c. xxxvii. 21, &c. xxxviii. 8. xxxix. 27, 28. Eph. ii. 12—19.
 e li. 17. Job v. 18. Is. lvii. 15. lxi. 1. Jer. xxxiii. 6. Hos. vi. 1, 2. Mal. iv. 2. Luke iv. 18.
 * Heb. *griefs*. Is. i. 5, 6.
 f viii. 3. cxlviii. 3. Gen. xv. 5. Is. xl. 26.

Exhortations to praise God for the wisdom, power, and goodness, displayed in providence, and in the care of his Church; and in the changes of the weather, and the revolving seasons; and for giving Israel his word and ordinances, 1—20.

PRAISE ye the LORD: ^a for *it is good* to sing praises unto our God; for *it is pleasant*, ^b and praise is comely.

2 The LORD doth ^c build up Jerusalem; ^d he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel.

3 He ^e healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their ^{*} wounds.

4 He ^f telleth the number of the

stars: he calleth them all by *their* names.

5 ^g Great is our Lord and of great power: [†] his understanding is infinite.

6 The LORD ^h lifteth up the meek: ⁱ he casteth the wicked down to the ground.

7 ^k Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God;

8 Who ^l covereth the heaven with clouds, who ^m prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow upon the mountains.

9 He ⁿ giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.

m lxv. 9—13. civ. 13, 14. Job v. 10. Jer. xiv. 22. Joel ii. 23. Am. v. 7, 8. Matt. v. 45. Acts xiv. 17. Jam. v. 17, 18. n civ. 27, 28. cxlvi. 25. cxlv. 16. Job xxxviii. 41. Matt. vi. 26. Luke xii. 24.

g lxviii. 1. xcvi. 4. xcix. 2. cxxxv. 5. cxlv. 3. Jer. x. 6. xxxii. 17—19. Nah. i. 3. Rev. xv. 3.
 † Heb. *of his understanding there is no number*. xl. 5. cxxxix. 17, 18. Is. xl. 28. Rom. xi. 33.
 h xxv. 9. xxxviii. 11. cxlv. 14. cxlvi. 8. cxlix. 4. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Zeph. ii. 3. Matt. v. 5. Jam. iv. 10. 1 Pet. v. 6.
 i lv. 23. lxxiii. 18, 19. cxlvi. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 4—9.
 k lxvii. 6, 7. lxxviii. 32. xcii. 1—3. xcv. 1, 2. cvii. 21, 22. Ex. xv. 20, 21. Rev. v. 9—10.
 l cxxxv. 7. Gen. ix. 14. 1 Kings xviii. 44, 45. Job xxvi. 8, 9. xxxvii. 27—33. xxxviii. 25—27. Is. v. 6.
 m lxv. 9—13. civ. 13, 14. Job v. 10. Jer. xiv. 22. Joel ii. 23. Am. v. 7, 8. Matt. v. 45. Acts xiv. 17. Jam. v. 17, 18. n civ. 27, 28. cxlvi. 25. cxlv. 16. Job xxxviii. 41. Matt. vi. 26. Luke xii. 24.

opened the eyes of those who had been born blind; he raised up those who were bowed down with disease; and he shewed himself the effectual Friend of the widow and of the destitute. But all this was only a specimen and an emblem of what he is doing every day. He still continually proclaims and grants “deliverance to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those that are bound” in the chains of sin and Satan. He opens the eyes of our understandings, and raises up those who are bowed down with a load of conscious guilt, or by great distress of soul; he feeds those who hunger for salvation, with the Bread of life; and he is the constant Friend of “the poor in spirit,” of the destitute and helpless. In short “he loveth the righteous,” and their righteousness is in him and from him; “but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down:” and while he does these things by his grace, his providence orders all things for the good of those who trust and love him. Let sinners then flee to him; and let believers rejoice in him, as their gracious and covenanted Friend: and as “the LORD shall reign for ever,” even our God to all generations,” let us without ceasing excite each other to praise his holy name.

NOTES.

PSALM CXLVII. V. 1, 2. This Psalm also is, by the Septuagint, ascribed to Haggai and Zechariah; and indeed many expressions in it favour the supposition, that it was composed as a song of praise for the restoration of the Jews to Jerusalem and their own land: but it seems better suited to the times of Nehemiah, when the walls were rebuilt, and the state re-established, than to the unsettled condition of the newly returned captives, when Haggai and Zechariah prophesied to them. For in their days, it could scarcely be said, that the Lord “built up Jerusalem,” as he had not then “strengthened the bars of her gates” (13); for they were not set up till long afterwards.—(*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Neh. i. 3. iii. iv. vi. 15, 16. xii. 27—43. Dan. ix. 25—27.*) ‘Praise is “good,” and acceptable to God our Saviour, whose glory is the great end of man’s creation and redemption: and it is “pleasant and comely” for man,

‘being the only return he can make for those and all other mercies; the offspring of gratitude, and the expression of love; the elevation of the soul, and the antepast of heaven; its own reward in this life, and an introduction to the felicities of the next.’ *Bp. Horne.* (*Notes, xxxiii. 1. lxiii. 5, 6. xcii. 1, 2. cxxxv. 3.*)—*Outcasts.* (2) *Note, Is. lvi. 8.*

V. 3. ‘He comforts us after our long sorrows, which had in a manner broken our heart: ... and hath in some measure repaired our breaches, which, like a festering wound, endangered the life of our nation.’ *Bp. Patrick.* The readiness of our gracious Lord, at all times and in all nations, to heal the broken in heart, and to bind up the wounds of “those who call on him” are also intended.—(*Notes, Job. v. 18, 19. Is. lxi. 1—3. Hos. vi. 1—3.*)

V. 4, 5. ‘Though it seem to man incredible, that God should assemble his church, being so dispersed; yet nothing can be too hard for him, that can number and name all the stars.’—This thought naturally arose from the dispersed state of the Jews after the captivity, and was applicable to the Lord’s gathering them into their own land. (*Am. ix. 9.*)—‘He who does this’ (number and name the stars,) ‘cannot be ignorant of the situation and circumstances of his elect. He knoweth each individual. ... He can call his saints from the depths of the earth and sea, “by their names,” as when once “he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.”’ *Bp. Horne.* (*Notes, cxxxix. 17, 18. cxlv. 3, 4. Job. xi. 7—12. Is. xl. 25—31. Am. v. 7—9. Rom. xi. 33—36.*)

V. 6—8. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, cxlv. 14. cxlvi. 8.—Clouds, &c.* (8) ‘Clouds look melancholy; yet without them we could have no rain, and consequently no fruit: thus afflictions look black, and dark, and unpleasant; yet from them come those showers that ... “yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness,”’ *Henry.*—(*Notes, lxv. 9—13. civ. 13—15. cxxxv. 7. 1 Kings xviii. 43—44. Job. v. 8—10. xxxvi. 22—33. Jer. xiv. 19—22, v. 22.*)

V. 9. ‘Will he, in the day of dearth and calamity, forsake the meek and harmless dove, that mourneth continually in prayer before him? The desponding servant of God need only therefore put to himself the question ...

o xlv. 7. xxxiii. 16
—18. Job xxxix.
19—25. Prov.
xxi. 31. Is xxxi.
1. Hos. i. 7.
p 1 Sam. xvi. 7.
2 Sam. i. 23. ii.
18—23. Ec. ix.
11.
q xxxv. 27. cxlix.
4. Prov. xi. 20.
xxi. 30. Zeph.
iii. 17. Pet. iii.
4.
r xxxiii. 18. 22. s
1 Pet. i. 13. 17.
s xxxv. 19—21.
cxli. 10. cxlix.
2. Is. xii. 6. iii.
7. Joel ii. 23.
t xlviii. 1—14. li.
18. cxv. 2. Neh.
iii. 1. &c. vi.
1. vii. xii. 30.
Lam. ii. 8, 9.
iv. 12. Dan. ix.
25.
u cxv. 14. 15.
cxlviii. 3—6.
cxliv. 12. Is.
xlv. 3—5. Jer.
xxx. 19, 20. Zech. viii. 3—5. Luke xix. 42—44.

10 He °delighteth not in the strength
of the horse: ° he taketh not pleasure
in the legs of a man.
11 The LORD ° taketh pleasure in
them ° that fear him, in those that hope
in his mercy.

12 Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem;
° praise thy God, O Zion.

13 For ° he hath strengthened the
bars of thy gates; he hath ° blessed thy
children within thee.

14 ° He ° maketh peace in thy bor-
ders, and ° filleth thee with the ° finest
of the wheat.

15 He ° sendeth forth his command-
ment upon earth: ° his word runneth
very swiftly.

ment upon earth: ° his word runneth
very swiftly.

16 He ° giveth snow like wool: he °
scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes.

17 He ° casteth forth his ice like
morsels: ° who can stand before his
cold?

18 He ° sendeth out his word, and
melteth them: he causeth his wind to
blow, and the waters flow.

19 He ° sheweth his ° word unto Ja-
cob, ° his statutes and his judgments
unto Israel.

20 He hath ° not dealt so with any
nation: and as for his judgments, they
have not known them. Praise ye the
LORD.

a lxxviii. 11. 2 Thes.
iii. 1. marg.
b cxlviii. 8. Job
xxxvii. 6. Is. lv.
10.
c Job xxxvii. 9,
10. xxxviii. 29.
d lxxviii. 47, 48.
Ex. ix. 23—25.
Josh. x. 11. Job
xxxviii. 22, 23.
e Job xxxviii. 29,
30.
f 15. Job vi. 16.
17. xxxvii. 17.
g lxxvi. 1. lxxviii.
5. ciii. 7. Deut.
xxxiii. 2—4.
Mal. iv. 4. Rom.
iii. 2. ix. 4.
2 Tim. iii. 15—
17.
h Heb. words. Ex.
xx. 1. &c. Deut.
iv. 12, 13. marg.
v. 22.
i Ex. xxi.—xxiii.
See on Deut. iv.
1. 8. 45. v. 31.
vi. 1.
Deut. iv. 32—34.
Prov. xxix. 18.
Is. v. 1—7. Matt.
xxi. 33—41. Acts
xiv. 16. xxvi. 17,
18. Rom. iii. 1,
2. Eph. ii. 12. v. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10

“ Who provideth for the raven his food? When his young
“ ones cry unto God, they wander for lack of meat.”
Bp. Horne. (Notes, Job. xxxviii. 31—41, v. 41. Matt. vi.
26—32, v. 26.)

V. 10, 11. ‘ Let us... not be afraid though we are of
‘ little force, (Neh. iv. 3, 4. vii. 4,) and have no armies of
‘ horses and foot to defend us: for the LORD who fights for
‘ us (Neh. iv. 20,) hath no need of these; and will not
‘ take part with our enemies, because they are superior to
‘ us in the strength of their horses, and the nimbleness of
‘ their soldiers: but delights to give those his assistance
‘ and protection,... who, worshipping him devoutly, fear to
‘ offend him; and having no help in themselves, nor any
‘ earthly refuge to fly unto, depend notwithstanding with a
‘ stedfast faith on his infinite mercy.’ Bp. Patrick. (Marg.
Ref.—xxxiii. 17, 18. Note, cxlix. 4.)

V. 12—14. The Jews celebrated the dedication of the
wall, (when it had been rebuilt, and the gates of it set up,
under the pious care of Nehemiah,) with loud and earnest
thanksgivings to God: (Notes, Neh. xii. 27—43:) and they
had at that time, and were encouraged in future to hope con-
fidently for, peace and plenty. These blessings Jerusalem,
or Zion, was called on to celebrate with joyful praises;
and the exhortation is equally applicable to other nations
and companies of God’s worshippers, when favoured in
like manner.—The last clause is literally, “ He shall sa-
tisfy thee with the fat of wheat.” (Marg. and Marg.
Ref.—Notes, Deut. xxxii. 14.)

V. 15—18. (Marg. Ref.—Note, 2 Thes. iii. 1—5, v. 1.)
Till the Lord’s time came, all the efforts of the Jews, to
recover liberty or prosperity, were as unavailing, as the
skill and power of man are, to prevent the effects of frost
and snow: but when he gave the command, every heart
was speedily disposed to favour them; as the snow and ice
melt, and the waters flow, when he sends a thaw, warm
sun-beams, and a southern breeze.—The snow is here com-
pared to “ wool,” and the ice, to “ morsels:” and it is
well known that the snow keeps the ground warm and
assists vegetation: so that perhaps the ice, or hailstones,
are compared to “ morsels,” not only from the solid
form which they assume; but because of the nourishing

and fertilizing effects which the frost produces upon the
ground.

V. 19, 20. ‘ That word, the effects of which upon the
‘ spiritual system are similar to those experienced by na-
‘ ture in the vernal season, that “ word was shewed unto
‘ “ Jacob,” and became the property of Israel, while
‘ Israel continued to be the church of God. It hath since
‘ been made over, with all its types realized, and its pro-
‘ phecies accomplished in Jesus, to the church Christian:
‘ it is that peculiar blessing, which distinguishes her from
‘ the rest of the world, and for which her children are
‘ bound, at all times to praise the LORD.’ Bp Horne. The
sovereignty of God, in making one nation to differ from
another, “ not for their righteousness,” but “ according to
“ the course of his own will,” is in this respect undeni-
able. Britain especially has abundant cause to adore and
praise God on this account. The word *property* in the
quotation does not seem appropriate. It was a *talent*, and
a *deposit*, entrusted to Israel, and is so to us, of which an
account must be given, and which we are bound to commu-
nicate to others, by every means in our power. (Notes,
lxxviii. 3—8. Deut. iv. 6—8. 32—40. Rom. iii. 1, 2. ix.
4, 5. Eph. ii. 11—13.) The pious Jews, when returned
from their dispersions among idolaters, would be more im-
pressed with the value of their sacred oracles, and other
special advantages, than they were who had never wit-
nessed such scenes of darkness and ignorance.—This Psalm
also begins and ends with Hallelujah.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The display of the glory of the divine perfections was
intended in all the works of God: (Notes, Prov. xvi. 4.
Eph. i. 9—12:) and to celebrate his praises forms the most
suitable return for his benefits, of which we are capable.
It is therefore both reasonable and acceptable, pleasant
and becoming, for us to abound in this blessed work.—The
continued care of God over his chosen city, and in gather-
ing his people Israel from their various captivities and dis-
persions, to dwell and worship at Jerusalem, were em-
blems of his care of his church, the city of the living
God; of his gathering outcast sinners by his grace, to

PSALM CXLVIII.

The Psalmist calls on all celestial beings to praise God their Creator, 1—6; and on all terrestrial, 7—10; especially on all the race of men, however distinguished, 11, 12: and this on account of his glory, and his love to his people, 13, 14.

* Heb. *Hallelujah*. cxlvi. 1. *marg.*
 a lxxxix. 5. Is. xlix. 13. Luke ii. 13, 14. Rev. xix. 1—6.
PRAISE ye the LORD. ^a Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise him in the heights.

2 Praise ye him, ^b all his angels: ^b ciii. 20, 21. Job xxxviii. 7. Is. vi. 2—4. Ez. iii. 12. Rev. v. 11—13.
 praise ye him, ^c all his hosts.

3 Praise ye him, ^d sun and moon: ^c Gen. ii. 1. d viii. 1—3. xix. —6. lxxxix. 36, 37. cxxxvi. 7—9. Gen. i. 14—16. viii. 22. Deut. iv. 19. Jer. xxxiii. 20.
 praise him, all ye stars of light.

4 Praise him, ^e ye heavens of heavens and ^f ye waters that be above the heavens. ^e cxiii. 6. 1 Kings viii. 27. 2 Cor. xii. 2. f civ. 3. Gen. i. 7. vii. 11.

5 Let them praise the name of the LORD: ^g for he commanded, and they were created. ^g xxxiii. 6—9. xcv. 5. Gen. i. 1, 2. 6. Jer. x. 11—13. Am. ix. 6. Rev. iv. 11.

6 He ^h hath also stablished them for ^h lxxxix. 37. xciii. 1. cxix. 90, 91. Job xxxviii. 10, 11. 33. Prov. viii. 27—29. Is. liv. 9. Jer. xxxi. 35, 36. xxxiii. 25.

dwell there on earth; and of his bringing them all at length to his holy habitation in heaven.—The contrast between the *majesty* and the *mercy* of our God, should never be overlooked. While “he telleth the number of the “stars,” he condescends to hear the broken-hearted sinner, and to heal by his consolations the wounded spirit. His greatness, power, and wisdom are infinite; and he displays his justice in crushing to the earth the haughtiest and mightiest rebels: yet he “lifteth up the meek” from their dejection and abject misery, to the comfort of his favour here, and to the throne of glory hereafter. He provides for all creatures, by means worthy of himself: and whilst he “feeds the young ravens who cry unto him,” he gives a pledge that he will not leave destitute his praying people. He delights not in those things in which sinners confide and glory: but his delight is in those who conscientiously fear and serve him, hoping in his mercy alone for pardon and acceptance. (Note, Jer. ix. 23, 24.) These are the inhabitants of Zion, who praise his name: he is their Protector, and will bless them and their children, with spiritual peace and abundant supplies of every good thing; while they who trust in chariots and horses, or in their own agility, strength, wisdom, courage, or righteousness, will sink into penury, misery, and contempt.—When the Lord speaks, all nature prepares for prompt obedience. At his command the snow and the hoar-frost irresistibly cover the earth; nothing can withstand his piercing and congealing cold; the rivers are arrested in their course, and the works of men are suspended; nor can any human power remove the obstruction. But JEHOVAH again gives the word: the gentler breezes blow, the snow and ice melt, the waters flow, and all reverts to its former course. Let us then consider how unable we are to stand before the indignation of the Lord: let us be thankful, that he moderates the continuance of the winter, and renders it useful to the earth: let us bless him, if abundance of all things needful renders us free from the miseries, which many suffer during that inclement season; and let us learn to contribute liberally to their relief. Let us also expect from his power things impracticable to all others. He can comfort and sanctify, when every human effort has proved unsuccessful: he can soften and melt the most obdurate heart; and bring the rich and great into his church, though that is more difficult than “for a camel to “go through the eye of a needle.” (Notes, Matt. xix. 23—26. Jam. i. 9—11.) While therefore we remember with gratitude, that he has shewed his word unto us, and favoured us with his statutes and judgments, as he did Jacob

of old; while we are watchful not to abuse these privileges to our deeper condemnation, and study to shew forth his praises in our holy lives; let us also pity and pray for those, who are not so dealt with, and who have not known his judgments: for the Lord is able to remove every obstruction to their conversion, that all nations may join in his solemn worship, and praise him as the God of Israel.

NOTES.

PSALM CXLVIII. V. 1, 2. (Notes, ciii. 20—22. Job xxxviii. 4—7. Luke ii. 8—14. Rev. iv. 6—11. v. 11—14. xix. 1—6.) ‘Finding how short his own praises were, he ‘wishes all creatures in heaven and earth would conspire ‘in a sweet symphony ... of singing hymns unto him. ... ‘First let the celestial choir begin, and sing their thankful hymns to him, who hath raised them so high.’ Bp. Patrick. ‘From the heavens and those unutterable ‘heights, where hosts of immortal spirits, admitted to the ‘sight of their King, enjoy unfading pleasures, the song is ‘to begin. And when the strain is thus set by the celestial part of the choir, it is to be taken up, and echoed ‘back, by the creatures of this lower world, animate and ‘inanimate, which have all their several parts assigned ‘them, in the great work of glorifying their Creator.’ Bp. Horne.

V. 3. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps. xix. 1—6.) ‘The material heavens, ... with the luminaries placed in them, ... ‘by their splendour and magnificence, their motions and ‘their influences, all regulated and exerted according to ‘the ordinance of their Maker, do, in a very intelligible ‘and striking manner, declare the glory of God: they call ‘upon us to translate their actions into our language, and ‘copy their obedience in our lives; that so we may, both ‘in word and deed, glorify, with them, the Creator ... of ‘the universe.’ Bp. Horne.

V. 4, 5. Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1. 4—6, v. 6. lxxxix. 5. Gen. i. 6—12. Jer. x. 9—15.

V. 6. (Notes, civ. 6—9. Gen. viii. 20—22. Job xxxviii. 4—11. Is. liv. 6—10, v. 9.) ‘Let all these set forth the ‘adorable wisdom, and power, and goodness of the Lord. ‘For by his omnipotent word these, whom the mistaken ‘world calls gods, were created, not to be worshipped, but ‘perpetually to proclaim his praise, ... who hath made ‘them not only illustrious, but everlasting monuments of ‘his splendour and glory; having fixed and settled them ‘in an admirable order, which they constantly observe, ‘and prescribed them laws which they never transgress.’ Bp. Patrick.

i See on 1.
k lxxiv. 13, 14.
civ. 25, 26. Gen.
i. 21. Job xli. 1.
&c. Is. xxvii. 1.
xlvi. 20. li. 9,
10.
l cxlvii. 15-18.
Gen. xix. 24.
Ex. ix. 23-25.
Lev. x. 2. Num.
xvi. 35. Josh. x.
11. Job xxxvii.
2-6. xxxviii.
22-37. Is. lxvii.
16. Joel ii. 30.
Am. vii. 4. Rev.
xvi. 8, 9, 21.
m cvii. 25-29. Ex.
x. 13. 19. xiv. 21.
Am. i. 13. Jon.
i. 4. Matt. viii.
24-27.
n lxx. 12, 13. xcvi.
11-13. xcvi. 4.
5. xcvi. 7-9. cxiv. 3-7. Is. xlii. 11. xlv. 23. xlix. 13. lv. 12, 13. lxiv. 1. Ez. xxxvi.
1. &c. o i. 10, 11. ciii. 22. cl. 6. Gen. i. 20-25. * Heb. birds of wing. Gen.
vii. 14. marg. Ez. xvii. 23. p ii. 10-12. xxii. 27-29. lxxi. 1-4. lxxiii. 31, 32. lxxii.
10, 11. lxxxvi. 9. cii. 15. cxxxviii. 4, 5. Prov. viii. 15, 16. Is. xlix. 23. lx. 3. Rev. xxi. 24.

ever and ever: he hath made a decree which shall not pass.

7 Praise the LORD ⁱfrom the earth, ye dragons, and all deeps;

8 ⁱFire, and hail; snow, and vapour; ^mstormy wind fulfilling his word;

9 ⁿMountains, and all hills; fruitful trees, and all cedars;

10 ^oBeasts, and all cattle; creeping things, and ^{*}flying fowl;

11 ^pKings of the earth, and all peo-

ple; princes, and all judges of the earth;

12 Both ^qyoung men, and maidens; old men, and children;

13 Let them praise the name of the LORD: ^rfor his name alone is [†]excellent; ^shis glory is above the earth and heaven.

14 He also ^texalteth the horn of his people, ^uthe praise of all his saints; ^veven of the children of Israel, ^wa people near unto him. Praise ye the LORD.

viii. 2. lxxviii. 25.
Jer. xxxi. 13.
Zech. ix. 17.
Matt. xxi. 15.
16. Luke xix. 37.
Tit. ii. 4-6.
r viii. 1. 9. xcix.
3, 4. 9. Cant. v.
9. 16. Is. vi. 3.
Zech. ix. 17.
Phil. iii. 8.
† Heb. exalted.
1 Chr. xxix. 11.
Is. xli. 4. xxxiii.
5. Matt. vi. 13.
s lvii. 5. lxxii. 19.
cviii. 4. cxiii. 4.
Eph. iv. 10.
1 Pet. iii. 22.
t lxxv. 10. lxxxix.
17. xcii. 10.
cxii. 9. 1 Sam.
ii. 1. Luke i.
52.
u cxlv. 10. cxlix.
9. Luke ii. 32.
Rev. v. 8-14
x Ex. xix. 5, 6. Deut. iv. 7. Eph. ii. 13, 19. 1 Pet. ii. 9

V. 7-12. *From the earth.* (7) The preceding praises were to be rendered from the heavens above; the following from the earth beneath. (*Marg. Ref.*)—*Dragons.*] Whales, and other sea-monsters. (*Notes*, lxxiv. 13-17. civ. 25, 26. Gen. i. 20-25.)—*Fire and hail, &c.* (8) ‘Let the lightnings, thunder, and hail; the snow, hoary frost, and ice; the winds, storms, and tempests; all make a part of this song: for they constantly execute his sovereign will, and serve his wise designs.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—The Gentiles had imaginary deities, ruling over winds and storms, to whom they rendered worship; but the Psalmist pauses as it were to note, that all these should be regarded as “fulfilling the word” of **יהוה**.—*All people.* (11) Or “peoples,” plural. ‘This exhortation doth not belong to the Hebrews alone, but to all men absolutely: and so is, as it were, a prelude to the calling of the gentiles. For they cannot praise God in a suitable manner, who do not well know him; nor know him sufficiently, who have never heard the gospel; from which especially the praises of God flourish.’ *Le Clerc in Bp. Horne.*

V. 13. ‘Let them praise the incomparable wisdom, goodness, and power of the LORD: ... whose most excellent majesty infinitely surpasses all, that the earth or the heavens can tell us of him.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—It ought not to pass unnoticed, that this verse is future: “They shall praise, &c.” and it may be considered as a prediction of that time, when “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.” (*Note, Hab. ii. 12-14.*)

V. 14. *He also exalteth, &c.*] Or, “He will exalt a Horn for his people.”—“He hath raised up a Horn of Salvation for us, in the house of his servant David; as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began.” (*Note, Luke i. 67-75.*)—“He hath set over us a powerful prince for the defence and safety of his people; (lxxxix. 19;) whose fame he hath hereby raised to the highest pitch of honour.” *Bp. Patrick.*—David however was only a shadow of him, who is “a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the Glory of his people Israel.” (*Marg. Ref.—Note, Luke ii. 25-32.*)—This Psalm also opens and concludes with “Hallelujah.”

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Every effort of the zealous believer to praise the Lord, causes his boundless excellences to unveil themselves more

fully, to his enraptured, admiring, thankful heart; and thus he becomes more and more conscious of his inability to praise his God in a suitable manner. He therefore rejoices to reflect, that there are innumerable hosts of angels before the throne, in the heights of heaven, who are able to praise him in more exalted strains: and though they need no incitement; yet his desire that God should be worthily glorified, will make him ready to call on them to proceed in their lofty adorations: and he would wish, if it were possible, that the sound of their praises might be heard on earth, and echoed back in responsive chorus by all its inhabitants. Indeed all the works of God, above and below, (fallen angels, and fallen man alone excepted,) without our exhortations, do in their way proclaim the Creator’s praise: and it is worthy of notice, that men, who do not praise the Lord and obey his command, are more ungovernable than the monsters of the deep, than the raging sea itself, than the stormy wind, or the devouring flame!—But how desirable would it be, if kings of the earth, and all princes, nobles, and rulers would count it their honour to lead the chorus of praise to the Lord, and use all their authority in promoting his glory; and if all people and nations would unite in this service! How reasonable and becoming would it be, for “young men and maidens” to employ the fire and vigour of their active spirits, and to seek their pleasure and joy, in doing the will and celebrating the praises of the Lord; and for the aged to shew that they are ripening for heaven, by teaching their infant posterity to lisp thanksgivings unto him, and lead them forwards, as they advance to maturity! Alas! how little do any of us feel or express, of this fervent spirit of adoring love and gratitude! and how few of the human species praise him, in concert with the angels and saints in heaven! But we are taught to pray, “Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.” (*Notes, Matt. vi. 9, 10.*) Nor will our fervent prayers be always unanswered: “for all kings shall yet fall down before God our Saviour, all nations shall do him service.” In the mean time, let us shew that we are “his saints,” by praising his name continually. He is not only our Creator, but our Redeemer, who has made us “a people near unto him,” and will exalt us “above all our enemies. His name only is excellent; and his glory is above the earth and heaven:” and in redemption, those infinite excellences, and that unspeakable glory, are displayed to our view, and form the source of all our hopes and joys.

PSALM CXLIX.

* Heb. *Hallelujah*. cxlviii. 1.

a xxxiii. 3. xcvi. 1.

xcviii. 1. cxlii.

9. Is. xlii. 10.

Rev. v. 9.

b xxii. 22. 25.

xviii. 26. lxxxix.

5. cxi. 1. cxvi.

18. Heb. ii. 12.

c. 1—3. cxxxv.

3. 4. Deut. vii. 6.

7. xii. 7. 1 Sam.

xii. 22. Job xxxv.

10. Is. liv. 5.

d Is. lii. 7. lxii.

11. 12. Joel ii.

23. Zech. ix. 9.

Matt. xxi. 5. xxv.

34. Luke xix. 27.

38. John xix. 15.

19—22. Phil. iii.

3. Rev. xix. 6.

† Or, *with the pipe*.cl. 4. *marg.*

e Ex. xv. 20. Judg.

xi. 34. 2 Sam.

vi. 16. Jer. xxxi.

13.

f xxxiii. 2. lxxxv.

2. cxxxvii. 2—

4. cl. 3—5.

1 Chr. xv. 28, 29.

xvi. 42. xxv. 6.

2 Chr. xxix. 25.

Ezra iii. 10.

g xxii. 8. xxxv. 27.

cxlvii. 11. Prov. xi. 20.

Is. lxii. 4, 5.

Jer. xxxii. 41.

Zeph. iii. 17.

Israel is exhorted to praise God, and to rejoice in him; and to prepare for victory and triumph over all their enemies, 1—9.

* **PRAISE** ye the LORD. ^a Sing unto the LORD a new song, *and* his praise ^b in the congregation of saints.

2 Let Israel ^c rejoice in him that made him: ^d let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.

3 Let them praise his name [†] in the ^e dance: let them sing praises unto him ^f with the timbrel and harp.

4 For the LORD ^g taketh pleasure in

his people: he will ^h beautify the meek with salvation.

5 Let ⁱ the saints be joyful in glory: let them ^k sing aloud upon their beds.

6 Let ^l the high praises of God be in their ^m mouth, ⁿ and a two-edged sword in their hand;

7 To ^o execute vengeance upon the heathen, *and* punishments upon the people;

8 To ^p bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;

9 To ^q execute upon them the judgment written: ^r this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.

vii. 1, 2. xxxii. 42, 43. Is. xiv. 22, 23. Rev. xvii. 14—16.

2, 3. Rev. iii. 21.

h xc. 17. cxxxii.

16. Is. lxi. 1—3.

10. Heb. xii. 10.

1 Pet. iii. 4. v. 5.

Rev. vii. 14.

xxiii. 1. cxviii.

15. cxlv. 10.

Rom. v. 2.

1 Pet. i. 8.

xxii. 8. lxiii. 5.

6. xcii. 2. Job

xxxv. 10.

1 xvi. 4. Neh. ix

5. Dan. iv. 37.

Luke ii. 14. Rev.

xix. 6.

† Heb. *throat*. cxv.

7. cxlv. 3—5.

m Heb. iv. 12.

Rev. i. 16.

n cxxxvii. 8, 9.

Num. xxxi. 2, 3.

Judg. v. 23.

1 Sam. xv. 2, 3.

18—23. Zech.

ix. 13—16. xiv.

17—19. Rev.

xix. 11—21.

o Josh. x. 23, 24.

xii. 7. Judg. i.

6, 7.

p cxxxvii. 8. Deut.

q cxlviii. 14. 1 Cor. vi.

While sinners are invited to draw near to our reconciled God, his believing people, as brought nigh unto him, are called on to rejoice in him; and the language of joy is praise and thanksgiving. With such a subject and such obligations, what words can be sufficiently expressive, what affections sufficiently ardent! May the Lord pardon and accept our languid praises; and teach our hearts to love him more, and praise him better: that we may emulate, and be preparing to join, the adorations of the heavenly world!

NOTES.

PSALM CXLIX. V. 1. Several conjectures have been formed, concerning the time and occasion of this triumphal song of praise: but it is probable, that David composed it not long before his death; and that the Spirit of prophecy led him, (beyond the occasion, whatever that were,) to celebrate by anticipation the future triumphs of the church over all enemies, at the opening of the Millennium, and after the general resurrection. (Notes, xxii. 22. xxxiii. 2, 3. xcvi. 1. cxi. 1.)

V. 2. *Made him.*] Made them his peculiar people, as well as created them men. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, c. 3. Is. xliii. 14—21. Eph. ii. 4—10. 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10.) ‘Christians are now the people, to whom belong the names and characters of “saints, Israel, and children of Zion.” They sing this holy song, ... “new,” in its evangelical sense, as new men, celebrating new victories, new and greater mercies, a spiritual salvation, an eternal redemption. They “rejoice” with hearts, voices, instruments, and every other token of joy “in him who hath made,” or created them again, in righteousness and true holiness: they are “joyful in their King,” who hath himself overcome, and is now leading them on to final conquest and triumph, to honour and immortality.’ Bp. Horne. (Notes, Rev. v. 8—10. xiv. 1—5, v. 3.)

V. 3. *Dance.*] Let them leap for joy, as David did at the removal of the ark to mount Zion. (Marg.—Notes, xxxiii. 2, 3. Judg. xxi. 19—21. 2 Sam. vi. 14—16. Jer. xxxi. 10—11.)

V. 4. *Note, cxlvii. 10, 11.—Beautify.*] The beauties of holiness, and the special honours which God confers on his people, will render them most beautiful and glorious;

especially when compared with their previous low and mean condition, and their deep self-abasement on account of their sins. (Notes, lxviii. 13. xc. 13—17. Is. lxi. 1—3. 10, 11.)

V. 5. “The saints shall exult in glory; they shall sing “aloud on their beds:” even on the bed of sickness and death. (Note, lxiii. 23—28.) ‘They sing aloud, in a state of perfect ease and security, resting from their labours, but not from their Hallelujahs.’ Bp. Horne. (Marg. Ref.—Note, Rev. vii. 13—17.)

V. 6. (Notes, 2 Cor. x. 1—6. Heb. iv. 12, 13.) ‘In assured hope of victory, they shall go to war with psalms and hymns in their mouths, concerning the great acts of the Lord; which they shall courageously sing with a loud voice, when they shall fall upon their enemies; and prefer to the two-edged sword which they carry in their hand.’ Bp. Patrick. (Note, 2 Chr. xx. 20, 21.)

V. 7—9. Many of JEHOVAH’s servants, in ancient times, were commissioned “to execute vengeance,” according to his word, upon heathen kings and nobles: and the marginal references may convince the impartial reader, that something of a similar nature will take place, when antichristian powers shall be destroyed, and more glorious times introduced. And doubtless those, who are expressly appointed “to execute the judgment written,” in the prophecies yet unfulfilled, may do it in entire consistency both with meekness and mercy. The special honour indeed intended for all the saints of God, consists in their final triumph over the enemies of their salvation; and in being assessors with Christ in judgment, to concur in the sentence denounced upon wicked men and apostate angels: but it does not become us to explain away the obvious meaning of prophecy, because it accords not with our views and expectations, which may be erroneous; or with the more ordinary duty of believers. And it is most evident, that “the judgment written” against the New Testament Babylon, and her adherents, will be executed before the Millennium; and in part at least by the saints. (Notes, Ez. xxxviii. xxxix. Rev. xix. 11—21. xx. 1—3. 7—10.)—This Psalm likewise begins and ends with “Hallelujah;” as does the next also. (Notes, Rev. xviii. 20. xix. 1—6.)

* Heb. *Hallelujah*. cxlix. 1.
a xxix. 9. lxvi. 13
—16. cxvi. 18, 19.
cxviii. 19, 20.
cxxxiv. 2.
b Gen. i. 6—8. Ez.
i. 22—26. x. 1.
Dan. xii. 3.
c xlv. 5, 6 Rev.
xv. 3, 4.
d xvi. 4. cxlv. 3.
Deut. iii. 24.
Jer. xxxii. 17—
19.

2 Praise him ^c for his mighty acts :
praise him ^d according to his excellent
greatness.

6 ¹ Let every thing that hath breath,
praise the LORD. Praise ye the
LORD.

New mercies demand continually new songs of praise, to be sung in the congregation of the saints on earth, and in heaven. And "the children of Zion" have not only to bless the God who made them, but to rejoice in him as having "created them in Christ Jesus unto good works," and formed them saints as well as men: they should therefore express their gratitude in every way of which they are capable; and not only rejoice in his pardoning mercy, but likewise in his benign and equitable government.—As the LORD "takes pleasure in his people," surely they should rejoice in him as their Portion and eternal recompence. When he has made sinners humbly sensible of their indigence, and unworthiness, and deep depravity, and rendered them meekly willing to be taught, saved, and ruled by him; he will "beautify them with salvation;" he will clothe them with the robes of righteousness, adorn them with the graces of his Spirit, renew them to the beauty of holiness, and cause them to bear his image, reflect his glory, and rejoice in his felicity, for ever. Let his saints then rejoice in the hope, and in the earnest of his glory; let them employ their waking hours upon their beds in songs of praise: yea, let them be joyful upon the bed of death, and bless his name with the last fragments of their strength, assured that they are going to their eternal rest and glory. Let "the high praises of God be in their mouths," while they wield the two-edged sword of the word of God, together with "the shield of faith," in their warfare with the world, the flesh, and the devil. For to whatever work, conflict, or suffering they may be called upon earth, they shall all have the honour of being "more than conquerors" over every enemy of their souls, through "the blood of the Lamb, and the word of his testimony." And when their salvation shall be completed, "the judgment written" shall be executed on the haughtiest enemies of Christ and his church, and his servants shall behold, rejoice, and praise the Lord.

PSALM CL. V. 1. It is most probable, that this Psalm was composed on purpose to close the book, perhaps by Ezra, when the whole number was collected; as the first Psalm formed a most suitable introduction to it. (*Note*, i. 1—3.)—The word translated “in his sanctuary,” may be rendered “for his holiness:” and “the firmament of his

Those who praise the Lord in his sanctuary above, behold displays of his power and glory, of which we can have no conception : but the greatest of all his mighty acts is known in his earthly sanctuary, and forms the foundation of our hope, and the subject of our admiring gratitude. The glorious holiness, the excellent greatness, and the unfathomable love of our God, are more displayed in man's redemption, than in all his other works. Let us well study this subject, as our preparation for the world of glory : and let us celebrate the praises of our God and Saviour for it, according to our present capacities and to the utmost of our ability. And surely those expressions of joy and love, which the enraptured Psalmist, as from the third heaven, has so earnestly recommended, cannot be unsuitable to the sacred work, if properly used.—Finally, if we begin by separating from the ungodly, and delighting in the sacred word ; (*Notes, i ;*) and proceed by lively faith and fervent prayer, to follow after holiness, resist temptation, and maintain communion with God ; we may hope to close with exulting praise, and to end our lives, ardently exhorting all that have breath to praise the Lord.

THE BOOK

OF

P R O V E R B S.

IMMEDIATELY after the prophetical and devotional compositions of David, we enter on the writings of his son Solomon, whose character and actions have already been considered. In the sacred historian's account of Solomon's extraordinary wisdom and knowledge it is said, that "he spake three thousand proverbs, and "his songs were a thousand and five; and he spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon even "unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall; he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping "things, and of fishes." (Note, 1 Kings iv. 30—34.) No more, however, has been preserved of his writings, than the books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, or Solomon's Song; except a few psalms which seem to have been composed by him: (Note, Ps. cxxvii. title:) these alone being sufficient for the purpose of attractive variety, in a revelation, the whole of which was intended, by the wisdom of God, to be distinguished and adapted to general usefulness by comprehensive brevity. (Note, John xxi. 24, 25.)—In respect of the book before us, we may suppose that the selection contained in it was made, in part by Solomon himself, in his old age, from his other works: and the rest by the men of Hezekiah, namely, those prophets whom that pious prince consulted; and among these were Hosea and Micah, and especially Isaiah. (Note, xxv. 1.) We may therefore assuredly conclude, that it was conducted under the superintending inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Indeed the express quotations from this book, or most evident references to it, in the New Testament, constitute the fullest proof that our Lord and his apostles considered it, not merely as the work of a very wise man, but as a part of the oracles of God. For satisfaction on this point, let the reader compare the following passages: iii. 11, 12. with Heb. xii. 5, 6;—iii. 34. with Jam. iv. 6, and 1 Pet. v. 5;—x. 12. with Jam. v. 20, and 1 Pet. iv. 8; xxv. 6, 7. with Luke xiv. 8—10;—xxv. 21, 22. with Rom. xii. 20;—and xxvii. 1. with Jam. iv. 13, 14. Many more evident references might be shewn; but these are sufficient for the purpose.—The original name of this book (משלים) seems to signify *authoritative maxims*, or maxims of high estimation and authority: and a great part of it is made up of detached aphorisms, containing most important practical instruction. 'Parables, or proverbs, such as those of Solomon, are always 'expressed in short pointed sentences; frequently figurative, being formed on some comparison; generally 'forcible and authoritative, both in the matter and the form. ... The verb *mashal* signifies to rule, to 'exercise authority, to make equal, to compare one thing with another; to utter parables, or acute, weighty, 'and powerful speeches, in the form and manner of parables, though not properly such. Thus Balaam's 'first prophecy, (Num. xxiii. 7—10,) is called his *mashal*, though it has hardly any thing figurative in it; but 'it is beautifully sententious, and from the very form and manner of it, has great spirit, force, and 'energy.' Bp. Lowth.—'The proverbs generally consist of two sentences, joined in a kind of antithesis, 'the second being sometimes a reduplication, sometimes an explanation, and sometimes an opposi- 'tion,' (or contrast) 'to the sense of the first. This style of composition produces great beauty in many other 'parts of Scripture, where it is employed for poetical arrangement. ... The wisdom of all ages, from the 'highest antiquity, has chosen to compress its lessons into compendious sentences, which were peculiarly 'adapted to the simplicity of earlier times, which are readily conceived and easily retained, and which circu- 'late in society as useful principles, to be unfolded and applied as occasion may require. ... Solomon's Pro- 'verbs are so justly founded on the principles of human nature, and so adapted to the permanent interests 'of man, that they agree with the manners of every age, and may be assumed as the rules for the direction 'of our conduct, in every condition and rank of life.' Grey.—'It was usual for wise men of old, ... when 'their observation lighted upon any thing that might prove beneficial unto common life, to reduce it imme- 'diately, and contract it ... into some short sentence. ... The great antiquity of this sententious way of speak- 'ing is apparent enough from the passage of David's, 1 Sam. xxiv. 13, "As saith the proverb of the ancients, ' "Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked." ' Bp. Patrick.—Indeed such short maxims, comprehending much instruction in few words, and carrying their own evidence with them, are well suited to direct the conduct, without over-burdening the memory, or perplexing the mind with abstract reasonings: and there are in all countries old proverbs, or common sayings, which have great authority and influence on the

PROVERBS.

opinions and actions of mankind. Such maxims, however, want their proper basis, namely, the sanction of a divine original : and, being generally the mere result of worldly prudence, are too often calculated to impose on the judgment, and mislead those who are directed by them. But the proverbs of this book, not only are far more ancient than any others extant in the world ; but they have also received a divine *imprimatur*, and are infallible rules to direct our conduct in every circumstance of human life : and we shall perceive the meaning and utility of them, in proportion to our experience in true religion, our acquaintance with our own hearts, and with human nature, and the extent and accuracy of our observation on the characters and affairs of men.—It has also been made evident by the learned, that several persons among the heathen, who acquired reputation by framing or collecting proverbs, enriched their works from the treasury before us, nay, drew from it their most valuable materials.—It would be unreasonable to expect direct prophecies in a composition of this nature : and though we shall not lose sight of Christ, and of his truths and precepts ; yet we should by no means endeavour to find out the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, in every part of the book. These must be learned from those portions of Scripture which treat more expressly on them : and, having our hearts enlivened in communion with God, by meditation on those devotional exercises which we have just closed, we may here be instructed how “ to walk in wisdom towards them that are “ without ;” to live in this evil world without being entangled or polluted by it ; and to pursue our eternal interests, and our present peace and holiness, in connexion with the honour of God, and the benefit of the church and of the world : so that it would be very useful for those, who can command their time, at some stated season every day, to read and deliberately consider a few of these maxims, with reference to their own conduct, in the various affairs in which they are concerned.—The book seems not to have been all written at any one period of Solomon’s life, but from time to time as circumstances occurred. It is however probable, that the first nine Chapters were framed, as an introduction to the whole, towards the close of his days. This is reckoned the first part of the book, or the preface to it. The second part extends from the beginning of the tenth chapter, to the seventeenth verse of the twenty-second ; and more strictly speaking contains the Proverbs. In the third part, which reaches to the end of the twenty-fourth chapter, the sacred writer again addresses his son, or scholar, as present, with more connected exhortations. The fourth part consists of Proverbs collected by the men of Hezekiah, and reaches to the end of the twenty-ninth chapter. And the last two chapters, which bear the names of Agur and Lemuel, are regarded as the fifth part.—There can be no doubt, that the whole or the greater part of the book is a poetical composition : yet the nature and rules of Hebrew poetry are at present so little understood, that every attempt to alter the original, or to interpret its meaning, by reasons deduced from the metre, must to the serious mind be entirely unsatisfactory.—‘ He is wise, not only who hath arrived at a complete habit of wisdom, but who hath made some progress ‘ towards it : nay who doth as yet but love it, or desire it, and listen to it. Such as these, by reading of ‘ this book, shall be made wiser ; for they shall be instructed in much divine, and in no less human learning. ‘ ... It bridles the injurious tongue ; corrects the wanton eye ; and ties the unjust hand in chains. It perse- ‘ cutes sloth ; chastises all absurd desires ; teaches prudence ; raises man’s courage ; and represents tem- ‘ perance and chastity after such a fashion, that one cannot but have them in veneration.’ *Basil in Bp. Patrick*.—‘ Let a man but consent to one thing, which this book desires ; to make these precepts familiar to ‘ his mind, “ saying unto Wisdom ” (as you find the words vii. 4) “ thou art my sister, and calling under- ‘ “ standing his kinswoman,” and he will not fail to be happy. For this is the sum of all in a few words ; ‘ “ Love her, and she shall preserve thee.” ’ *Bp. Patrick*.

CHAP. I.

The title and subject of the book, 1—6. Exhortations to fear God, and obey parents, 7—9. Dissuatives from the company of the wicked, 10—19. Wisdom's address to sinners, 20—23. She complains of being despised, and denounces the doom of her despisers, 24—32; and shews the security of her disciples, 33.

^a x. 1. xxv. 1.
1 Kings iv. 31.
32. Ec. xii. 9.
John xvi. 25.
^b 2 Sam. xii. 24.
25. 1 Kings ii.
12. 1 Chr. xxii.
9. xxviii. 5.
xxix. 23.
^c iv. 5—7. vii. 4.
viii. 5. xvi. 16.
xvii. 16. Deut.
iv. 5. 6. 1 Kings
iii. 9—12. 2 Tim.
iii. 15—17.
^d ii. 1—9. viii. 10.
11. Job xxii. 22.
Heb. *equities*.
1 Kings iii. 28.
^e 22. 23. viii. 5. ix.
4—6. Ps. xix. 7.
cxix. 130. Is.
xxxv. 8.

THE ^aproverbs of ^bSolomon, the son of David, king of Israel;

2 To ^cknow wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding;

3 To ^dreceive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and ^eequity;

4 To give ^esubtlety to the simple,

to the young man knowledge and discretion.

5 A ^gwise man will hear, and will increase learning; and ^ha man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

6 To understand ⁱa proverb and ^jthe interpretation; ^kthe words of the wise, and their ^ldark sayings.

7 ¶ The ^mfear of the LORD is the ⁿbeginning of knowledge: ^obut fools despise wisdom and instruction.

8 °My son, ^phear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

9 For ^qthey shall be ^ran ornament

ⁿ 22. 29. 30. v. 12. 13. xv. 5. xviii. 2. John iii. 18—21. Rom. i. 28. ^o 10. 15. ii. 1. ^p iv. 1—4. v. 1, 2. vi. 20. xxx. 17. xxxi. 1. Lev. xix. 3. ^q iii. 22. iv. 9. vi. 20, 21. 1 Tim. ii. 9. ^r Gen. xii. 42. Cant. i. 10. iv. 9. Is. iii. 19. Ez. xvi. 11. Dan. v. 7. 16. 29.

^f vii. 7—24. viii. 17. 32. Ps. xxxiv. 11. cxix. 9. Ec. xi. 9. 10. xii. 1. 2 Tim. ii. 22. Tit. ii. 6. ^g Or, *advisement*. ^h ix. 9. xii. 1. Job xxxiv. 10. 16. 34. Ps. cxix. 98—100. 1 Cor. x. 15. ⁱ 1 Sam. xxv. 32. 33. 2 Chr. xxv. 16. ^j Matt. xiii. 10—17. 51. 52. Mark iv. 11. 34. Acts viii. 30. 31. ^k Or, *an eloquent speech*. ^l Ec. xii. 11. ^m Ps. xlix. 4. lxxviii. 2. Matt. xiii. 34. 35. Heb. v. 14. 2 Pet. iii. 16. ⁿ ix. 10. Job xxviii. 28. Ps. cxi. 10. cxii. 1. Ec. xii. 13. ^o Or, *principal part*. ^p 10. 15. ii. 1. ^q 10. 15. ii. 1. ^r 10. 15. ii. 1.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1—4. 'This book contains some notable and very useful sayings of that wise prince, king Solomon, the son of that devout prince, king David. The scope of them is to make a man know, what it is to be truly wise; and instruct him how to avoid those errors, which men are apt to fall into, or to correct them if he hath been misled and run into them: and to make him understand when good advice is given him; nay, to be able to give it unto others. For they will furnish him with the most excellent notions; and make him capable to understand things of highest concernment: both how to be just and good in all private transactions; and in publick trusts and offices to judge and act according to right and equity. ...The most unskilful and incautious persons may here learn to be circumspect and wary; and they who are childish and inconsiderate, to behave themselves with prudence and discretion.' Bp. Patrick. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5. The Septuagint translation of this book is allowed to be very faulty: yet this verse is rendered in it with great energy:—'Which' (instructions) 'a wise man hearing will be wiser; and the man of understanding shall possess government:' the *talent for governing*, or the authority of a governor. (חֲכָמָה, *gubernatio prudens: consilia solertia gubernandi*. Robertson.) 'Indeed it is principally designed for the improvement of him that is so wise as to be willing to learn more: who shall both gain a clearer knowledge of what he understands, and also make such additions, that he shall be fit to be a counsellor to kings, and govern the affairs of state in the greatest kingdoms.' Bp. Patrick. (2 Chr. xxv. 11—16, v. 16.)

V. 6. *Dark sayings.*] The word signifies *riddles*, or *enigmas*, which of old were used, not for amusement, but to impress important instructions the more deeply on the minds of those, who studied to unriddle them. (*Notes*, Judg. xiv. 10—14. 1 Kings x. 1, 2. Ps. xlix. 1—4. lxxviii. 2. Ez. xvii. 2. 1 Cor. xiii. 8—12, v. 12.)

V. 7. (*Note*, Ps. cxi. 9, 10.) 'There is not ... such a

'wise instruction to be found in all their books,' (those of the most admired pagan writers,) 'as the very first of all in Solomon's, which he lays as the ground of all wisdom; but they alas! did not think of;...' 'The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;' ...without which men are but fools, and, having no regard to their Creator, will despise the wisest instructions.' Bp. Patrick. (*Notes*, 21—31.)

V. 8. Perhaps Solomon meant to address himself to his son Rehoboam, exhorting him to regard the instructions and rules, which he had received in his education, as most ornamental to him. It is, however, a general exhortation to young persons to receive the instructions of their parents, and to submit to their authority, as the surest method, in subserviency to the fear of God, of obtaining the esteem and respect of all wise men. (*Note*, Ex. xx. 12.)—The appellation, "My son," may also be considered as the language of that authority and affection, which should unite in a publick teacher of religion. (*Note*, 1 Thes. ii. 9—12, vv. 11, 12.)—'And not only ... hearken unto thy father, when he teaches thee to fear God, or tells thee what thou doest amiss; but ... let thy mother's commands be a law to thee, especially when she bids thee observe the directions of thy tutors and publick instructors. ...The second' (step to wisdom) 'is, next to God, to bear a great reverence to parents, both natural and spiritual; to God's ministers, ... to whom if children be not bred to give a great regard, they seldom prove virtuous. ...It is very observable how much human laws differ from divine: the former generally only providing that due regard be given by children to their fathers, but taking no notice of mothers. ...But God in his law takes care to preserve a just reverence both to father and mother equally.' Bp. Patrick. (*Note*, Lev. xix. 3.)—Both the lawgivers and the moralists, of the most celebrated nations of antiquity, are strikingly deficient in this respect: and in all things the scriptural religion alone assigns to females the rank, importance, and honour, which properly belong to them.

V. 9. Young persons too generally seek notice and ad-

^s vii 21—23 xiii. of grace unto thy head, and chains
20. xx. 19. Gen. about thy neck.

10 ¶ My son, ^s if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.

11 If they say, Come with us, ^t let us lay wait for blood, ^t let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:

12 Let us ^v swallow them up alive ^v as the grave; and ^v whole as those that go down into the pit:

13 We ^z shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:

14 Cast in thy lot among us: let us all have one purse:

^a 19. Job xxiv. 2, 3. Is. x. 13, 14. Jer. xxii. 16, 17. Nah. ii. 12. Hab. ii. 9. Luke xii. 15. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10. Rev. xviii. 9—16.

15 My son, ^b walk not thou in the way with them; ^c refrain thy foot from their path:

16 For ^d their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.

17 (Surely ^e in vain the net is spread in the ^e sight of any bird.)

18 And they ^f lay wait for their *own* blood; they lurk privily for their *own* lives.

19 So *are* the ways of ^g every one that is greedy of gain; *which* ^g taketh away the life of the owners thereof.

20 ¶ [†] Wisdom [†] crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets;

—4. 2 Pet. ii. 3. 14—16. h Job xxxi. 39. Ec. v. 13. † Heb. *Wisdoms*, that is, *excellent wisdom*. Matt. xiii. 34. Luke xi. 49. 1 Cor. i. 24. 30. Col. ii. 3. i xiii. 1—5. John vii. 37.

b iv. 14, 15. ix. 8. xiii. 20. Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. 2 Cor. vi. 17. c iv. 27. v. 8. Ps. cxix. 101. Jer. xiv. 10. d iv. 16. vi. 18. Is. lix. 7. Rom. iii. 15. e vii. 23. Job xxxv. 11. Is. i. 3. Jer. viii. 7. * Heb. *eyes of every thing that hath a wing*. f v. 22, 23. ix. 17, 18. xxviii. 17. Esth. vii. 10. Ps. vii. 14—16. ix. 16. lv. 23. Matt. xxvii. 4, 5. g xxiii. 3, 4. 2 Sam. xviii. 11—13. 2 Kings v. 20—27. Jer. xxii. 17—19. Mic. ii. 1—3. iii. 10—12. Acts viii. 19, 20. 1 Tim. iii. 3. vi. 9, 10. Jam. v. 1. † Heb. *Wisdoms*, that is, *excellent wisdom*.

miration by external decorations, and vain ostentation in divers ways: while they neglect both the fear of God, and respectful obedience to their parents and superiors; which are immensely more becoming, and more valuable in the judgment of all wise men, as well as in the judgment of God. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 1 Pet. iii. 1—4, v. 4.)

V. 10—14. This transition seems to imply an instruction to parents, as to the counsels and warnings which they should give their children.—Combinations among individuals for carrying on a kind of private war, either within the community, or against the adjacent territories, have been common in many ages and countries; and have not exposed men to that stigma, which highway-robberies and murders do, in countries governed by a stricter police. The unreasonable and disproportionate reputation, acquired by military valour and conduct, has often caused such exploits, to be considered as proofs of a man of spirit; and as opportunities of acquiring or displaying a capacity for war and victory, as well as of making a fortune; and the blood shed in them to be considered as a thing of course. Just as the murder committed in duels, by men who call pride and revenge *the point of honour*, is not considered as so atrocious a crime, as murder is in other circumstances; nay, sometimes it adds to a man's reputation, in defiance indeed of common sense and scripture. When therefore a young man, destitute of the fear of God, and weary of subjection to prudent parents, was secretly persuaded to make an inroad on the neighbouring countries, or to lay wait for the companies of travellers or merchants, and without cause or provocation to shed their blood, and enrich himself with their plunder; he would not in general be very scrupulous, but consider the attempt as a kind of military expedition. This might easily be shewn to have been the case, by innumerable extracts from ancient history. And when any one considers, with what eagerness men engage in privateering, as soon as they receive permission to plunder the merchants of a neighbouring country with impunity; and how small account they make of the blood shed on either side, in attempting to seize the property of those, with whom they have no personal quarrel; he will readily perceive how little most men are governed by principles of equity and humanity, when motives of interest urge them

on, and they may gratify their avarice without losing their reputation, or exposing themselves to the lash of the law. For in the court of conscience, of reason, and of scripture, this common practice is not much more justifiable than that of these ancient associated freebooters: except a man can say, as in the presence of God, 'I do not seek private emolument, but the publick good; and to weaken an unjust and unreasonable enemy, that an equitable and durable peace may be re-established.'

V. 15, 16. 'My son, ... let them not prevail with thee; ... stir not one step in their company, or after their example. ... It is not one single murder or robbery, in which they will engage thee; ... but they will be always hurrying thee to some new mischief or other: and as soon as one mischief is over, they will be ready for, and make haste to commit another.' *Bp. Patrick*. (*Note*, Is. lix. 3—8, vv. 7, 8.)

V. 17—19. The snare of Satan in exciting men to rapine and bloodshed is as manifest, as the net spread in the sight of the bird, which will in that case fly away. He aims to allure those who are greedy of gain, by the prospect of plunder and impunity, to shed the blood of their unoffending neighbours: and by this bait he intends to take their lives and souls in his net. Such depredators commonly come to an untimely end, either by the sword of justice, or by that of war, or by private revenge: and they are all the while "treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath" and vengeance. For, however human laws are framed and executed, and however they may be eluded or out-braved; the vengeance of God pursues every murderer to death and perdition, except deep repentance intervene. They are therefore as foolish, as if they lay in wait, with great subtlety and assiduity, for their own lives and souls.—Indeed such are the ways of all, who are eagerly and covetously desirous of gain; which, when obtained by unjust methods, proves the destruction of those who are led captive by the love of it. (*Notes*, Luke xii. 15—21. 1 Tim vi. 6—10.)

V. 20. The word translated "Wisdom" is plural (*marg.*) as well as feminine, yet the verbs are singular. The construction of the first verses of the ninth chapter is the same: (*Notes*, Gen. i. 1. 26, 27:) and this is generally understood to mean the highest and most eminent

21 She ^k crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying,

22 ¹ How long, ^m ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and ⁿ the scorers delight in their scorning, and ^o fools hate knowledge?

23 ^p Turn you at ^q my reproof: ^r behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.

24 ¶ Because ^s I have called, and ye refused; I have ^t stretched out my hand, and no man regarded;

25 But ^u ye have set at nought all my counsel, and ^v would none of my reproof:

26 I also ^y will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;

27 When ^z your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh ^a as a whirlwind; when ^b distress and anguish cometh upon you.

28 Then ^c shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; ^d they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:

29 For ^e that they hated knowledge, and did ^f not choose the fear of the LORD:

30 They ^g would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

31 Therefore ^h shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

wisdom: so that it may either denote the instructions of the word of God personified, as Wisdom speaking to mankind; or Jesus Christ, as the Word and Wisdom of God, and the great Prophet of the church and "Light of the world." We need not determine whether the sacred writer intended expressly to prophesy of the Messiah; or whether the Israelites would generally consider him as the Speaker in these addresses. To us, who have the New Testament for our guide, this latter is by far the most simple manner of considering the subject, and it gives the exhortations of wisdom a peculiar majesty and emphasis: nor can any material objection be made to it; unless men would substitute *carnal* wisdom, in the stead of "that wisdom which is from above." The coincidence of the words of *Wisdom* also with the doctrine of Christ, renders it obvious to adopt this mode of exposition.—'He that is 'the eternal and uncreated Wisdom of the Father, uses all 'means to draw men unto God: both by his works, and 'by his word, he inviteth all men to the knowledge and 'love of the truth.' *Bp. Hall. (Marg. Ref.)* It is remarkable that the original is future, "Wisdom shall cry without, &c."

V. 21—23. Christ, by his own personal ministry, and by that of his apostles and evangelists, and ever since by his faithful and zealous ministers, has addressed himself to sinful men, in the most earnest and publick manner, and in every place, in which they could be met: of this he gave the example by preaching in houses and synagogues, the courts of the temple, the streets, fields, mountains, and plains, as occasion required.—By "the simple ones, who "love simplicity," are meant the ignorant, unwary, and careless, who love to continue thoughtless and dissipated; having no desire to trouble their minds about any thing, which interferes with their present pursuits of pleasure, reputation, or worldly advantage. "The scorers who de-light in their scorning," are those, who deride and revile the truths and precepts of the gospel, and glory in their impiety, infidelity, and blasphemy, and in making proselytes to their principles. And "the fools, who hate know-

ledge," may mean such persons, as have had some acquaintance with religion, and whose consciences have been distressed by it; but, determining to gratify their lusts, they "hold the truth in unrighteousness," sin in defiance of their convictions, and hate that knowledge, which makes them dread the fatal effects of their daring wickedness. (*Notes, Ps. i. 1—3. John iii. 19—21.*) Persons, however, of all these characters are here expostulated with upon the madness of continuing longer in wickedness; they are commanded to repent, and turn to Wisdom, or to Christ, at his reproof; nay, the gift of the Holy Spirit, to be their Teacher and Sanctifier, is promised to such as attend to the gracious proposal.—'I offer unto you both my word 'outwardly to your ears, and a plentiful measure of my 'Spirit inwardly to your hearts, to make that word effectual to you.' *Bp. Hall. (Notes, John iv. 10—15. vii. 37—39. Rev. iii. 17—19.)*

V. 24—31. The nature and consequences of rejecting the invitations and counsels of heavenly wisdom, are here most affectingly displayed, and in terms entirely coincident with many passages in the New Testament. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Luke xiii. 22—30. Heb. ii. 1—4. xii. 22—25.*) The gracious Saviour invites, exhorts, and warns; but sinners refuse to hearken: he stretches out his hands, to afford them help, or to confer blessings upon them, or as earnestly beseeching them to accept of his salvation; but they pay no regard to him: he gives them the best of counsel, mingled with salutary reproof; but they despise his counsel, and reject his reproof with scorn, preferring the flattering advice of their worldly associates, or of Satan and his instruments; (*Note, 1 Kings xii. 8—15;*) for indeed they "hate knowledge, and do not choose the fear of the LORD." But in the event they will certainly be overtaken with dreadful calamities and terrors, depriving them of every hope and comfort; with destruction, bearing them away like an impetuous whirlwind, while distress and anguish seize upon them. Then indeed they would fain be rescued from hell by the arm of the despised Saviour, and will hastily call to him to help them: but as they before

32 For ⁱthe ^kturning away of the simple shall slay them, ^kand the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.

i viii. 35. John iii. 35. Heb. x. 38, 39. xii. 25. Or, ease. Jer. xlviii. 11, 12. Deut. xxxiii. 15. &c. Ps. lxxix. 22. xcii. 6, 7. Luke xii. 16—21. xvi. 19—25. Heb. xii. 8. Jam. v. 5.

33 But ^lwhoso hearkeneth unto me ^mshall dwell safely, ^mand shall be quiet from fear of evil.

l viii. 92—95. ix. 11. Ps. xxv. 12, 13. lxxxi. 13. Is. xlviii. 18. lv. 3. Matt. xvii. 5. John x. 27—29. 1 Pet. i. 5. m iii. 21—26. xiv. 26. Ps. cxii. 7. Is. xxvi. 3. Luke xxi. 9. 19. Rom viii. 35—39.

scorned him and his reproof; so will he then neglect and disdain their cries, terrors, and distress; and thus “they will eat of the fruit of their own ways, and be filled” for ever “with their own devices.”—The change of persons, from a direct address to the despisers themselves, to such as are supposed to witness the awful scene, is peculiarly impressive. (*Notes*, Ps. ii. 4—6. xxxvii. 12—15.)—Let all hear and take warning: let all notice the equity of this most severe infliction of vengeance on obstinate enemies and despisers.

V. 32, 33. The sinner’s “turning away” from the instructions of heavenly Wisdom, or of Christ, is the immediate cause of his destruction, and a most dreadful species of self-murder, without which all his other crimes would not ruin him: (*Notes* and *P. O. Ez.* xviii. 21—32:) while the prosperity and carnal security, in which hardened sinners live, ripen them apace for destruction. Whereas the holy confidence and hope in God, grounded on his word, of those who hearken to the voice of wisdom, and are preserved from the fear of evil, even in the greatest extremities, is a contrast to that sensual and careless security in prosperous circumstances, which is turned into terror and despair, in the season of danger and alarm. (*Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—19.

If God imparts wisdom and entrusts authority to the same person, a great advantage is afforded him for the extensive communication of good instructions. But “the inspiration of the Holy Spirit” gives an authority to the scriptures, far beyond what they could derive from the honourable descent, the dignity, wealth, wisdom, or renown, of those employed in committing them to writing.—It is the design of every part of revelation, to “cause us to know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding,” and to receive lessons of heavenly discretion: that we may pursue the noblest ends by the most effectual means, and may learn to walk with God, and among men, “in justice, judgment, and equity” of every kind, and towards all men. These divine instructions suffice to render the unlearned, and those of slender abilities, discerning and sagacious, and able to detect and elude the most crafty designs of wicked men, and of the devil; nay, even to remedy the rashness of inexperienced youth, and to render it prudent and discreet. (*Notes*, Ps. xix. 7—11. cxix. 9.) And as Solomon, or rather he who inspired Solomon, proposed such benefit to us by this book, we should enter upon the reading of it with fervent prayer to the Fountain and Giver of wisdom, to enable us to profit by it. Indeed, a teachable disposition, arising from a due valuation of heavenly knowledge, united with a consciousness of our own ignorance and fallibility, and exposedness to plausible and strong delusions from every quarter, forms a proper test and standard of our present progress in wisdom. The wise man will always be a learner: he will therefore hear, and will add to this treasure from every maxim, in proportion as he attains to the true interpreta-

tion of it; and discovers the meaning of those words of the wise, which to the careless, superficial, and conceited, appear “dark sayings.”—All who are taught of God agree, that true knowledge and wisdom are practical; and begin with the fear of God, and a due regard to his authority, and principally consist in them. The most sagacious in worldly things, and the most learned in all human sciences, are miserably infatuated and deplorably foolish, if they despise this wisdom and instruction; and do not make it their grand concern to do the will of God and seek his favour: yet alas! how is the earth filled, and its eminent places occupied, by such profane and foolish despisers!—While young persons are exhorted and charged to “hear the instruction of their fathers, and at no time to forsake the law of their mothers;” how forcibly are parents called upon to give them such instructions, to set them such good examples, and so to exercise their authority, as may indeed conduce to their children’s best advantage! and to what a wretched dilemma do many parents reduce their offspring, who must either renounce their instructions and injunctions, or disobey God, and ruin their own souls! (*Notes* and *P. O. Mark* vi. 14—29.) In this case indeed the matter is decided; and they must obey God rather than men. But alas! children are commonly least disposed to be duly observant of wise and pious parents, who would direct them in the way to durable honour and felicity. When youthful inexperience unites with self-sufficiency and impatience of controul, they form a proper prey for the artful and profligate. With flattering caresses and encomiums, and large but cheap and delusive promises of pleasure, advantage, and impunity; these entice such simple young persons to join their cabals and imitate their crimes: and when they have once consented, they are caught in a net whence few ever escape. Would they then shun temporal and eternal ruin, let them turn a deaf ear to all these inviting strains, and refuse to take one step in these destructive paths: for, while they haste to obtain money to defray the expenses of dissipation or licentiousness, “their feet run to evil and they make haste to shed blood.” Thus they are caught in Satan’s net, which is spread before their eyes; they are forming a conspiracy against their own lives; and employing their ingenuity and activity, in rendering themselves execrable and miserable, in bringing themselves to an untimely end, and in ripening apace for eternal destruction. So are the ways of all, in every rank of society even the most exalted, who, being greedy of gain, seize upon it by oppressing their fellow creatures, or taking away their lives by violence or deceit.

V. 20—33

Would men keep at a distance from the destructive temptations of Satan and his servants, they should hearken to the voice of Wisdom; they should attend to the gospel, and the sacred word, by which the Saviour addresses them with inconceivable affection and earnestness. After his example, and in the same fervent and sympathizing tenderness, his ministers should “preach the word, instant

CHAP. II.

Wisdom promises the blessings of true religion, to those who seek her from God, with prayer and diligence, 1—9; and to preserve them from the ruinous ways of bad men and women, by guiding them in the paths of righteousness, 10—22.

a i. 3. iv. 1. vii.
1. John xii. 47.
48. 1 Tim. i. 15.
b iii. 1. iv. 20—22.
vi. 21. Deut. vi.
6—9. Job xxiii.
12. Ps. cxix. 9—
11. Matt. xiii.
44. Luke ii. 19.
51. ix. 44.
c xviii. 1. Ps. cxix.
111. 112. Is. lv.
3. Matt. xiii. 9.

MY son, ^a if thou wilt receive my words, and ^b hide my commandments with thee;

2 So that ^c thou incline thine ear

unto wisdom, and ^d apply thine heart to understanding:

3 Yea, ^e if thou criest after knowledge and ^f liftest up thy voice for understanding;

4 If ^g thou seekest her as silver, and ^h searchest for her as for hid treasures:

5 Then ⁱ shalt thou understand ^j the fear of the LORD, and ^k find the knowledge of God.

xix. 21, 22. 29. g Job xxviii. 12—20. Ec. iv. 8. Luke xvi. 8. h 2 Chr. i. 10—12. Hos. vi. 3. Matt. vii. 7, 8. Luke xi. 9—13. i ix. 10. Job xxviii. 28. Jer. xxxii. 40, 41. k Jer. ix. 24. xxiv. 7. xxxi. 34. Matt. xi. 27. Luke x. 22. John xvii. 3. 1 John v. 20.

d xxii. 17—21.
xxiii. 12. Ps. xc.
12. Ec. vii. 25.
viii. 9. 16. Acts
xvii. 11.
e iii. 6. viii. 17.
1 Kings iii. 9—
12. 1 Chr. xxii.
12. Ps. xxv. 4.
5. cxix. 34. 73.
125. 169. Luke
xi. 13. Eph. i.
17, 18. Jam. i. 5.
f Heb. givest thy
voice.
g iii. 14, 15. viii.
18, 19. xvi. 16.
xxiii. 23. Ps. xix.
10. cxix. 14. 72.
127. Matt. vi.
19—21. xiii. 44.

“in season, out of season,” whenever and wherever they can get men to attend. And surely none should censure their brethren, who “cry without in the streets,” in the chief places of concourse, and in the opening of the gates, being greatly in earnest to snatch sinners as brands from the burning; when the Wisdom of God has given them the example. Nay, if the same divine Saviour exhorts, warns, and invites even scorers, and “fools that hate knowledge, and simple ones who love simplicity;” they certainly come the nearest to wisdom, who call upon sinners of every description, without exception or limitation, and in the most urgent manner, to repent, and believe, and be saved.—The love and condescension of Christ, and the gracious promises which he mingles with his reproofs, while he declares his readiness to “pour out his Spirit, and make known his words to” those who turn to him, should surely attract the attention of the most careless and ungodly: and it may well be enquired of them, “how long” they mean to proceed in such a perilous path, when the uncertainty of life, and the tremendous consequences of dying without conversion, are considered. But if sinners, bent upon the indulgence of their lusts, now refuse, disregard, despise, revile, and hate the counsels and proposals of the Son of God; they will hereafter curse their own madness and folly. Some few on earth anticipate their own doom, and are left to desperation for a warning to others: and many cry out in terror of conscience for deliverance from torment, without any desire after redemption from iniquity; (*P. O. Matt. viii. 28—34*;) and therefore they cry in vain: though none can at any period of life heartily pray for the entire salvation of the gospel, and be rejected. But no words can express the horror, distress, and anguish of the wicked, as standing before the tribunal of their angry Judge; when all their pleas, and extorted cries for mercy, shall be disregarded and despised. “Then will he laugh at their calamity, and mock when their fear cometh:” turning to others, he will shew the reasons of his severity, and even the rocks and mountains will refuse to hide them from his wrath. Then will they receive the due reward of their crimes, and especially of their contempt of Christ and his salvation. “Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, “we would persuade” sinners to repent, and not turn away from the Saviour to their own destruction. And surely we should not fear the cross of his people, nor envy the prosperity of fools which destroys them! But we should hearken diligently and obediently to the Lord Jesus, that we may dwell safely under his protection, and enjoy peace

of conscience and confidence in God, and be free from fear of evil, in life, in death, in judgment, and for ever.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1—5. Wisdom, having finally warned the careless and unteachable, who despised her instructions, and having denounced their doom, (*Notes, i. 20—33*;) here proceeds to teach and exhort her children: (*Matt. xi. 19. Luke vii. 35*;) for this seems to be the sacred writer’s intention, which he pursues in most parts of these introductory chapters, under the figure of a father instructing his son. It is indeed the general and reasonable opinion of commentators, that he had the best interests of his son Rehoboam peculiarly in view, while he was employed on these important subjects. “And now, my son, whose happiness I most heartily desire, let me tell thee for thy further encouragement, that if thou dost entertain these my exhortations, and keep these precepts in remembrance: ... listening with diligent attention, ... to the counsels and instructions of wisdom; with sincere affection applying thy mind to understand thy duty: and moreover if thou ex- pressest such a desire of it, as men do of that which they most need, and without which they are in danger to perish: praying those that are able to inform thee; and beseeching God likewise, with ardent devotion, that he would bring thee acquainted with it: if thou dost value this wisdom above the greatest treasures, and show thy esteem of it by studious seeking for it, as covetous men do for money, laying hold upon all occasions of profiting in knowledge, and pursuing thy advantages, (as they do,) when thou meetest with them, ... not giving over thy labour presently: if thou findest not what thou desirest; but enquiring still, and sparing no pains to know what the will of the LORD is: ... then shalt thou not fail to understand what it is to be truly religious, and that there is no wisdom comparable to it.” *Bp. Patrick. —Hide, &c. (1) Marg. Ref. b.—Note, Ps. cxix. 11.—Searchest, &c. (4) “A proverbial saying, borrowed from those that dig in mines: the former part of it expressing eager desire and great diligence; and the latter, invincible resolution, and constant perseverance, notwithstanding those difficulties that occur to discourage our labour.” Bp. Patrick.—The fear, &c. (5) “The fear of the LORD,” and “the knowledge of God,” are concise scriptural terms for the whole of that religion, by which sinful men come to God, walk with him, enjoy his favour, and inherit eternal life. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, i. 7. Gen. xxii. 11, 12. 1 Chr. xxviii. 9. John xvii. 1—3.*)*

1 Ex. xxxi. 3.
1 Kings iii. 12
iv. 29. 1 Chr
xxii. 12. Job
xxxii. 8. Is. lv.
13. Dan. i. 17.
ii. 21. 23. Luke
xxi. 15. John vi.
45. Eph. i. 17.
18. Jam. i. 5. 17.
vi. 23. viii. 5—9
Ps. xix. 7. cxix.
98. 104. Is. viii.
20.
viii. 14. xiv. 8.
Job xxviii. 28.
1 Cor. i. 19. 24.
30. ii. 6. 7. iii.
18. 19. Col. ii. 3.
2 Tim. iii. 15—
17. Jam. iii. 15
—17.
o xxviii. 18. xxx
5. Ps. lxxxiv. 11
cxliv. 2.
p viii. 20. Ps. i. 6
xxiii. 3. 4. cxix
5—8. Is. xxxv
9. xlix. 9. 10
John x. 28. 29
iii. 21—24. Deut.
xxiii. 3. 26—29
1 Sam. ii. 9. Ps
xxxvii. 23. 24.
28. 31. lxvi. 9.
cxlv. 20. Jer.
xxxii. 40. 41. 1 Pet. i. 5
r i. 2—6. Ps. xxv. 8. 9. xxxii. 8. cxix. 105. cxliii. 8—10.
Is. xxxv. 8. xlviii. 17. Jer. vi. 16. Matt. vii. 13. 14. John xiv. 6. s xviii. 1. 2. xxiv.
3. 14. Job xxxiii. 12. Ps. xix. 10. civ. 34. cxix. 97. 103. 111. 162. Jer. xv. 16. Col. iii. 16.
t iv. 6. vi. 22—24. Ps. xxv. 21. cxix. 9—11. Ec. ix. 15—18. x. 10. Eph. v. 15.

6 For ¹the LORD giveth wisdom:
out of his mouth *cometh* knowledge
and understanding.
7 He ²layeth up sound wisdom for
the righteous: *he is* ³a Buckler to them
that walk uprightly.
8 He ⁴keepeth the paths of judg-
ment, ⁵and preserveth the way of his
saints.
9 Then ⁶shalt thou understand right-
eousness, and judgment, and equity;
yea, every good path.
10 ¶ When ⁷wisdom entereth into
thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant
unto thy soul;
11 ⁸Discretion shall preserve thee,
understanding shall keep thee:

12 To ⁹deliver thee from the way
of the evil *man*, ¹⁰from the man that
speaketh froward things;
13 Who ¹¹leave the paths of up-
rightness, to ¹²walk in the ways of
darkness;
14 Who ¹³rejoice to do evil, ¹⁴and
delight in the frowardness of the
wicked;
15 Whose ¹⁵ways *are* crooked, and
they froward in their paths:
16 To ¹⁶deliver thee from the strange
woman, *even* from the stranger *which*
¹⁷flattereth with her words;
17 Which forsaketh ¹⁸the guide of
her youth, and ¹⁹forgetteth the cove-
nant of her God.

u i. 10—19. iv. 14
—17. ix. 6. xiii.
20. Ps. xvii. 4.
5. xxvi. 4. 5.
cxli. 4. 2 Cor.
vi. 17.
x iii. 32. viii. 13.
xvi. 28—30. Ps.
ci. 4. Is. lix. 3—
5. Acts xx. 30.
1 Cor. xv. 33.
y xxi. 16. Ps. xiv.
3. xxxvi. 3. Ez.
xxiii. 26. xxxiii.
12. 13. Zeph. i.
6. Matt. xii. 43
—45. 2 Tim. iv.
10. Heb. vi. 4—
6. 2 Pet. ii. 20
—22. 1 John ii.
19
z iv. 19. Job xxiv.
13—16. John iii.
19. 20. Rom. i.
21. 1 Thes. v. 5
—7. 1 John i. 6.
ii. 9—11.
a x. 23. Jer. xi.
15. Hab. i. 15.
Zeph. iii. 11.
1 Cor. xiii. 6.
b Hos. vii. 3.
Luke xxii. 4. 5
Rom. i. 32.
c Deut. xxxii. 5.
Ps. cxxxv. 5. Is.
xxx. 8—13. lix. 8. Phil. ii. 15. d v. 3—20. vi. 24. vii. 5—23. xxii. 14. xxiii.
27. Gen. xxxix. 3—12. Neh. xiii. 26. 27. Ec. vii. 26. e vii. 21. xxix. 5. f v. 12.
Jer. iii. 4. g Ez. xvi. 8. 59. 60. Mal. ii. 14—16.

V. 6. (Notes, Jam. i. 5—8. 16—18. iii. 13—18.) “The
“LORD will give wisdom,” (the literal rendering,) that is,
to those, who thus seek and pray for it: and he will do
this, by means of the words which he has spoken by his
holy prophets. The wisdom, which he gives by his Spirit
in answer to prayer, to those who diligently seek it, accords
with the written word, and must be tried by it.
V. 7. *He layeth up, &c.*] The old version renders this,
“He preserveth the state of the righteous,” and has in
the margin, “He hideth the salvation of the righteous.”
“Our life is hid with Christ in God.” (Note, Col. iii. 1—4,
v. 4.) The literal meaning seems to be, “He reserveth
“essential good for the righteous:” “all things pertaining
“to life and godliness;” that which *exists* independently
of this changing world, and shall exist for ever. (Marg.
Ref.)—הוֹשִׁיעָה, *ab ַשׁ, exiitit immobiliter, essentiam habuit*
formam. ... Proprie est essentia seu existentia, substantia. ...
‘Varie redditur, et sæpius virtus, sapientia, quod stabilis et
‘durabilis harum sit essentia, et reliqua omnia transeant.’
Robertson. (xviii. 1 Job xi. 6.)
V. 8. “In order to keep the paths of judgment, he pre-
“serveth the feet of his saints.” (Notes, 1 Sam. ii. 9. Ps.
xxxvii. 23, 24. cxxv. 1, 2.)
V. 9. Some versions include the passage from the be-
ginning of the third verse, in a parenthesis. “If thou
“apply thine heart to understanding, ...then shalt thou
“understand, &c.” the intermediate verses being an ex-
planation of the words “apply thy heart to understand-
“ing,” and the grounds of the subsequent assurance.
V. 10, 11. The first steps towards heavenly wisdom
may be attended with difficulty, and seem unpleasant:
but, it is here intimated, that when wisdom has entered
into the heart, it will become pleasant to the soul; and by
its pleasantness, as well as its instructions, preserve the
possessor from the destructive allurements of sin. (Notes,
xviii. 1, 2. xxiv. 13, 14.)—“The word of God shall
“teach thee, and counsel thee how to govern thyself.”
V. 12. (Notes, i. 10—16.) One ruinous effect of bad
company was shewn in the preceding chapter; but another,

not less fatal, is pointed out in this: for the company of
ungodly and profligate men is the common introduction of
young persons into the society of abandoned women (16)
Froward things.] “Perverted,” or such as overturn right
principles and good conduct.
V. 13, 14. They leave ‘the word of God, which is
‘the only light, to follow their own fancies, which are dark-
‘ness.’ Infidelity and impiety prepare the mind for debau-
chery, and prevent the disturbance of conscience, which
would otherwise interrupt the quiet of those who rejoice in
doing evil.
V. 15. *Crooked, &c.*] Note, Ps. cxxv. 4, 5.
V. 16. *Strange woman, &c.*] (Lev. xix. 29.) That is,
the prostitute. These were either heathen women, who sub-
sisted by prostitution in the land of Israel; or such Israel-
itish women, as were worthy to be treated as strangers, or
Gentiles. (Notes, v. 3—14. vii. 6—23. 1 Kings 1—8.)
But, while the prostitute is especially marked out; all ac-
quaintance with women, of lax moral principles and con-
duct, married or unmarried, is included in the warning, or
instruction; all, whose smooth, and flattering conversation
is calculated to draw the unwary into their net; all, who
in any respect resembled Delilah, the tempter and ruin
of Samson. (Notes, and P. O. Judg. xvi.)—Thus the adul-
tress in the next verse is considered as emphatically *the*
strange woman—Some indeed think, that the fascinations
of idolatry or false religion, and of worldly pleasures, are
meant in these warnings, as well as the crimes immedi-
ately specified: but the literal meaning is of immense im-
portance; and careful and enlarged observation on the
ways of men will more and more convince a serious en-
quirer, that the strong expressions used by Solomon, con-
cerning the fatal consequences of these vices, have a pecu-
liar propriety.
V. 17. *The guide, &c.*] ‘That is, her husband, which
‘is her head and guide to govern her; from whom she
‘ought not to depart, but remain in his subjection.’—
“The covenant of her God,” is the promise made in mar-
riage. (Note, Mal. ii. 13—16.) ‘To whom she was joined
3 O

h v. 4—14, vi. 26
—35, vii. 22—
27, ix. 18. 1 Cor.
vi. 9—11. Gal. v.
19—21. Eph. v.
5. Rev. xxi. 8
xxii. 15.
Ps. lxxxii. 12.
Ec. vii. 26. Jer.
xlii. 23. Hos. iv.
14. Matt. xix.
24—26.
k iv. 18. Heb. vi.
18.
l xlii. 80. Ps. cxix. 63. 115. Cant. i. 7, 8. Jer. vi. 16. Heb. vi. 12. 3 John 11.

18 For ^bher house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead :

19 ⁱNone that go unto her return again, neither ^ktake they hold of the paths of life.

20 That ^lthou mayest walk in the

way of good *men*, and keep the paths of the righteous.

21 For ^mthe upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it.

22 But ⁿthe wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be ^{*}rooted out of it.

m Job i. 1. xlii.
12. Ps. xxxvii.
3. 9. 11. 22. 29.
lxxxiv. 11. cxii.
4—6.
n v. 22, 23. Job
xviii. 16—18.
xxi. 30. Ps.
xxxvii. 20. 22
37, 38. lii. 5. civ
35. cxlv. 20. Is
iii. 10, 11.
Or, *plucked up*
Deut. vii. 22
marg. xxviii. 63.

‘in her youth, ... and took him for her guide and governor; but hath wickedly broken the laws of God, and violated the solemn vow of fidelity to him, which she made when they were married.’ *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 18. *The dead.*] מֵתִים. The word is the same, as is used for the giants who were destroyed by the deluge: and the state of future punishment seems to be intended.—‘By what name ... was this place of the damned expressed, before the word *Gehenna* or *Gehinnom* came to be used? ... It seems to have been called *the house of the giants*.’ (xxi. 16.) ‘He shall go and keep them company,’ (namely the giants, whose wickedness provoked God to drown the world;) ‘that is, go to that accursed place and condition which they are in.’ *Mede, Discourse vii.*—(Note, xxi. 16.) ‘Who ... seeks the ruin of all that go to her house, where by one means or other, they are in danger to meet with their grave, and to be sent to keep company with those old giants, who corrupted mankind with such filthiness and violence, that they brought a deluge upon the earth.’ (Gen. vi. 4, 5. 11.) *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 19. ‘It is rarely seen, that any body, who is drawn into her impure embraces, ever gets out again: but she holds them so fast by her enchantments, and they are so blinded and bewildered by her arts, that, like men who have quite lost their way in a strange country, they seldom or never can recover themselves.’ *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 20—22. *Marg Ref.—Notes, 10—12. Ps. xxxvii. 9—11. 21—28.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—9.

Those, who earnestly seek heavenly wisdom, will never have cause to complain that they have lost their labour: and the freeness of the gift encourages, but does not supersede the necessity of our diligence. (John vi. 27.) God alone bestows this blessing: he has given his Son to be “made Wisdom unto us,” and in him are laid up all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge for our use. From these he communicates to believers through his holy word: and it especially teaches us to fear God; and so to know him, as to trust in his mercy, and delight greatly in his commandments. This sound wisdom and substantial good is “reserved for the righteous,” and they exclusively possess it; that they may pass safely through this perilous world to heaven: “for the LORD is a Buckler to them that walk uprightly.”—Would we obtain this inestimable treasure, we must receive the words of Christ, and, by daily study and meditation, “hide his commandments” in our hearts: we must habitually have our ear open to instruction, and our minds applied to understanding. Above all, we must with earnestness “cry after knowledge, and lift up our voice” in prayer for understanding: (Jam. i. 5:) for in

no other way can “we understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.” Those persons, therefore, whose religious knowledge has been obtained without this application of mind, and this fervency of prayer, have an internal demonstration that it is not of the right sort: if it has cost them only a little of this labour, it must at best be very scanty and superficial: and those, who are more eager to grow rich or great, or are more intent about their pleasures, or the curiosities of science, or the reputation attached to it, than about this divine wisdom, may be sure that as yet “they know nothing as they ought to know;” nor will they ever, unless they value the prize at another rate, and pursue it in another manner. But those, who value wisdom above rubies, and seek for it with that unwearied diligence and perseverance, with which the miner delves in the earth for the silver ore, or the miser scrapes together his heap of money, however feeble their capacities, or scanty their stock of other knowledge, “shall understand righteousness, judgment and equity, yea, every good path.” (1 Cor. ii. 13—15. Col. i. 9, 10.) For when divine truth thus gains admission into the heart, and the soul is taught to relish and delight in it, “discretion shall preserve, and understanding shall keep” men, from the many and great dangers to which others are exposed: for it is in this manner that “the LORD keepeth” and guardeth “the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints.” (Note, Jer. xxxii. 38—41.)

V. 10—22.

Beside all the temptations from their own hearts, from the things of the world, and from the stratagems and suggestions of Satan; numerous bad examples and crafty seducers, of both sexes, exceedingly endanger the souls of men; especially in the giddy season of youth. But they, who “ask wisdom from God,” and delight in his word, will shun those scenes and companies, where these tremendous dangers most abound, and will decidedly shun the company of the evil man. For such as “leave the paths of uprightness, to walk in the ways of darkness; whose delight is in doing evil, and in the frowardness of the wicked,” are very zealous to corrupt the principles and morals of those who are apparently well-disposed; that they may strengthen their party and keep themselves in countenance: nay, being instigated by Satan, and as it were inspired as his prophets, their “mouths utter perverse things;” and they are continually disseminating infidelity, impiety, and licentiousness among the rising generation. Thus thousands of simple ones are trained up in the school, and at length qualified to assume the chair, of the scorner: and the academies for teaching these sciences, are not likely to want experienced and laborious preceptors. Indeed the minds of our

CHAP. III.

Wisdom exhorts to obedience, as conducive to long life, peace, and reputation, 1—4; to simple dependence on God; with a promise of special guidance, 5, 6; and avoiding self-wisdom, to fear God, to honour him, and profit by his fatherly correction, 7—12. The happiness and safety of him that finds wisdom, 13—26. Exhortations to justice, charity, peace, and contentment, 27—32. The miserable state of the wicked, 33—35.

a i. 2. iv. 5. xxxi.
5. Deut. iv. 23.
Ps. cxix. 93. 153.
176. Hos. iv. 6.

MY son, ^a forget not my law; but

youth, before they arrive at manhood, are too generally prepared for scenes of debauchery, in concert with scepticism and profaneness; and they fall an easy prey to those wicked women, who are too numerous to be thought strangers in our cities, or even towns and villages. These are perhaps the victims of seduction by more hardened profligates: or a loose education and early habits of sloth and extravagance, lead them into such infamous courses; or they have adulterously broken the marriage-covenant, solemnly engaged to in the presence of God, and been unfaithful to those who ought to have been the guides of their youth. But, however themselves initiated in the ways of vice, they assault the young and inexperienced with their flatteries and insinuating blandishments; and aid them in getting over the remaining scruples of conscience, and the restraints of fear and shame; and so qualify them to go forth to seduce the daughters, and debauch the wives, of their friends and neighbours. These are prevailing evils which excite the sorrow of every serious and pious mind; and must cause the reflecting parent to look upon his children with tears and anxious fears, lest they should be caught in the fatal snare. For, however light the inconsiderate make of these things, it is plain in fact, that “the house of the harlot inclineth to death, and “her paths to the dead;” numbers are thus first led to venture into those violent or fraudulent practices, in order to gratify the exorbitant demands of an extravagant prostitute, or to support the expenses of their lusts, which terminate in an ignominious execution, or in banishment from civilized society, to some remote and desolate region, where there are scarcely any to plunder. Thousands prematurely perish by loathsome diseases, perhaps more desolating in these later ages than the sword of war: others, unreformed, are united with virtuous women, to whom they cause inexpressible misery, and train up children by their example and discourse, to live, like them, the nuisances of society. And the corrupt language of that very small number of them, who live to old age, too plainly shews, that with worn out bodies they possess hearts as debauched, as in the vigour of youth.—The abounding grace of God indeed snatches a small number of the countless multitude, as brands out of the burning; and perhaps sometimes an individual may be otherwise outwardly reformed: but these rare exceptions consist very well with its being a *general rule*, that none, who form connexions and habits of this kind, “return again, to take hold of the “paths of life.” How carefully then should parents watch over their children, to keep them at a distance from the fatal precipice: nor should they ever mention such sub-

let thine heart keep my commandments:

2 For ^c length of days, and ^{*} long life, ^d and peace, shall they add to thee.

3 Let not ^e mercy and truth forsake thee: ^f bind them about thy neck; ^g write them upon the table of thine heart:

4 So ^h shalt thou find favour, and

b Deut. iv. 9. vi. 6—9. xxx 16—20. Ps. cxix. 11. 16. 34. 47. 48. Jer. xxxi. 33. John xiv. 21—24. c 16. iv. 10. ix. 11. Job v. 26. Ps. xxxiv. 11—14. xci. 16. cxxviii. 6. Eph. vi. 1—3. * Heb. years of life. Ps. xxi. 4. d 17. Ps. cxix. 165. Is. xxxii. 17. lvii. 19—21. Rom. v. 1. xiv. 17. xv. 13. e xvi. 6. xx. 28. 2 Sam. xv. 20. Ps. xxv. 10. Hos. iv. 1. Mic. vii. 18—20. Mal. ii. 6. Matt. xxiii. 23. Eph. v. 1, 2. 9. f vi. 21. vii. 3. Ex. xiii. 9. Deut. xi. 18—21. Ps. cxix. 11. g Jer. xvii. 1. 2 Cor. iii. 3. Heb. x. 16. h Gen. xxxix. 2—4. 21. i Sam. ii. 26. Dan. i. 9. Luke ii. 52. Acts ii. 47. Rom. xiv. 18.

jects, as too many do, as the foibles or slips of youth; but with horror, as the most tremendous of all vicious habits. How carefully should every young man keep at a distance from the entrance upon this perilous way! shunning such seducers more than a person infected with a plague. How should they store their minds with heavenly wisdom, and learn to relish purer pleasures, and pray to be kept by the grace of God from the dangerous snare, “that they may “walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the “righteous!” For the upright believer shall not only inherit heaven, but have the best portion on earth; living in the Lord’s land, and enjoying peace and comfort, “when “the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and transgressors rooted out of it.”—Finally, let us note, that *in general*, it is expedient for young persons to enter into the married state, before they have contracted bad habits, in order to prevent these fatal consequences: and, having made a prudent and pious choice, to be faithful to the covenant of God, and an affectionate guide of the youth, to one who is suited for a helper in the way to heaven. (Note, v. 15—19.) “For marriage is honourable in all, “and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers “God will judge.”

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1. ‘Be not careless and negligent in ‘the observance of these instructions: but remember them, ‘and love them, and set thyself heartily to do whatsoever ‘I command thee.’ Bp. Patrick.—The most effectual prevention of forgetfulness, in respect of God’s commandments, is an habitual care to reduce them to practice, in our daily conduct, and to learn to love and delight in so doing.

V. 2. Temperance, chastity, honesty, and industry, which are inseparable from a life of true piety, do in the course of things conduce to health, safety, and long life: and this is sufficient to warrant these general maxims of wisdom, without supposing them to be direct promises, which are invariably fulfilled.—‘Long life is the blessing of God, ‘which he giveth to his, so far forth as it is expedient for ‘them.’

V. 3, 4. ‘By “mercy and truth” he meaneth... the ‘mercy and faithfulness which we ought to use toward our ‘neighbours,’ after the example of the Lord’s mercy and truth to us. ‘Fix them in thy memory, and in thy affections, as if they were engraven upon thy heart, and look ‘upon it as thy greatest ornament to be obedient to ‘them.’ Bp. Patrick.—‘Count these thy ornament and thy treasure: then shalt thou be so favoured and directed by the Lord, that thy affairs, being managed discreetly,

* Or, *good success*. Josh i. 7, 8. *marg.* Ps. cxi. 0.

1 good understanding in the sight of God and man.

5 ¶ Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; ^k and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, ^m and he shall direct thy paths.

7 ⁿ Be not wise in thine own eyes: ^o fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

8 It ^p shall be [†] health to ^q thy navel, and [†] marrow to thy bones.

17. 23. 28. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 215. 216. 217. 218. 219. 220. 221. 222. 223. 224. 225. 226. 227. 228. 229. 230. 231. 232. 233. 234. 235. 236. 237. 238. 239. 240. 241. 242. 243. 244. 245. 246. 247. 248. 249. 250. 251. 252. 253. 254. 255. 256. 257. 258. 259. 260. 261. 262. 263. 264. 265. 266. 267. 268. 269. 270. 271. 272. 273. 274. 275. 276. 277. 278. 279. 280. 281. 282. 283. 284. 285. 286. 287. 288. 289. 290. 291. 292. 293. 294. 295. 296. 297. 298. 299. 300. 301. 302. 303. 304. 305. 306. 307. 308. 309. 310. 311. 312. 313. 314. 315. 316. 317. 318. 319. 320. 321. 322. 323. 324. 325. 326. 327. 328. 329. 330. 331. 332. 333. 334. 335. 336. 337. 338. 339. 340. 341. 342. 343. 344. 345. 346. 347. 348. 349. 350. 351. 352. 353. 354. 355. 356. 357. 358. 359. 360. 361. 362. 363. 364. 365. 366. 367. 368. 369. 370. 371. 372. 373. 374. 375. 376. 377. 378. 379. 380. 381. 382. 383. 384. 385. 386. 387. 388. 389. 390. 391. 392. 393. 394. 395. 396. 397. 398. 399. 400. 401. 402. 403. 404. 405. 406. 407. 408. 409. 410. 411. 412. 413. 414. 415. 416. 417. 418. 419. 420. 421. 422. 423. 424. 425. 426. 427. 428. 429. 430. 431. 432. 433. 434. 435. 436. 437. 438. 439. 440. 441. 442. 443. 444. 445. 446. 447. 448. 449. 450. 451. 452. 453. 454. 455. 456. 457. 458. 459. 460. 461. 462. 463. 464. 465. 466. 467. 468. 469. 470. 471. 472. 473. 474. 475. 476. 477. 478. 479. 480. 481. 482. 483. 484. 485. 486. 487. 488. 489. 490. 491. 492. 493. 494. 495. 496. 497. 498. 499. 500. 501. 502. 503. 504. 505. 506. 507. 508. 509. 510. 511. 512. 513. 514. 515. 516. 517. 518. 519. 520. 521. 522. 523. 524. 525. 526. 527. 528. 529. 530. 531. 532. 533. 534. 535. 536. 537. 538. 539. 540. 541. 542. 543. 544. 545. 546. 547. 548. 549. 550. 551. 552. 553. 554. 555. 556. 557. 558. 559. 560. 561. 562. 563. 564. 565. 566. 567. 568. 569. 570. 571. 572. 573. 574. 575. 576. 577. 578. 579. 580. 581. 582. 583. 584. 585. 586. 587. 588. 589. 590. 591. 592. 593. 594. 595. 596. 597. 598. 599. 600. 601. 602. 603. 604. 605. 606. 607. 608. 609. 610. 611. 612. 613. 614. 615. 616. 617. 618. 619. 620. 621. 622. 623. 624. 625. 626. 627. 628. 629. 630. 631. 632. 633. 634. 635. 636. 637. 638. 639. 640. 641. 642. 643. 644. 645. 646. 647. 648. 649. 650. 651. 652. 653. 654. 655. 656. 657. 658. 659. 660. 661. 662. 663. 664. 665. 666. 667. 668. 669. 670. 671. 672. 673. 674. 675. 676. 677. 678. 679. 680. 681. 682. 683. 684. 685. 686. 687. 688. 689. 690. 691. 692. 693. 694. 695. 696. 697. 698. 699. 700. 701. 702. 703. 704. 705. 706. 707. 708. 709. 710. 711. 712. 713. 714. 715. 716. 717. 718. 719. 720. 721. 722. 723. 724. 725. 726. 727. 728. 729. 730. 731. 732. 733. 734. 735. 736. 737. 738. 739. 740. 741. 742. 743. 744. 745. 746. 747. 748. 749. 750. 751. 752. 753. 754. 755. 756. 757. 758. 759. 760. 761. 762. 763. 764. 765. 766. 767. 768. 769. 770. 771. 772. 773. 774. 775. 776. 777. 778. 779. 780. 781. 782. 783. 784. 785. 786. 787. 788. 789. 790. 791. 792. 793. 794. 795. 796. 797. 798. 799. 800. 801. 802. 803. 804. 805. 806. 807. 808. 809. 810. 811. 812. 813. 814. 815. 816. 817. 818. 819. 820. 821. 822. 823. 824. 825. 826. 827. 828. 829. 830. 831. 832. 833. 834. 835. 836. 837. 838. 839. 840. 841. 842. 843. 844. 845. 846. 847. 848. 849. 850. 851. 852. 853. 854. 855. 856. 857. 858. 859. 860. 861. 862. 863. 864. 865. 866. 867. 868. 869. 870. 871. 872. 873. 874. 875. 876. 877. 878. 879. 880. 881. 882. 883. 884. 885. 886. 887. 888. 889. 890. 891. 892. 893. 894. 895. 896. 897. 898. 899. 900. 901. 902. 903. 904. 905. 906. 907. 908. 909. 910. 911. 912. 913. 914. 915. 916. 917. 918. 919. 920. 921. 922. 923. 924. 925. 926. 927. 928. 929. 930. 931. 932. 933. 934. 935. 936. 937. 938. 939. 940. 941. 942. 943. 944. 945. 946. 947. 948. 949. 950. 951. 952. 953. 954. 955. 956. 957. 958. 959. 960. 961. 962. 963. 964. 965. 966. 967. 968. 969. 970. 971. 972. 973. 974. 975. 976. 977. 978. 979. 980. 981. 982. 983. 984. 985. 986. 987. 988. 989. 990. 991. 992. 993. 994. 995. 996. 997. 998. 999. 1000.

9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase:

10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

11 ¶ My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; ^u neither be weary of his correction:

12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even ^x as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

t Job v. 17. Ps. xciv. 12. 1 Cor. xi. 32. Heb. xii. 5, 6. Rev. iii. 19. Job iv. 5. Is. xl. 30, 31. 2 Cor. iv. 1, 16, 17. Heb. xii. 3. 7—12. viii. 5. Ps. ciii. 13.

xiv. 31. Gen. xiv. 18—21. xxviii. 22. Ex. xxii. 29. xxiii. 19. xxxiv. 26. xxxv. 20—29. Num. vii. 2, &c. xxxi. 50, &c. Deut. xxvi. 2, &c. Hag. i. 4—9. Mal. iii. 8, 9. Mark xiv. 7, 8. Luke xiv. 3, 14. 1 Cor. xvi. 2. 2 Cor. viii. 2, 3, 8, 9. Phil. iv. 17, 18. 1 John iii. 17, 18. xi. 24, 25. xix. 17. xxii. 9. Lev. xxvi. 2—5. Deut. xxviii. 8. Hag. ii. 19. Mal. iii. 10, 11. 2 Cor. ix. 6—11.

u xxiv. 10. x xxix. 17. Deut.

shall generally be crowned with “good success.” (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.*)

V. 5, 6. Entire dependence on the providence, grace, and promises of God, in every undertaking, is here contrasted with a man’s “leaning to his own understanding.” He who “trusts in the LORD with all his heart,” is doubtless a true believer; and he expects the blessing from God, on his lawful undertakings, in the use of allowable means, and these alone: but he who “leans to his own understanding,” engages in such pursuits as are agreeable to his own inclinations, and relies for success on his own capacity, policy, or management; and consequently he is under continual temptations to deviate from the path of duty, both as to the end proposed, and the means of accomplishing it. This is therefore the result of pride, unbelief, ungodliness, and a worldly heart, and leads to further transgressions; the other is the way of humility, faith, piety, peace, and safety.—This is further recommended by the exhortations to *know* and “acknowledge God in all “our ways.” When a man undertakes nothing without consulting the word of God as to its lawfulness, and seeking his direction in prayer as to its expediency; when he seeks counsel, assistance, and a blessing from God in all his concerns; when he acknowledges his authority and providence, aiming to do his will and glorify his name; when he makes the Lord his Friend and Counsellor in every thing, neglecting no proper means for discovering his will and ensuring his blessing; then he “acknowledges “him in all his ways,” and may confidently expect “that “he will direct his paths.” And those who do this constantly, seldom fall into prejudicial mistakes; which almost universally arise from neglect of these rules, from men’s fondness for their own schemes, and partiality towards such measures, as seem to promise external advantages, or accession to their reputation or enjoyment.

V. 7, 8. ‘Never be guilty of such folly, as to conceit “thine own wit to be so great, that thou canst manage “things thereby in thine own way (neglecting the rules “that God hath prescribed thee,) to thy satisfaction: but “have a religious regard to him, who can either disappoint “or prosper thee as he pleases; and fearing to offend his “majesty...avoid most cautiously those practices which “he hath forbidden thee. This is the way to preserve a good habit both of soul and body, and in all conditions “to remain undejected; nay cheerful and fully satisfied, “whatsoever happens.’ *Bp. Patrick.*

Navel (8). Some suppose that this clause alludes to a custom of applying medical preparations to the navels of children, for the prevention of diseases: and that it was a proverbial expression, denoting health and cheerfulness.

V. 9, 10. Several laws were given concerning the first-fruits of different kinds; most of which were offered at the sanctuary or given to the priests: but some were appointed to be spent in feasting before the Lord, with the Levite, the stranger, the widow, and the fatherless; and in many of them, the proportion to be given was left to the voluntary choice of the offerer, as a test of his faith, piety, and liberality. (*Num.* xviii. 12, 13. *Notes, Ex.* xxii. 29—31. *Deut.* xii. 5—7. 17, 18. xxvi. 1—4. 12—15.) The spirit of these laws however is here inculcated, by a general exhortation to “honour the LORD with their substance, and “with the first-fruits of all their increase;” the prime of all that with which providence in any way blessed their labours and undertakings. This would be done by liberally employing his bounty in works of piety and charity, as circumstances required; which instead of impoverishing them, as covetousness and unbelief would suggest, would secure the blessing of God on their fields and vineyards, and on every work of their hands. ‘For to the “faithful distributor God giveth in greater abundance.’ (*Notes, xi.* 24, 25. *Hag.* i. 5—11. ii. 15—19. *Mal.* iii. 7—12. 2 *Cor.* ix. 6—15.)

V. 11, 12. (*Notes, Job* v. 17. *Heb.* xii. 4—11.) The apostle expressly quotes this passage, with a special reference to the address, “My son;” and in a manner which decisively proves, that he considered it as the exhortation of our heavenly Father to his afflicted children. Now this method of quoting it shews, that the apostle considered the book as divinely inspired; and it also demonstrates, who it is, that speaks in the instructions given by Wisdom to her children.—‘Suppose it be his pleasure that “any affliction should befall thee; my son, let not that “dissatisfy thee; nor make thee either doubt of his gracious providence towards thee, or out of impatience take “any unlawful course to remove it from thee.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—The extremes of insensibility and contempt of God under afflictions, as if from chance or second causes, on the one hand, and despondency and murmurs, on the other, seem especially intended: and a proper submission under his parental discipline and improvement of it are inculcated; by the assurance that it springs from his wise and faithful love, is salutary in its nature and tendency, is

y iv 5-9. viii. 32
-35. 1 Kings x.
- 6-9. 23, 24. Ec.
ix. 15-18.
* Heb. draweth
out. ii. 4. xviii. 1.
z viii. 10. 19. xvi.
15. 2 Chr. i. 11.
12. Job xxviii.
15-19. Ps. xix.
10. cxix. 72. 111.
162. Matt. xvi.
26. Rev. iii. 18.
a viii. 11. xx. 15.
xxi. 10. Matt.
xxiii. 44-46.
b Ps. lxxiii. 3.
lxxiii. 25. 26.
Rom. viii. 18.
c 2. iv. 10. Ps.
xxi. 4. lxxi. 9.
1 Tim. iv. 8.
d iv. 6-9. viii. 18
-21. 1 Kings iii.
13. Mark x. 30.
1 Cor. iii. 21-
23. 2 Cor. vi. 10.
e ii. 10. xxii. 18.
Ps. xix. 10. 11.
lxxiii. 3-5. cxii.
1. cxix. 14. 47.
103. 174. Matt.
xi. 28-30.
f Ps. xxv. 10
xxxvii. 11. cxix
165. Is. xxvi. 3
lvii. 19. Luke i.
79. Rom. v. 1.
Phil. iv. 8, 9.
g xi. 30. xiii. 12.
Gen. ii. 9. iii.
22. Rev. xxii. 2.
h viii. 27-29. Ps. civ. 24. cxxxvi. 5. Jer. x. 12. li. 15 John i. 3

13 ¶ Happy is ^y the man *that* find-
eth wisdom, and the man *that* ^{*} get-
teth understanding.

14 For ^z the merchandise of it is bet-
ter than the merchandise of silver, and
the gain thereof than fine gold.

15 She is ^a more precious than ru-
bies: and ^b all the things thou canst
desire are not to be compared unto her.

16 ^c Length of days is in her right
hand; ^d and in her left hand riches and
honour.

17 Her ways are ^e ways of pleasant-
ness, and ^f all her paths are peace.

18 She is ^g a tree of life to them that
lay hold upon her: and happy is *every*
one that retaineth her.

19 The ^h LORD by wisdom hath
founded the earth: by understanding
hath he [†] established the heavens.

† Or, prepared.

needful to every man, and that it is never withheld from any
whom the Lord loves as his chosen and adopted children,
and over whom he rejoices in doing them good; any
more than a wise and affectionate father would permit his
son, in whom he most delighted, to be ruined for want of
fatherly rebukes and corrections.

V. 13-15. True wisdom is requisite in order to act
with becoming submission, and hope in God, under heavy
trials, and in faith and patience to profit by his chastise-
ments; (*Notes*, Jam. i. 2-4. 5-8, v. 5:) and increase of
this wisdom is the effect of corrections thus endured and
improved. In this manner these verses may be connected
with the preceding.—‘Happy, more happy than can be
expressed, is that man who attains to this degree of wis-
dom, ...though it cost him the greatest pains and labours.
...If it were to be bought for money, one would pur-
chase it at any rate; for the profit of it is infinitely to be
preferred before all the advantages, that can be made by
silver and gold: ...nor can our boundless fancy present
any thing to our wishes that is worthy to come in com-
petition with it.’ *Bp. Patrick*. (*Notes*, ii. 1-7. xvi. 16.
xxiii. 23. *Job* xxviii. 12-28. *Ps.* xix. 7-11, v. 10. cxix.
14. *Matt.* xiii. 44-46.)

V. 16, 17. ‘He that seeketh wisdom, that is, suffereth
himself to be governed by the word of God, shall have
all prosperity.’ (*Note*, 2.) That length of days, which
Wisdom holds in her right hand, and offers to her votaries,
as her chief good, no doubt includes “the gift of God
which is eternal life, through Jesus Christ;” while the
riches and honour in her left, comprise all desirable pros-
perity and comfort in this world. The ways also, in which
she requires her children to walk, “are pleasantness
and peace.”—Christ’s “yoke is easy and his burden
light.” (*Note*, *Matt.* xi. 28-30.) “The kingdom of
God is ...righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy
Ghost:” and all the unpleasantness, connected with
true religion, arises from the opposition of depraved nature
and bad habits, with this evil world and Satan, while men

20 By his knowledge ⁱ the depths ⁱ
are broken up, and ^k the clouds drop
down the dew.

21 My son ^l let not them depart
from thine eyes; ^m keep sound wisdom
and discretion:

22 So shall they be ⁿ life unto thy
soul, and ^o grace to thy neck.

23 Then ^p shalt thou walk in thy
way safely, and thy foot shall not stum-
ble.

24 When ^q thou liest down, thou
shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie
down, ^r and thy sleep shall be sweet.

25 ^s Be not afraid of sudden fear,
^t neither of the desolation of the wick-
ed, when it cometh.

26 For the ^u LORD shall be thy con-

i Gen. i. 9. Job
xxxviii. 8-11.
Ps. civ. 8, 9.
k Gen. xxvii. 28
37-39. Job
xxxviii. 26-28.
Ps. lxxv. 9-12.
Jer. xiv. 22.
Joel ii. 23.
l 1-3. Deut. iv.
9. vi. 6-9
Josh. i. 8. John
viii. 31. xv. 6,
7. Heb. ii. 1-3.
1 John ii. 24.
27.
m ii. 7. Deut.
xxxii. 46, 47.
n iv. 22. Is.
xxxviii. 16 John
xii. 49, 50.
o i. 9.
p ii. 8. iv. 12. x.
9. Ps. xxxvii. 28,
24. 31. xci. 11,
12. cxxi. 3. 8.
Zech. x. 12.
q vi. 22. Lev.
xxvi. 6. Ps. iii.
5. iv. 8. cxxi.
4-7. Ez. xxxiv.
15.
r Ps. cxxvii. 2. Jer.
xxxii. 26. Acts
xii. 6. 1 Thes.
iv. 13, 14.
s Job v. 21, 22.
xi. 13-15. Ps.
xxvii. 1, 2. xlv. 1-3. xci. 5. cxii. 7. Is. viii. 12, 13. xli. 10-14. Dan. iii. 17, 18. Matt.
viii. 24-26. xxiv. 6. Mark iv. 40. Luke xxi. 9. John xiv. 1. 1 Pet. iii. 14.
t i. 27.
Ps. lxxiii. 19. Matt. xxiv. 15. Luke xxi. 18-28.
u xiv. 26. Ps. xci. 3, 9, 10.
Hab. iii. 17, 18.

are striving to enter her paths, and to walk in them; and
from the devious steps which even Wisdom’s children too
often make, to their grief and wounding.

V. 18. “A tree of life;” which seems to be a pro-
verbial speech, (used afterward more than once in this
book,) for that which prolongs life, and makes it very
delightful and pleasant, as well as firm and durable.
‘If we understand it of Christ, the Wisdom of God, (as
Origen, St. Ambrose, St. Austin, and others do,) or of his
doctrine, which is the same; it is literally true that he
gives immortality, as “the tree of life” in paradise would
have done.’ *Bp. Patrick*. (*Notes*, xi. 30. xiii. 12. xv. 4.
Gen. ii. 8, 9. iii. 22. 24. *Rev.* ii. 6, 7, v. 7. xxii. 2-5, v. 4.
14.)

V. 19, 20. The wisdom, which God gives to his peo-
ple, is an emanation from his own infinite wisdom, by
which he formed the plan of the whole creation, and of
its several parts, and completed that grand design; and it
must on that account be unspeakably valuable. The whole
however, may be applied to Jesus Christ, the Wisdom of
God, “by whom also he made the worlds.” (*Notes*, viii.
22-31.)—‘Hereby he sheweth, that this wisdom, whereof
he speaketh, is everlasting, because it was before all
creatures, and that all things, even the whole world, were
made by it.’ (*Marg. Ref.* h-k.)

V. 21, 22. (*Note*, i. 9.)—‘They will revive and cheer
thee when all other things fail thee.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—
Sound wisdom. (21) *Note*, ii. 7.

V. 23-25. The composure and serenity, arising from
faith in the promises and providence of God, and the testi-
mony of a good conscience, are here described as the
effects of hearkening to wisdom, in language which agrees
with the general scope of the holy Scriptures in this re-
spect. (*Notes*, vi. 20-23. *Job* v. 18-27. *Ps.* iii. 3-5.
iv. 8. xci. 3-10.) ‘When the Lord destroyeth the wicked;
he will save his, as he did Lot in Sodom.’

V. 26. ‘For *JEHOVAH* shall be present according to
thy confidence, &c.’—‘A firm hope in the Lord shall be

fidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.

27 ¶ * Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is ^y in the power of thine hand to do it.

28 Say not unto thy neighbour, ^z Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee.

29 † Devise ^a not evil against thy neighbour, seeing he dwelleth securely by thee.

30 ^b Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.

31 ^c Envy thou not ^d the oppressor, and ^d choose none of his ways.

32 For ^e the froward is abomination to the LORD: but ^f his secret is with the righteous.

33 The ^g curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked; but ^h he blesseth the habitation of the just.

34 Surely ⁱ he scorneth the scorers; but ^k he giveth grace unto the lowly.

35 The ^l wise shall inherit glory; ^m but shame ^h shall be the promotion of fools.

&c. 2 Sam. vi. 11. Job viii. 6. Ps. i. 3. xci. 10. i ix. 7, 8. 12. xix. 29. xxi. 24. Ps. cxxxviii. 6. k Is. lvii. 15. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 5. 1 iv. 8. 1 Sam. ii. 30. Ps. lxxiii. 24. m xiii. 18. Ps. cxxxii. 18. Is. lxxv. 13—15. Dan. xii. 2, 3. § Heb. exalteth the fools.

xxiii. 17. xxi. 1. 19. 20. Ps. xxxvii. 1. 7—9. lxxxi. 3. Gal. v. 21. t Heb. a man of violence. Ec. v. 8. d i. 15—18. ii. 12—15. xii. 12. xxii. 22—25. vi. 16—19. viii. 13. xi. 20. xvii. 15. Ps. xviii. 26. Luke xvi. 15. f xiv. 10. Ps. xxv. 14. Matt. xi. 25. xiii. 11. John xiv. 21—24. xv. 15. Rev. ix. 17. g xxi. 12. Deut. vii. 26. xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 19, &c. Josh. vi. 18. vii. 13. Zech. v. 3, 4. Mal. ii. 2. h Deut. xxviii. 2. i ix. 7, 8. 12. xix. 29. xxi. 24. 1 iv. 8. 1 Sam. ii. 30. Ps. lxxiii. 24. m xiii. 18. Ps. cxxxii. 18. Is. lxxv. 13—15. Dan. xii. 2, 3.

thy support, even when thou art in a tottering condition: nay when thy skill quite fails thee, and thou knowest not what to do for thy safety; he shall so direct and guide thee, that thou shalt be preserved from falling into the hands of those that lie in wait to destroy thee.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 2 Chr. xx. 12. Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24. cvii. 23—30, vv. 27, 28. 2 Cor. i. 8—11.)

V. 27, 28. (Lev. xix. 13. Deut. xxiv. 14, 15. Note, Ec. ix. 10.) This exhortation exposes the avaricious backwardness of numbers, to discharge their debts, taxes, and dues, even when able; their unwillingness to pay their labourers and servants; and especially their reluctance to part with money in acts of piety and charity. When they know not on what pretence to refuse, they procrastinate; being fondly tenacious of their golden idol, and hoping that they shall be forgotten, that the design will be dropped, or that some other person will bear the expense.—The Septuagint make many interpolations in this book, and here add, 'For thou knowest not what the following day shall bring forth.'

V. 29, 30. Marg. Ref.—Seeing he dwelleth, &c. (29) "And he dwelleth in confidence with thee;" "that is, putteth his trust in thee." The baseness of those, who take occasion from the confidence placed in them, to defraud and injure others, is most emphatically exposed. 'Let not the quietness of any man's temper, much less the confidence he hath of thy honesty and goodness, tempt thee to contrive any mischief to him.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 31. Notes, xxiii. 17, 18. xxiv. 19, 20. Ps. xxxvii. 1, 2. 5—8.

V. 32. Secret.] 'That is, his covenant and fatherly affection, which is hid and secret from the world.' (Note, Ps. xxv. 14.)

V. 33. Marg. Ref. g, h.—Notes, Deut. vii. 25, 26. Josh. vi. 17—19. 26. vii. 21—24. Jer. xxii. 13—19. Hab. ii. 9—11. Zech. v. 1—4.

V. 34. The apostles, James and Peter, have quoted the Septuagint translation of these words; "God resisteth the proud, but giveth his grace unto the humble." (Notes, Jam. iv. 4—6. 1 Pet. v. 5—7.) "Surely with the scorners he will scorn; but on the lowly he will bestow grace."

V. 35. The glory, which the wise inherit, is the same

as believers inherit, according to the New Testament: but everlasting shame and punishment will be the event of the towering and vain expectations, with which the ungodly here deceive themselves. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

A cordial affection for God's commandments, and a conscientious obedience to them, form the best remedy against a treacherous memory in the concerns of religion: and if ten thousand other things were forgotten, to make room for the truths of the Scriptures, we should be great gainers. For, in the way of believing obedience, health and outward peace may commonly be enjoyed; and, if our days be not long on earth, we shall live for ever in heaven.—While we rely on the mercy and truth of our God for salvation, we should sedulously copy them in our own conduct; cultivating a kind and forgiving disposition, and adhering to strict sincerity, veracity, and fidelity, in all our intercourse with mankind; counting these things our peculiar ornament, and seeking to have them engraven on the tables of our hearts. Thus we shall have a well-grounded confidence of our acceptance with God, and shall find favour with all good men, and with all others as far as it is conducive to our profit; and we shall be evidenced to be men of understanding before God and man.—But we can do none of these things, except we "trust in the LORD with all our heart:" we must place our whole dependence on his mercy and grace, his teaching and assistance, his word and providence, for every thing relative to this world and the next. We must not depend on our own sagacity or penetration, our own heart, strength, or resolution: we must not idolize our own schemes, or judge of things by the unaided light of our own reason, but according to the word of God: we must submit our understanding to his teaching, and wait in his way for every promised blessing, regardless of intervening difficulties: and while we thus "acknowledge God in all our ways," he will remove obstructions, prevent mistakes, and direct our paths; but when we prefer our own devices, and grow conceited of our own wisdom, we shall soon be left to prove our folly.—In the fear of the Lord, and in departing from evil, health and prosperity will be real blessings; and if we fail of them, we shall find inward support and consolation.

CHAP. IV.

Solomon shews what good instruction he had received from his parents, concerning the advantages of wisdom, in order to induce obedience, 1—13. He dissuades from the path of the wicked, and contrasts

it with that of the righteous, 14—19. Further admonitions and counsels of Wisdom, 20—27.

HEAR ^a ye children, the instruction of a father, and ^b attend to know understanding.

^a i. 8. vi. 20—23.
Ps. xxxiv. 11.
1 Thes. ii. 11, 12.
^b ii. 1—5. v. 1.
vii. 4. viii. 32—
36. xix. 20. xxii.
17. Heb. ii. 1.

But if the Lord confer on us worldly wealth, or even a small proportion of outward things, we must honour him in the use of it; or it will prove no advantage, but a fatal snare to us: and he cannot be honoured with our substance, be it more or less, if it be extravagantly spent on ourselves in vanity and luxury; or if it be tenaciously hoarded to feed our avarice. Not only justice and temperance must be observed, but piety and charity also: and the more liberally we communicate, in proportion to our ability, the more plentifully we shall reap. For niggardliness is mere narrow policy, like the husbandman being sparing of his seed-corn: but a bountiful and extensive benevolence, a heart as large as the human species, and a hand open to every call of humanity, and every opportunity to promote the cause of godliness, is true wisdom in those who have it in their power. This by no means tends to poverty, but to bring a blessing on a man's estate: "so shall his barns be filled with plenty, and his presses shall burst out with new wine." This every one will know, in proportion as he gives credit to the Lord, and puts out his wealth on the security of his promises.—But should he see good to visit us with adversity and sickness, let us not forget, "that the exhortation speaketh unto us as to children:" these also are pledges of his love, and the appointments of his wisdom for our good; "for whom the LORD loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." We should therefore neither despise his chastening, by disregarding his hand, or by hardening ourselves in sullen apathy and impenitence, as if we scorned to submit; nor should we yield to impatience and despondency, or be weary of his correction: but we ought to humble ourselves under his hand, confess our sins before him, thank him for his paternal discipline, pray that it may be sanctified to us, and look to him for comfort and deliverance. Thus "patience" will "have its perfect work," and our afflictions will tend to make us "partakers of his holiness."

V. 13—35.

If we, at any time or by any labour, become acquainted with wisdom, we shall have great cause for gratitude; and may consider ourselves peculiarly happy. For the merchandise of it is far more lucrative to ourselves, and capable of far greater improvement for the good of others, than that which is carried on for the gain of silver and gold: nor are any precious jewels, or conceivable treasures, worthy to be compared to it; whether the comfort and usefulness of this present time, or the felicity of a future life be considered. For this wisdom is no other than Jesus Christ and his salvation, sought and obtained by faith and prayer; by whose unsearchable riches the believer's debt and ransom are paid, his wants supplied, his soul enriched with knowledge and holiness, and his eternal inheritance purchased: in Christ he has "Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption." And his left hand, as it were, confers temporal riches and honour, if con-

ducive to our good; for they are absolutely at his disposal. Observing his directions, we walk in the pleasant paths of communion with God and holy obedience, with a peaceful conscience, a lively hope, and a joy unspeakable and full of glory: and were it not for our unbelief and inattention, we should find all our ways pleasantness and our paths peace; for his are so, but we too often step aside from them, to our own detriment and grief. The Lord Jesus is indeed "the Tree of Life," of which the believer lays hold and keeps hold by faith and love; for he, by whom the Father made the world, and who "by himself purged our sins," can neither want power, nor knowledge, nor love, to guide and support our steps through life, to receive our souls at death, and to raise our bodies from the grave; and his eternal truth is pledged, to do all this for his people. Let us then not suffer his words to depart from before our eyes, that so we may keep sound wisdom and discretion; such as will be life to our souls, and our durable honour and ornament. Then we shall walk in his ways safely and not stumble: we shall be composed in those times of consternation, when sudden fear and destruction overtake the wicked: and when we resign our breath, to be laid in the silent grave, we shall sweetly sleep in Jesus, till the resurrection, when we shall awake to judgment; and shall even then be free from fear; for the "LORD," through all these scenes, "will be our Confidence, and keep our feet from being taken."—In the mean time let us carefully observe his precepts and copy his example: let us do justice, love mercy, beware of covetousness, and be ready for every good work; rendering to all their dues, and giving or lending, as we have opportunity and ability, without grudging, and with alacrity; devising no evil, being harmless and blameless, avoiding needless contention, nay bearing every tolerable injury, rather than seek even legal redress. Above all, we should be careful not to envy the prosperous oppressors, who grow rich by the sweat, and toil, and blood of men much better than themselves. Far be it from any disciple of Christ to "choose any of their ways;" for they are an abomination unto the Lord: but his secret consolations remain with the righteous, and his blessing resides in their lowly cottages; while his curse rests upon the lordly palaces of the wicked. These truths the covetous and luxurious will contemn, and the infidel will ridicule: but the Lord will scorn such scorers, and everlasting contempt shall be their final promotion: while his favour shall be shewn, and his grace communicated, to the humble believer, who alone is truly wise, and who shall at length inherit everlasting glory.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1. 'The dulness, sluggishness, and forgetfulness of mankind, in their principal concerns, are so notorious, that we need not wonder the wise man repeats the very same things, and quickens our attention to them, in the beginning of this chapter; ... because all

c vii. 6—9. xxii. 20,
21. Deut. xxxii.
2. Job xxxiii. 3.
Ps. xlix. 1—3.
John vii. 16, 17.
1 Tim. iv. 6.
Tit. i. 9.

d 1 Chr. xxviii. 9.
2 Chr. vii. 19.
Ps. lxxxix. 30—
32.

e 2 Sam. xii. 24.
25. 1 Kings i. 13
—17. 1 Chr. iii.
5. xxii. 5. xxix.
1.

f xxii. 6. Gen.
xxviii. 19. 1 Chr.
xxii. 11—16.
xxviii. 9. Eph.
vi. 4. 2 Tim. i.
5. iii. 15.

g See on iii. 1.—
Deut. iv. 9. vi.
6. Ps. cxix. 11.
h vii. 2. Lev. xviii.
3—5. Is. lv. 3.
John xii. 50.
Heb. v. 9.

i i. 22, 23. ii. 2—
4. iii. 13—18.
vii. 5. xvii. 16.
xxiii. 1. xix. 8.
xxiii. 23. Jam.
i. 5.

k 2 Chr. xxxiv. 2.
Job xxiii. 11.
Ps. xlix. 18.
cxix. 51. 157.

l 21, 22. ii. 10—12. Eph. iii. 17. 2 Thes. ii. 10.
m Ec. vii.
12. ix. 16—18. Matt. xiii. 44—46. Luke x. 42. Phil. iii. 8.
n xvi. 16. xxi. 6.
Ps. xlix. 16—20. Ec. ii. 4—9. iv. 8. Mark viii. 36, 37. Luke xii. 20.
o Ps. cxix.
104.

p iii. 35. xxii. 4. 1 Sam. ii. 30. 1 Kings iii. 5—18. Dan. xii. 3.

2 For I give you ^c good doctrine: ^d forsake ye not my law.

3 For ^e I was my father's son, tender and only *beloved* in the sight of my mother.

4 He ^f taught me also, and said unto me, ^g Let thine heart retain my words: ^h keep my commandments, and live.

5 ⁱ Get wisdom, get understanding: forget *it* not; ^k neither decline from the words of my mouth.

6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: ^l love her, and she shall keep thee.

7 ^m Wisdom is the principal thing: *therefore* get wisdom; and ⁿ with all thy getting ^o get understanding.

8 Exalt her, ^p and she shall promote

thee: she shall bring thee to honour, ^q when thou dost embrace her.

9 She shall ^r give to thine head an ornament of grace: ^s a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee.

10 Hear, O my son, and ^t receive my sayings; ^u and the years of thy life shall be many.

11 I have ^v taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have ^w led thee in right paths.

12 When ^x thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest ^y thou shalt not stumble.

13 ^z Take fast hold of instruction: ^a let *her* not go: keep her; for ^b she is thy life.

14 ¶ Enter ^c not into the path of

1. 9. iii. 22
1 Tim. ii. 9, 10
1 Pet. iii. 4.
* Or, *she shall compass thee with a crown of glory.* xvi. 31.
Is. xxviii. 5.
Heb. ii. 7—9.
1 Pet. v. 4. Rev. ii. 21.
r viii. 10. xix. 20.
Job xxii. 22.
Jer. ix. 20. John iii. 32, 33.
1 Thes. ii. 13.
1 Tim. i. 15.
s iii. 2. 16. Deut. v. 16. vi. 2.
t 4. Deut. iv. 5.
1 Sam. xii. 24.
Ec. xii. 9.
u viii. 6. 9. 20. Ps. xxiii. 8. xxv. 4.
5. Acts xiii. 10.
x vi. 22. 2 Sam. xxii. 37. Job xviii. 7, 8.
y 19. iii. 23. Ps. xci. 11, 12. cxix. 165. Jer. xxxi. 9. John xi. 9.
10. Rom. ix. 32, 33. 1 Pet. ii. 8.
1 John ii. 10, 11.
z iii. 18. xxiii. 23.
Acts ii. 42. xi. 23. 1 Thes. v. 27—29. John iv. 39—42.
a Gen. xxxii. 26. Cant. iii. 4. Luke xxiv. 27—29. John iv. 39—42.
b iii. 22. Deut. xxxii. 47. Ec. vii. 12. John vi. 68
c i. 10. 15. ii. 11, 12. ix. 6. xiii. 20. Ps. i. l. xxvi. 4, 5. 1 Cor. xv. 33.

his pains he knew would be lost, without serious consideration of what he had said: and *the very first step to wisdom is to have a mind to be wise.* ... Listen then all ye that are desirous to learn, unto the instructions, which, out of a paternal affection, I bring from God unto you.' Bp. Patrick.—'He speaketh this in the person of a preacher and minister, which is as a father unto the people.'—Solomon had one son, and two daughters of whom we read; (1 Kings iv. 11. 15;) and perhaps he meant to address himself to them: but the Holy Spirit directed him to such instructions, as would be generally useful; and doubtless many thousands have derived more benefit from them, than his own son did.

V. 2. 'I teach you the most excellent things, and absolutely necessary to your happiness; therefore, ... strictly observe my precepts, as the law and rule of your life.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 3. Solomon was "beloved by the Lord," and appointed to the kingdom: no doubt he was also regarded by his father with peculiar affection, and probably received a more careful education than David's other sons had, to which the misconduct of Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah might conduce. Bathsheba had more children by David; but Solomon, being (as Isaac) a child of promise, was peculiarly dear to her likewise. (Note, 1 Chr. iii. 1—9.)

V. 4. (Marg. Ref.—Note, iii. 1.) 'To make his exhortations more acceptable, he acquaints the reader, with the lessons which his own father and mother were wont to teach him; and the great benefit he had received by them.' Bp. Patrick.—Hence we may learn 'the care that parents ought to take, to instruct their children diligently; and the greater they are (suppose princes), the more accurate their education ought to be, as Solomon's was.' Ibid.—From this verse to the end of the thirteenth, may be considered as David's exhortation to Solomon.

V. 5, 6. (Marg. Ref. i—l.—Notes, xvi. 16. xvii. 16. xix. 8. xxiii. 23. 1 Kings iii. 5—14.)—'Treasure up wisdom.

... Quit all things in this world, rather than forsake the precepts of wisdom: stick to them, and they will preserve thee from innumerable mischiefs: love them sincerely, and they will be a stronger guard than money can procure thee.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 7. 'He sheweth, that we must first begin at God's word, if so be we will that other things prosper with us; contrary to the judgment of the world, which make it their last study, or else care not for it at all.' (Note, Matt. vi. 33, 34, v. 33.)

V. 8—10. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, i. 9. iii. 13—17. 35.) 'Thou canst not speak too highly of this wisdom, as thou shalt find by experience. ... Whatsoever else thou hast to commend thee, and gain thee honour, this shall add unto it. ... The fairest ornaments, or the most beautiful crown that can be set on thy head, shall receive lustre from hence; and be settled there the more securely.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 11, 12. 'Solomon declareth what care his father had to bring him up in the true fear of God: for this was David's protestation.' (Notes, 3, 4.)—'I have already taught thee, and will still inform thee, in the wisest course unto it;' (a long and happy life;) 'not in those crooked paths of fraud and falseness ... which many take; but in the directed paths of integrity and truth. ... If thy actions and designs have no other rule, thou shalt be at ease, and free from those straits and difficulties, which others meet withal: and in case thy business shall require haste, this will be the safest, as well as the most inoffensive, (if not the shortest,) way to accomplish thy ends.' Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 18, 19. iii. 23—25. vi. 20—25. 1 John ii. 7—11.)

V. 13. 'Take such fast hold of it, as never, for want of care and pains, to let it slip out of thy mind: keep it as a most precious treasure, for all thy happiness depends upon it.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, viii. 3, 4. xxiii. 23. Acts ii. 42, 43. xi. 23, 24.)

V. 14, 15. Solomon, or rather heavenly Wisdom b

^d v. 8. vi. 5. Ex. xxxiii. 7. Job xi. 14. xxii. 23. Is. xxxiii. 15. Eph. v. 11. 1 Thes. v. 22.

the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.

^c i. 16. Ps. xxxvi. 4. Is. lviii. 20. Mic. ii. 1. Luke xxii. 66. John xviii. 28. 2 Pet. ii. 14.

15 ^d Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

^f ix. 17. xx. 17. Job xxiv. 5, 6. Ps. xiv. 4. Jer. v. 26—28. Ez. xxii. 25—29. Am. vii. 4—6. Mic. iii. 5. vi. 12. Zeph. iii. 3. Matt. xxiii. 14. Jam. v. 4, 5.

16 For ^e they sleep not, except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause *some* to fall.

^g 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. Job xi. 17. xxiii. 19. Hos. vi. 3. Zech. xiv. 6, 7. Matt. v. 14. 16. John viii. 12. 2 Cor. iii. 18. Phil. ii. 15. 2 Pet. i. 19. iii. 18. Rev. xxi. 23. xxii. 5.

17 For ^f they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.

^h 1 Sam. ii. 9. Job v. 14. xii. 25. xviii. 5, 6. 18. Is. lix. 9, 10. Jer. xlii. 16. xxiii. 12. Matt. vii. 23. xv. 14. John xii. 35. 1 John ii. 11.

18 But ^g the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

19 The ^h way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.

him, seems here to resume the discourse, by most earnestly dissuading from every degree of intimacy with wicked men, and from whatever might prove an inlet or temptation to it. The varied and energetick expressions, used to warn his hearers or readers against the company of wicked men, shew his view of the immense importance of shunning with dread and abhorrence all such society. (Notes, xiii. 20. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18. Eph. v. 8—14.)

V. 16, 17. ‘To do evil is more ... natural to the wicked, than to sleep, eat, or drink.’—Having formed their iniquitous plans, they are restless till they have accomplished them: they spend those hours in perpetrating crimes, which others give to repose; and they make their violence and deceit bear the expenses of their voluptuousness. (Notes, i. 10—19.)

V. 18, 19. The Septuagint version of the first of these verses, is very expressive:—‘The ways of the righteous shine like the light: they go on and shine, until the day be perfected.’—‘The path of the just,’ or righteous, is that way in which a believer walks, from the time when he begins to seek the Lord, to the close of his days. A glimmering of knowledge at first pervades the darkness of his mind, as to spiritual things; and some feeble desires after God and holiness arise in his heart: thus the day dawns. But frequently these feeble beginnings cannot be distinguished from many specious appearances, which afterwards vanish: when however, they arise from divine life communicated to the soul, the glimmering light will increase. Advancing knowledge gradually dispels ignorance and error; peace and comfort are obtained, and established on a firm base; and holy affections and dispositions ripen into fruits and habits. Thus this light shines progressively, not wasting as that of a taper, or declining as that of the setting sun; but increasing as that of the morning, until perfected in the knowledge, holiness, and felicity of heaven. This light comes from Christ at the first, and is augmented, and will be perfected, by the knowledge of him: and the way in which he directs the soul, and on which it shines continually, is that of humble faith and obedient love. But the way of the wicked, though they amuse themselves with following many glimmering meteors, is as thick dark-

20 My son, ⁱ attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

21 Let them not ^k depart from thine eyes; keep them ^l in the midst of thine heart.

22 For they *are* ^m life unto those that find them, and ⁿ health to all their flesh.

23 ⁿ Keep thy heart ^o with all diligence; ^p for out of it *are* the issues of life.

24 ^p Put away from thee ^q a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.

25 Let ^q thine eyes look right on, and let thine eye-lids look straight before thee.

q xxiii. 5. 33. Job xxxi. 1. Ps. cxix. 37. Matt. vi. 22.

ness; a compound of ignorance, error, sin, and misery, which continually increases, until at length it terminates in “the blackness of darkness for ever;” into which they stumble unawares, and they know not how. (Marg. Ref. —Notes, Is. xlii. 13—17, v. 16. Hos. vi. 1—3. John vii. 14—17, v. 17. viii. 12. xii. 34—36. 44—50, v. 46. 1 John ii. 7—11.)

V. 20, 21. (Notes, 1, 2. 8—12.) ‘Read them over and over again, and keep them perpetually in mind: or rather preserve them studiously, and lay them up as a most precious treasure, in the closest affections of thy heart.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 22. (Notes, iii. 7, 8.) Under the general terms of “life and health,” all blessings, providential and spiritual, temporal and eternal, as promised to the righteous in the word of God, are comprised.

V. 23. As the heart in the body seems the centre and fountain of life, because the blood thence circulates into every part, conveying with it health or disease; so are the affections to a man’s whole conduct. If the heart, in this sense, be purified by faith and grace, and be properly kept, the tenour of the thoughts, words, and actions will be pure, for they flow from it: if it be the residence of pride, impiety, unbelief, avarice, malice, or lust, the whole conduct will be tainted with these vices: if they find admission, or prevail for a season, they will proportionably infect the tempers, conduct, and discourse, and the end or event of life will be accordingly. Therefore this citadel should above all things be garrisoned, that it may not be seized by any of its numerous, subtle, and watchful assailants: this spring should be watched that it may not be poisoned: for as the heart is, so will the life be; if not openly, yet in the sight of God, before whom thoughts, desires, and dispositions decide a man’s character. (Notes, Ps. cxix. 113. Matt. xv. 15—20.) ‘For as the heart is either pure or corrupt, so is the whole course of man’s life.’ “Keep thy heart above all keeping.” Marg.

V. 24, 25. Next to the heart, the tongue, that unruly member, must be bridled and kept most diligently: and a strong guard must be placed upon the eyes, that they may be employed in looking well to the path of duty, and not

r v. 6. Ps. cxix.
59. Ez. xviii. 28.
Hag. i. 5, 7.
Eph. v. 15, 17.
* Or, all thy ways shall be ordered aright. Ps. xxxvii. 23. xl. 2. 1 Thes. iii. 13. 2 Thes. iii. 3. 1 Pet. v. 10.

26 * Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established.

in gazing at such objects as excite evil desires in the heart. (Notes, vi. 12—19. Gen. iii. 6. Josh. vii. 21. Job xxxi. 1—4. Ps. cxix. 37. Jam. i. 26. iii. 3—6.)

V. 26. The apostle employs nearly the words of the Septuagint translation of the first clause of this verse; "And make straight paths for your feet." Heb. xii. 13.—The marginal reading of the latter clause seems preferable.—"By a proper regard to the path of thy feet, all thy ways shall be ordered aright." (Note, Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24.)

V. 27. "Do not suffer thyself to be drawn aside, either 'to superstition on the one hand, or to contempt or neglect of religion on the other: let neither love of friends, nor hatred of enemies; neither hope of pleasure or gain, nor fear of pain and damage; neither prosperous nor cross events, ever move thee to turn into either extremes from the rule of virtue; but whatsoever inclination thou findest that way, do not proceed to commit the least sin against God, or against thy neighbour.' Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

Good instructions, given with paternal authority and affection, have a peculiar claim to the obedient attention of young persons; and will be thus received by every one, who applies his mind to the practical knowledge of divine truth: so that those who refuse such instructions and injunctions will be left without excuse. How aggravated then is the guilt of those, who reject the doctrine and forsake the law of the God of heaven, while he condescends to speak to them with the tender compassion of a Father!—We ought to shew our love to our children, by instructing them diligently in true wisdom: and that preference, which is shewn to such as are most teachable, is no sinful partiality. A special honour is in scripture given to the pious education of children, as the means by which the Lord gives wisdom and grace: and it behoves those who have received this benefit, to requite their parents for this unspeakable obligation, by handing down their instructions, in their name, and with respect to their memories, to their children also; for it was the intention of such parents, that their remote posterity should thus derive the advantage. (Note, Ps. lxxviii. 3—8.)—Pious men, in every age of the world, and of every rank in society, agree, that true wisdom consists in obedience to God, and is inseparably connected with happiness: and the well-beloved Son of the Father says to us, "Let thy heart retain my words, keep my commandments and live." (Marg. Ref. h.) He is the Wisdom of God: the blessings of his salvation we should by every means secure, whatever we go without or lose for his sake; his words we should remember and not decline from them, whatever we forget, or renounce, or leave undone. This "wisdom is the principal thing," the "pearl of great price," the sinner's "one thing needful:" and if we sell all to purchase it, forsake all to secure it, count all but loss for the excellency of it, and lay down our lives in adhering to it, our gain will be sure and infinite. For, while we love and honour the Redeemer, he will preserve us from every danger, keep our souls unto eternal life,

27 * Turn not to the right hand, nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

Deut. v. 32. xii. 32. xxviii. 14. Josh. i. 7. t xvi. 17. Is. i. 16. Rom. xii. 9.

give us that honour which cometh from God, adorn us with the ornament and beauties of holiness, and deliver to us "a crown of glory that fadeth not away." But how poor, and contemptible, and wretched will they be, who, "with all their getting" of wealth, of learning, of reputation, of preferment, or of dominion, die without getting understanding, "without Christ, without hope, and without God!" Let us then receive the sayings of him who "hath the words of eternal life;" and we shall daily perceive and experience, that "he hath taught us in the way of wisdom, and led us in right paths." Thus we shall avoid the intricacies and perplexities, in which crafty men are entangled: our path will be plain before us, and we shall proceed with alacrity, confidence, and safety; not straitened in our steps, nor stumbling over the obstructions, which are laid in the paths of the heedless and inattentive; and which can only be avoided by taking fast hold of Instruction, resolved not to let her go, but to keep her, as our life.

V. 14—27.

The counsels of heavenly wisdom continually warn us, to keep at a distance from the society and infectious example of wicked men; and to avoid their path, "passing by it, turning from it, and passing away," being afraid of coming withing the reach of their fascinations.—There are great numbers in every age, who are restless in pursuit of the pleasures and advantages of sin, or in indulging their malice and revenge; who are miserable when they cannot be mischievous to their utmost wish; who riot in excess upon the gains of their fraud, rapine, and oppression, regardless of the groans and tears extorted by their violence, and to support their extravagance and magnificence. This is one way of the wicked, and it is as increasing darkness; and, if persisted in, will speedily and unexpectedly plunge them into final misery and despair. "But the path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Their comforts are continually increasing, their characters perfecting, their sorrows expiring: and the hour of death will only occasion a short interruption of their increasing light, which will suddenly break forth in perfect and eternal day. Let us then be observant of our great Teacher, and keep our eye continually upon his directions, and hide them in our inmost souls, "for they are life unto those that find them," and a medicine for all our maladies. But, would we make progress in our heavenly path, we must "keep our hearts with all diligence," and more sedulously than we do our money, our estates, our habitations, or even our characters; "exercising ourselves to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man." With all vigilance and earnestness, and with increasing prayer, we should labour that no evil desire may prevail or abide in our hearts: avoiding every thing which poisons this fountain, by exciting pride, envy, malice, avarice, or sensual lusts; crushing the first emotions of such evils, as we would the brood of a scorpion; guarding the avenues of our senses, imagination, and memory; storing up pious instructions, and using every means to render our minds a

CHAP. V.

Exhortations to study wisdom, 1, 2. The seductions of harlots, and the complicated mischiefs of their society, 3—14. A figurative commendation of marriage; and of affection to a man's wife and children, 15—19. A further dissuasive from whoredom; urging the Lord's continual presence, and the miserable end of wicked men, 20—23.

MY son, ^a attend unto my wisdom, ^b and bow thine ear to my understanding:

2 That thou mayest regard discretion, and *that* ^c thy lips may keep knowledge.

3 For ^d the lips of a strange woman drop *us* an honey-comb, and her ^e mouth is ^f smoother than oil:

4 But ^g her end is bitter as worm-wood, ^h sharp as a two-edged sword.

5 Her feet go ⁱ down to death; her steps take hold on hell.

6 Lest thou shouldst ^k ponder ^l the

path of life, ^m her ways are moveable, ⁿ that thou canst not know *them*.

7 ^m Hear me now therefore, O ye children, ⁿ and depart not from the words of my mouth.

8 Remove ^o thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house:

9 Lest ^p thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel:

10 Lest ^q strangers be filled with thy ^r wealth; and thy labours *be* in the house of a stranger;

11 And ^s thou mourn at the last, ^t when thy flesh and thy body are consumed;

12 And say, ^u How have I hated instruction, ^v and my heart despised reproof!

13 And ^x have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!

^a ii. 1. iv. 1. 20. Matt. xiii. 9. Mark iv. 23. Rev. ii. 7. 11. 17. 29. iii. 6. 13. 22.
^b xxii. 17. Jam. i. 19.
^c x. 21. xv. 2. 7. xvi. 23. xx. 15. Ps. xlv. 2. lxxi. 15. cxix. 13. Cant. iv. 11. Mal. ii. 6, 7.
^d ii. 16. vi. 24. vii. 21. Rev. xvii. 2—6.
^e Heb. palate.
^f Ps. lv. 21.
^g vi. 24—35. vii. 22, 23. ix. 18. xxiii. 27, 28. Ec. vii. 26. Heb. xii. 15, 16.
^h Judg. xvi. 4—6. 15—21.
ⁱ ii. 18, 19. vii. 27. i. iv. 26. Ps. cxix. 59.
^k xi. 19. Ps. xvi. 11.

^l vi. 12, 13. vii. 10—21. 2 Thes. ii. 9, 10.
^m iv. 1. viii. 32—36. xxii. 17—21. Heb. xii. 25.
ⁿ iii. 21. iv. 21.
^o iv. 15. vi. 27, 28. Matt. vi. 13. Eph. v. 11.
^p vi. 29—35. Gen. xxxviii. 23—26. Judg. xvi. 19—21. Neh. xiii. 26. Hos. iv. 13, 14.
^q vi. 35. Hos. vii. 9. Luke xv. 30.
^r Heb. strength. xxxi. 3.
^s vii. 23. Deut. xxxii. 29. Jer. v. 31. Rom. vi. 21. Rev. xxi. 8. xxii. 15.
^t Num. v. 27. 1 Cor. v. 4, 5. vi. 18.
^u i. 7. 22. 29, 30. xv. 5. Ps. i. 17. lxiii. 22. John iii. 19, 20.
^v i. 25. xii. 1. xiii. 18. Gen. xix. 9. Ex. ii. 13, 14. 2 Chr. xxiv. 20—22. xxv. 16. xxxiii. 10, 11. xxxvi. 16, 17. Jer. xlv. 4, 5. Zech. i. 4—6.
^x Luke xv. 18. 1 Thes. iv. 8. v. 12, 13. Heb. xiii. 7.

treasure of holy thoughts and affections, and to increase in them grateful love, reverential fear, hatred of sin, and benevolence in all its delightful exercises; that from within, these holy streams may issue forth, and fructify our whole conduct and conversation. Above all, we should seek from the Lord Jesus, that living Water, that sanctifying Spirit, which is in the hearts of believers “a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” Thus we shall be enabled to put away from us a froward mouth and perverse lips: our eyes will be turned away from beholding vanity, and fixed upon our path; looking straight before us, that we may see and shun the snares and devious tracks, into which others are beguiled: we shall ponder the path of our feet, that we may take no false steps, but that all our ways may be established in consistency and propriety; turning neither to the right hand nor to the left; avoiding all extremes; keeping the middle path; removing our feet from every evil thing; walking by the rule of God's word, and observing the cautions, and treading in the steps, of our Lord and Master. In this view, what a beautiful, excellent, and happy thing is true Christianity! But alas! how far do we come short in every particular! Lord, forgive the past, and enable us to follow thee more closely for the time to come.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1, 2. *Marg. Ref.*—Notes, ii. 1—5. iii. 1. iv. 1, 2.
V. 3. ‘By oil and honey he meaneth flattering and crafty enticements.’ (Note, ii. 16.)
V. 4—6. ‘The beginning of this love is not so sweet, as the conclusion is bitter: ... after a short pleasure follows long pain, by the impairing men's health, strength, estates, and credit, which they cannot reflect upon without trouble and vexation, and, (if she do not quite destroy their reason,) be filled with remorse of con-

science and anguish of spirit: for like a sword that cuts on both sides, she wounds both soul and body; in short, leads those that follow her, to an untimely, shameful, and miserable end: to have never so little to do with her is to approach to destruction, not only here but in another world. For though thou mayest think to make a retreat in time, thou wilt be deceived, she having more ways than thou canst ever know, (winding and turning herself into a thousand shapes,) to keep thee from so much as deliberating about thy return to a virtuous course of life.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (Notes, ii. 18, 19. xxiii. 27, 28.)
V. 8. ‘Wholly shun all familiarity with her; ... avoid her as thou wouldest the plague.’ *Bp. Patrick.*
V. 9. *To the cruel.*] This may refer either to the harlot herself, who would readily concur in the plunder or murder of her paramour; or to some of those wicked men connected with her, who waited the opportunity of robbing or assassinating such as she took in her net; or to a husband, whom jealousy rendered merciless to the man, who had thus injured him. (Notes, vi. 27—35.) ‘She will have no pity on thee; as is read of Samson, and the prodigal son.’ (Notes and *P. O. Judg.* xvi.)
V. 10—13. (Note 4—6.) ‘Which’ (vice) ‘wastes first the strength and vigour of thy body, and then thy money and estate upon a strange family, ... whose house and table are furnished with the fruit of thy care and labours. And when things are come to this pass, that thy credit, thy friends, thy precious time, thy health, thy estate, and thy pleasure too, are all gone, and nothing left but an heavy heart, and skin and bone; then thou begin unprofitably to groan and lament, nay perhaps to roar out of thy grief in a most deplorable manner; saying, how stupidly foolish have I been in not considering all this sooner! how senselessly bent on my own ruin! I am amazed to think how I hated the cautions that were given me; ... and inwardly despised ... the just reproofs I had afterward

y xiii. 20. Num.
xxv. 1—6. Hos.
iv. 11—14. 1 Cor.
x. 6—8. 2 Pet.
ii. 10—18. Jude
7—13.

z 18, 19. 1 Cor. vii.
2—5. Heb. xiii.
4.

a Deut. xxxiii. 28.
Ps. lxxviii. 26. Is.
xlviii. 1.
b Gen. xxiv. 60.
Judg. xii. 9. Ps.
cxxxvii. 3. cxxxviii.
3.

c Ec. ix. 9. Mal. c
ii. 14, 15.

d Cant. ii. 9. iv. 5.
vii. 3. viii. 14.

e Heb. water
thee. 15.

14 I was ^r almost in all evil, in the midst of the congregation and assembly.

15 ¶ Drink ^r waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well.

16 Let ^a thy fountains be ^b dispersed abroad, and rivers of waters in the streets.

17 Let them be only thine own, and not strangers with thee.

18 Let thy fountain be blessed; and rejoice with the wife of thy youth.

19 Let her be ^d as the loving hind and pleasant roe: let her breasts ^e sa-

tisfy thee at all times; and ^t be thou ravished always with her love.

20 And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished ^e with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger?

21 For ^r the ways of man *are* before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.

22 ^s His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be ^h holden with the cords of his ^t sins.

23 He ⁱ shall die without instruction: and ^k in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.

xiii. 4. i x. 21. xiv. 32. Job iv. 21. xxxvi. 12.
2 Pet. ii. 15—22.

† Heb. *err thou*
always in her
love. 2 Sam. xii
4.

e ii. 16—19. vi
24. vii. 5. xxii. 14.
xxiii. 27. 28. 33
1 Kings xi. 1.

f xv. 3. 2 Chr
xvi. 9. Job xxxi.
4. xxxiv. 21. Ps.
xi. 4. xvii. 3.

g Jer. xvii. 10
xxiii. 24. xxxii.
19. Hos. vii. 2
Heb. iv. 13. Rev.
ii. 18. 23.

h i. 18. 31. 32. xi
3. 5. Ps. vii. 15.
16. ix. 15. 16.
Jer. ii. 19. Hos.
iv. 11—14. Gal.
vi. 7. 8.

i Ec. vii. 26.
† Heb. *sm.* 1 Cor.
v. 9, 10. Gal. v.
19—21. Eph. v.
5. 6. Heb.

k xiv. 14. Ps. lxxxii. 12.

‘for going to her. I wanted no good instructions of my ‘parents, tutors, friends, and God’s ministers; who informed me of the danger, and taught me how to escape ‘it: but alas! I was so sottish as not to obey them; so ‘contumacious that I did not so much as consider what ‘they said unto me.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (i. 7. 25. 30, 31. *Note*, ix. 7—9.)

V. 14. *In the midst, &c.*] This expression may either refer to the society, or assembly of wicked people, where every species of abomination is shamelessly perpetrated; or it may mean, ‘in the face of mankind, in the most open manner;’ or, as some think, that even in the midst of the congregation assembled for the worship of God, the man’s heart and imagination were employed about almost all kinds of wickedness.—If men are, as most persons think, almost *exclusively* the seducers, it is wonderful that Solomon should speak of women as the chief tempters to these vices, and bestow so much pains to put men upon their guard against their enticements, saying so very little on the counterpart of the subject. And we should remember, that this is not the wisdom of Solomon only, but the wisdom of God also. Doubtless external alterations in society may effect considerable changes: the seduction of females is in these times often attended with peculiar aggravations; and the abandoned of both sexes are reciprocally the tempters of the more virtuous. Yet upon examination it must appear, that bad women multiply the seduction (if that term may be used,) of heedless youths, far more rapidly than bad men seduce modest women. A few of them comparatively suffice to corrupt whole cities: and it might perhaps be ascertained by facts, that some insinuating prostitutes have initiated more young men into these destructive ways, in the course of a year or two, than the most abandoned rakes have debauched virgins during their whole lives. So that, though these latter should be treated with marked severity; yet the grand effort of those in publick stations, who would effectually promote reformation, should be directed to the restraining, or at least driving out of sight, those wretched females, who are the pestilence or nuisance of society, and equally the objects of compassion and of abhorrence. (*Note* and *P. O.* vii. 6—27.)

V. 15—19. Some interpret these verses as an exhortation to honest industry, contentment, and liberality:

but it seems far more natural to suppose that the inspired instructor is prosecuting his subject, and, in this figurative language, recommending marriage to those young persons who were tempted to the crimes before-mentioned.—‘He sheweth that God blesseth marriage, and ‘curseth whoredom.’—‘Happy shalt thou every way be in ‘such a wife; whom I advise thee to take in thy youth.’ *Bp. Patrick.* Instead of drinking, as it were, the muddy and poisonous water from the common sewer; let every man have a well or a cistern of his own, filled with pure and wholesome water: considering the offspring of his virtuous union, which he will confidently regard, and without shame acknowledge, as his own, to be so many fountains and rivulets, by which other families, so to speak, may be watered and replenished, and his name and posterity honourably perpetuated; and not like the dubious, spurious, and disgraceful offspring of illicit intercourses.—The inspired writer proceeds with his advice, by exhorting a man, to rest contented with the wife he has taken; to bless God for her, and count himself happy in her, and in an honourable offspring, and to pray for a blessing upon them; to be cheerful in the company of his wife, who is like the loving hind, or the pleasant, harmless roe, and does not at all resemble the crafty, rapacious, and licentious harlot; cherishing her with endeared and increasing affection, and never giving the least liberty to his passions but in her company. (*Notes*, 1 Cor. vii. 1—9. Heb. xiii. 4.)—It is observable that Solomon, though he had had so many wives, gives no intimation of polygamy, or encouragement to it: whence we may infer, that he wrote these cautions, after he was made sensible of his own madness and folly; and knew that violating the original law of marriage tended to inflame the licentious passions, rather than to allay them. (*Notes*, Ec. vii. 23—28. *P. O.* 23—29. *Note*, ix. 7—9.)

V. 20—23. *Notes*, 3—14. ii. 16—19. vi. 23—25.—*A stranger* (20) נָכָר; *alienigena*, *separatus a nostra religione*, *alienus*. Robertson. Such were the wives and concubines, which Solomon had loved and multiplied excessively, and with the most pernicious effects: (*Note*, 1 Kings xi. 1—8 :) so that he here warns his son, or his reader, and dissuades him most pathetically, against in a single instance imitating his example.—*He pondereth, &c.* (21) *Or weigheth.* (*Notes*, 1 Sam. ii. 3. Is. xxvi. 7. Dan. v. 25—28 v. 27. *P. O.* 18—31.)

CHAP. VI.

Cautions against suretiship, and counsels to those who have rashly engaged in it, 1—5. The slothful sent to the ant for instruction, and shewn how idleness tends to penury, 6—11. Some artful practices

of wicked men exposed, and their ruin denounced, 12—15. Seven things which the Lord hates, 16—19. Exhortations to obey parents, and to walk in God's commandments, 20—23. Dissuasives from fornication and adultery; and the fatal consequences of the latter especially stated, 24—35.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

If we bow an obedient ear to wisdom, we shall both regard discretion in our own conduct, and our lips will keep knowledge for the use of others also: and we always need her salutary cautions, but especially in youth; for innumerable snares and temptations beset our path. But there is no one, which has proved more fatal, or to greater numbers, than the blandishments of strange women. Nay, this has generally been Satan's method of drawing men off from the worship of God, into idolatry, or divers forms of false religion, which are spiritual whoredom and adultery. The soothing language of these fascinating tempters, blended with flatteries, professions of love, and artful persuasions, are as pleasing to the carnal heart, as honey from the comb to the palate; and they are smooth and insinuating as oil. But the consequences of yielding to their enticements prove bitter as wormwood, poisonous as hemlock, and sharp as a two-edged sword; nay, the harlot's "feet go down to death, her steps take hold on hell." And should a man, who has got entangled in this snare, seem disposed to consider his ways, to return to virtue, or to enquire after the path of life; his artful deceiver can employ a thousand wiles to withdraw him from his purpose. She can change her looks, her language, or demeanor, at pleasure, and assume innumerable forms of falsehood: she can affect grief, despair, affection, resentment, jealousy, contempt, aversion, as may best suit the present purpose; and by reproaches, caresses, complaints, menaces, tears, and expostulations, she can wind herself into every form, discover every avenue to the heart, work upon every weakness and passion, and avail herself of every unguarded moment, to resume her influence and rivet her chains: so that there is no knowing all her moveable ways, and scarcely any escaping from the fatal snare. Safety can therefore only be found by keeping at a distance, removing "the path far from her, and not coming nigh the door of her house;" even shunning the streets and passages where such tempters wait for their prey. This must be decidedly the conduct of all, who would not risk every thing dear and valuable: and those who palliate such intercourse as a small matter, are as little versed in the *private* history of mankind, as in the words of divine wisdom. Multitudes in this way continually lose their character, sink into contempt and infamy, and are left to the necessity of subsisting by the most destructive pursuits: thousands have fallen victims to the jealousy, revenge, or rapacity of a base prostitute or her associates: and what can men expect from trusting themselves with women, of whom they scarcely know any thing, but that they are equally destitute of conscience and of shame? But should this peril be escaped, no better can be expected, than that, by the expenses of such pursuits, a man's substance should be wasted among the basest strangers, and himself, with his family and friends, left to beggary and misery. At the

same time the constitution is generally ruined beyond recovery; and those diseases are contracted, which consume the body in the most loathsome manner, and bring thousands and tens of thousands every year to the grave, in the most deplorable manner, and which form a constant testimony of God's abhorrence of this iniquity. In this wretched situation many a miserable sufferer too late regrets his folly, and "mourns at the last, when the flesh and body "are consuming, and says, How have I hated instruction, "and my heart despised reproof! and have not obeyed the "voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that "instructed me! I was almost in all evil," in the midst of every congregation of evil-doers. Should such reflections be admitted in this life, and the evil of such a course of iniquity be duly perceived, by a miracle of mercy and grace; true repentance may at last prevent the most tremendous consequences, and the destruction of the flesh may prove the salvation of the soul. But those, who have the most opportunity of witnessing such scenes, have but seldom the satisfaction of seeing good evidence of this true though late repentance: alas! far, far more die as insensible and profane, as they have lived. And what language of man can express the case of the self-ruined sinner, in the eternal world, enduring the reproaches and keen remorse of his own conscience, "*his* worm, that never "dieth;" (*Note, Mark ix. 43—50;*) while he recollects despised warnings and expostulations, and good instructions of parents, teachers, and ministers, all treated with hatred and disdain; yea, the convictions of his own conscience, and the strivings of the Holy Spirit, all diligently opposed and extinguished, by rushing into every kind of evil, with a headlong disregard of consequences, till sudden destruction came upon him, without the possibility of escape!

V. 15—23.

But let us avert our eyes from the doleful scene, before contemplated. Every man should study to keep himself, if possible, from the least inclination to such destructive vices, which diffuse sin and misery more rapidly than any other: and the encouragement of lawful marriage is one means, which God has appointed for these purposes. This was good for man in his state of innocency; and it is become much more needful, since the fall has given his passions an immense accession of force, and his enfeebled powers have lost their authority over them. Every restraint upon marriage, or dissuasive from it, may in many cases operate as a temptation to vicious habits and connexions: and that which might have prevented these evils, seldom avails to cure them. But this preservative used in the fear of God, and in dependence on him, will not prove ineffectual; and the comforts of the married state, when prudently and piously entered into, and when the duties of it are faithfully and affectionately performed, are so superior to all the base pleasures of illicit connexions, and produce such contrary effects, to individuals and to society, in every respect; that if men will not renounce their reason, they

MY son, ^aif thou be surety for thy friend, ⁱif thou hast stricken thy hand with a stranger;

^b2 Thou art ^bsnared with the words of thy mouth, thou art taken with the words of thy mouth.

^c3 Do this now, my son, and deliver thyself, ^cwhen thou art come into the hand of thy friend; ^dgo, humble thyself, ^eand make sure thy friend.

^e4 ^eGive not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eye-lids.

^e5 Deliver thyself as a roe from the

hand of the hunter, and ^fas a bird from the hand of the fowler.

^g6 ¶ Go ^gto the ant, ^hthou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

^h7 Which, having ⁱno guide, overseer, or ruler,

ⁱ8 Provideth ^kher meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.

^k9 ^lHow long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? ^mwhen wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

ⁿ10 Yet ⁿa little sleep, a little slum-

must prefer these running waters from their own fountain, to the pestiferous exhalations of a stagnating, putrid pond. (Note, Gen. ii. 24.) Indeed, those who have once tasted the endearments of domestick life, with the rational conversation of a virtuous and affectionate companion; together with the satisfaction of seeing a family of hopeful children, growing up to be useful members of society; commonly lose all inclination for scenes of licentiousness, except where previous bad habits have debauched the mind: and multitudes, who seem not influenced by higher principles, live in this way respectable members of society. But there are so many dangers and hindrances, as to this desirable settlement in life, from the present state of human nature, that we can have no assurance of being properly yoked, except as we acknowledge God in respect of it; attending to the rules of his word; preferring prudence and piety, to wealth, wit, or beauty; and seeking his direction and blessing. (Notes, xviii. 22. xix. 14. xxxi. 10—12.) When a man has entered into the married state, he should consider, that he is bound to treat his wife with tenderness and affection, though she be not without faults and imperfections; not only because she is his own choice, but because she is the woman that the Lord has allotted him. He should therefore continually seek the blessing of God on their union and family, by fervent prayer; and study to be cheerful and happy in her company; and not allow a thought or desire to wander after any other person. For why should a man desire forbidden fruit, when he may have all that is needful and good for him, honourably and with a blessing?—Let us ever remember, that though secret deviations from our duty may escape the eye of our fellow-creatures; yet “a man’s ways are before the eyes of the LORD, and he pondereth all his goings.” If no other apprehend the adulterer or fornicator, to put him to shame, or testify against him; his own iniquities will entangle him, as in a net, and his sins will bind him, as with cords, for the vengeance of his offended God: and those, who despise these maxims of heavenly wisdom, shall die without instruction; while their doom shall prove the greatness of their folly, in going astray from God’s commandments.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1—5. A partial regard to insinuating companions, or relations, whose circumstances, prudence, or honesty are not fully ascertained, induces incautious

persons, especially the young and unsuspecting, to be bound with them for sums of money above what they can afford to lose; and often, to enable a man, who is discontented in his station and in haste to be rich, to prosecute some favourite scheme; or to extricate himself from difficulties into which his rashness or extravagance has plunged him; or to support a delusive shew of affluence and treacherous credit. Thus men risk the ruin of their own circumstances, the forfeiture of reputation and liberty, the injuring of their families, or even the defrauding of their creditors; when perhaps their consent was obtained at some convivial meeting, or when heated with liquor! Such contracts seem in Solomon’s days to have been finished by verbal promises, and striking of hands before witnesses. If then any one had been drawn into such a snare, and was taken with the words of his mouth; (“for a man’s own lips are a strong snare to him;” Sept.) it was his duty and interest, to extricate himself, if possible, by the most humiliating concessions and equitable proposals, that he might either induce the creditor to discharge the security, or his friend to pay the money: and this without the least delay; as the deer would escape from the hunter, or the bird from the fatal snare of the fowler.—It cannot be supposed that suretiship in every case is unlawful, or even inconsistent with prudence. Such engagements, *may*, nay *must*, frequently be entered into by many persons: and it would often be inconsistent with friendship, benevolence, and even justice, to refuse them. But the dangerous extremes to which this matter is carried, the fatal effects of men rashly engaging for large sums, and the cruel advantage frequently taken of their indiscretion, render it a general truth, that “he who hateth surety-ship is sure;” (xi. 15,) and some exceptions may well agree with a good general rule. Nor can it consist with *honesty*, in any ordinary case, for a man to be bound for more money than he is able to pay, along with his own debts, and without giving up a fair prospect of maintaining his family. (Notes, xvii. 18. xx. 16. xxii. 26, 27.)

V. 6—11. Diligence is every man’s wisdom and duty; that he may not be a burden to society, but provide things needful for himself and family; that he may be out of the way of various temptations, and have it in his power to relieve the distressed. The sluggard is therefore sent to school to the insignificant but provident ant; who, destitute of reason, and without any instructor or ruler, takes more proper care for the future, than the slothful do, with

ber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

11 So ° shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.

12 ¶ A ° naughty person, a wicked man, ° walketh with a froward mouth.

13 He winketh with his eyes, he speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers;

14 ° Frowardness is in his heart, ° he deviseth mischief continually; ° he ° soweth discord.

15 Therefore ° shall his calamity come suddenly; suddenly shall ° he be broken without remedy.

16 ¶ These ° six things doth the

LORD hate; yea, seven are ° an abomination ° unto him:

17 ° A proud look, ° a lying tongue, ° and hands that shed innocent blood,

18 An ° heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, ° feet that be swift in running to mischief,

19 ° A false witness that speaketh lies, and he ° that soweth discord among brethren.

20 ¶ My son, ° keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:

21 ° Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.

all their advantages. Habits of indolence grow upon people: they cannot resolve to leave their beds, and go to work, to encounter difficulties, or bear hardships: they make abundance of excuses; and if none prove satisfactory, they only desire a short respite, a little and a little more indulgence in sloth.—Thus the day is spent in sleep or inactivity; life runs to waste; and poverty, seen at a distance but not regarded, draws near with sure and gradual progress, like a traveller: and when he arrives, he proves an armed man; all resistance is in vain, and pinching want becomes the inevitable consequence. This slothfulness is frequently the effect of being brought up with the expectations of a large fortune, and then coming untutored into possession of it; while habits of industry are generally contracted by young men who have not such expectations: and thus some grow rich and others poor, in unremitted succession, one generation after another; which shews, that, even in respect of this world, the anxiety of men to heap up wealth for their children is vanity and folly.—The Septuagint exhort the sluggard to consider the bee likewise. ‘Or, go to the bee, and learn how skilfully she labours, and how completely she finishes her work: whose labours kings and private persons carry away for their health: for she is desirable and honourable among all; because being weak as to strength, she hath added wisdom to acquire reputation.’ (Notes, xiii. 4. xv. 19. xviii. 9. xix. 24. xx. 4. xxi. 25. xxii. 13. xxiv. 30—34. xxvi. 13—16. Eph. iv. 28. 1 Thes. iv. 9—12. 2 Thes. iii. 6—12.)

V. 12—15. Solomon here contrasts the sloth of those who might be profitably employed, with the unwearied application and wily sagacity of the sons of Belial, the determined and desperately wicked: or, he shews how indolence and extravagance make way for a man being gradually led on in sin, through urgent temptations, till he becomes the most abandoned and mischievous of the human species. Those who have totally cast off the fear of God, with all regard to justice and honour, form artful schemes of committing iniquity, and pursue their object without intermission, by lies, flatteries, slanders, or perjuries. Thus they “walk with a froward mouth.” They unite them-

selves in cabals, and have their secret signs, understood by each other. So that “they wink with their eyes, and speak with their feet, and teach with their fingers.” The artifices of gamesters and covetous usurers, to draw in young spendthrifts, may be intended. Or the conduct of hypocrites, who, with the language, the attitudes, the affected demure looks, and every action of extraordinary piety, carry on their trade of “devouring widows’ houses.” Their mouths, and hands, and eyes, and feet, are all employed: and even in their closet, at the church, and at the Lord’s table, they are pursuing their one object, with lifted eyes, and bended knees, and hands spread forth.—Or in general, it may mean, that all the powers, faculties, senses, and members of wicked men, are instruments of unrighteousness; and according to their different propensities, they pursue their object uniformly: for frowardness is in their heart, and they are continually devising mischief, and sowing discord, in neighbourhoods and nations, that they may reap some advantage for themselves; or because, as the children of the devil, they love mischief for mischief’s sake: but by all this they only ensure their own destruction; and that often very suddenly, and without remedy. (Notes, xxix. 1. 1 Thes. v. 1—3.)—A naughty person. (12) “A man of Belial.” Heb. Notes, Deut. xiii. 12—18, v. 12. 2 Sam. xx. 1, 2. 1 Kings xxi. 8—14.

V. 16—19. (Marg. Ref.) These seven abominations seem to have been mentioned by Solomon, as found in the practice of the children of Belial, whom he had been describing: they were sure therefore to destroy such as persisted in them, because peculiarly hateful to God the Judge of all. ‘Nothing is more odious to the Lord, (who is the dispenser of rewards and punishments) nothing more opposite to the divine nature, and which he more severely punishes, than these six or seven things, &c.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, viii. 13. xxx. 11—14.)

V. 20, 21. These commandments, as given by parents, are here supposed to coincide with the precepts of God: and this tacitly instructed parents, what injunctions to lay upon their children, and how to exercise their authority. (Notes, i. 8. Ex. xx. 12.)

^k ii. 11. iii. 23, 24. Ps. xvii. 4. xliii. 3. cxix. 9, 11. 24. 54. 97. 148. 22 When ^k thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and *when* thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

^l Ps. xix. 8. cxix. 98—100. 105. Is. viii. 20. 2 Pet. i. 19. ^{*} Or, *candle*. Rev. ii. 5. ^m v. 12. xv. 31, 32. xxix. 15. Lev. xix. 17. Ps. cxli. 5. 23 For ^l the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light; ^m and re-proofs of instruction are ⁿ the way of life;

^u ii. 18. iv. 4. 13. xv. 24. Jer. xxi. 8. ^o ii. 16. v. 3. vii. 5. Ec. vii. 26. [†] Or, *of the strange tongue*. ^p 2 Sam. xi. 2—5. Matt. v. 28. Jam. i. 14, 15. 2 Kings ix. 30. Marg. Cant. iv. 9. Is. iii. 16. ^r v. 10. xxix. 8. Luke xv. 13—15. 30. ^s 1 Sam. ii. 36. ^t Heb. *the woman of a man, or, a man's wife*. ^t Gen. xxxix. 14. Ez. xlii. 18. ^u Job xxxi. 9—12. Hos. vii. 4—7. Jam. iii. 5. 24 To ^o keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery [†] of the tongue of a strange woman.

[†] Or, *of the strange tongue*. ^p 2 Sam. xi. 2—5. Matt. v. 28. Jam. i. 14, 15. 2 Kings ix. 30. Marg. Cant. iv. 9. Is. iii. 16. ^r v. 10. xxix. 8. Luke xv. 13—15. 30. ^s 1 Sam. ii. 36. ^t Heb. *the woman of a man, or, a man's wife*. ^t Gen. xxxix. 14. Ez. xlii. 18. ^u Job xxxi. 9—12. Hos. vii. 4—7. Jam. iii. 5. 25 ^p Lust not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her ^a take thee with her eye-lids.

^r v. 10. xxix. 8. Luke xv. 13—15. 30. ^s 1 Sam. ii. 36. ^t Heb. *the woman of a man, or, a man's wife*. ^t Gen. xxxix. 14. Ez. xlii. 18. ^u Job xxxi. 9—12. Hos. vii. 4—7. Jam. iii. 5. 26 For ^r by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to ^a a piece of bread: and ^t the adulteress will ^h hunt for the precious life.

^t Gen. xxxix. 14. Ez. xlii. 18. ^u Job xxxi. 9—12. Hos. vii. 4—7. Jam. iii. 5. 27 Can a man ^u take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?

^u Job xxxi. 9—12. Hos. vii. 4—7. Jam. iii. 5. 28 Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?

^x Gen. xii. 18, 19. Lev. xx. 10. 2 Sam. xi. 3, 4. xii. 9, 10. xvi. 21. Jer. v. 8, 9. Ez. xxii. 11. Mal. iii. 5. ^y Gen. xx. 4—7. xxvi. 10, 11. 1 Cor. vii. 1. 29 So ^x he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever ^y toucheth her shall not be innocent.

30 Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry;

31 But ^z if he be found, he shall restore seven-fold; ^a he shall give all the substance of his house.

32 But whoso committeth adultery with a woman ^b lacketh ^c understanding: he *that* doeth it ^c destroyeth his own soul.

33 ^d A wound and dishonour shall he get; ^e and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

34 For ^f jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance.

35 He will not ^g regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts.

^z Ex. xxii. 1, 3, 4. 2 Sam. xii. 6. Job xx. 18. Luke xix. 8. ^a Matt. xviii. 25. ^b vii. 7. Gen. xxxix. 9, 10. xli. 39. Ec. vii. 25. 26. Jer. v. 8. 21. Rom. i. 22—24. ^c Heb. *heart*. Hos. iv. 11, 12. ^d ii. 18, 19. v. 22. 23. vii. 22, 23. viii. 36. ix. 16—18. Ez. xviii. 31. Hos. xiii. 9. ^e v. 9—11. Judg. xvi. 19—21. Ps. xxxviii. 1—8. li. 8. ^f Gen. xlix. 4. 1 Kings xv. 5. Neh. xiii. 26. Ps. li. title. Matt. i. 6. ^g xxvii. 4. Marg. Num. v. 14. xxv. 11. Judg. xix. 29, 30. Cant. viii. 6. 1 Cor. x. 22. ^h Heb. *accept the face of*.

^z Ex. xxii. 1, 3, 4. 2 Sam. xii. 6. Job xx. 18. Luke xix. 8. ^a Matt. xviii. 25. ^b vii. 7. Gen. xxxix. 9, 10. xli. 39. Ec. vii. 25. 26. Jer. v. 8. 21. Rom. i. 22—24. ^c Heb. *heart*. Hos. iv. 11, 12. ^d ii. 18, 19. v. 22. 23. vii. 22, 23. viii. 36. ix. 16—18. Ez. xviii. 31. Hos. xiii. 9. ^e v. 9—11. Judg. xvi. 19—21. Ps. xxxviii. 1—8. li. 8. ^f Gen. xlix. 4. 1 Kings xv. 5. Neh. xiii. 26. Ps. li. title. Matt. i. 6. ^g xxvii. 4. Marg. Num. v. 14. xxv. 11. Judg. xix. 29, 30. Cant. viii. 6. 1 Cor. x. 22. ^h Heb. *accept the face of*.

V. 22. (Note, Deut. vi. 7—9.) ‘Thou wilt find the benefit of giving early entertainment to such good counsel from thy parents, in every passage of thy whole life: for when thou goest about any business, it will guide thee to do it honestly and successfully; when thou liest down to sleep, it will make thee rest secure of the guardianship of the divine Providence; and when thou awakest in the morning, suggest to thy thoughts how thou oughtest to behave thyself at home and abroad.’ Bp. Patrick.—‘When thou walkest, lead her forth, that she may be with thee; thus when thou sleepest, let her keep thee, that when thou awakest she may talk with thee.’ Sept.

V. 23. ‘Every particular commandment of God... is like a candle; and the whole law is like the light of the sun; to shew thee thy way and to exhilarate thy spirits, while thou walkest in it: nay, the severest reproofs, which correct thy errors, and reduce thee to obedience, are the way to the greatest happiness.’ Bp. Patrick.—The words *law* and *commandment* are in such passages put for revelation in general, and not for any one part of it as distinguished from others. (Notes, Ps. xix. 7—11. cxix. 1.)

V. 24, 25. (Notes, ii. 16—18. v. 4—6.) *Eye-lids*.] Either the decorations of painting and attire, or the wanton glances of a licentious woman; which *wound* and *kill*, in a far different sense than deluded lovers suppose when they use such expressions.

V. 26. *A piece of bread, &c.*] That is, a fragment or crust of bread, the meanest morsel by which life can be supported. This expression describes that extreme poverty, to which fornication often reduces those who have before lived in affluence; as the latter clause of the verse shews the fatal effects of adultery. (Notes, 27—35. ii. 16, 17.)

V. 27—35. Solomon had before intimated, that some of these strange women had “forsaken the guides of their youth, and forgotten the covenant of their God:” (Note, ii. 17 :) but he here particularly considers the consequences

of adultery, with a woman who yet lived with her husband. It would be as vain to commit this crime in expectation of escaping detection and punishment; as to take fire into the bosom, and suppose that it would not burn so much as the raiment, or to walk on burning coals, and hope that the feet would not be burnt. (Notes and P. O. Num. v. 12—31.) And indeed no man could be so intimate with a married woman, as to give occasion to disadvantageous surmises, without guilt and a powerful temptation to more atrocious criminality. (Note, Matt. v. 27, 28.) A thief who stole from mere hunger, might escape contempt, through compassion for his distress: yet he that was caught stealing, was condemned to restore seven-fold, or abundantly, though it might reduce him to poverty or even slavery. (Note, Ex. xxii. 1—4.) But adultery, being a far more intolerable injury, was by the judicial law of God punishable with the death of both parties: (Lev. xx. 10. Notes, 2 Sam. xii. 13. 24, 25 :) it was a proof of a more desperate state of the heart, and could admit of no plea; and it was as egregious folly, as if a man should at once wilfully murder both his body and soul. In the judgment of all wise and pious men, the adulterer would contract an indelible disgrace; and would involve himself in quarrels which might terminate in bloodshed. For jealousy, when a man knew or suspected himself supplanted in the affections of his wife, and dishonoured by her unfaithfulness to his bed, commonly excited the most implacable rage and resentment. (Notes, Ex. xx. 5. xxxiv. 11—17, v. 14. Num. v. 12—14. 31.) In prosecuting the criminal, the injured husband would demand the rigorous execution of the law, and not regard any ransom, presents, or submissions: and if he failed of obtaining redress from the magistrates, he would be ready to execute vengeance with his own hand upon the injurer. So that he that committed adultery, did it, as one bent upon destroying his own soul.—*Toucheth her.* (29) Gen. iii. 3. xx. 7. 1 Cor. vii. 1.

CHAP. VII.

Repeated invitations to a familiar acquaintance with wisdom, as the preservative from strange women, 1—

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—5.

The Scriptures instruct us in discretion, even as to our temporal concerns, for the peace of our own minds, the comfort of domestick life, the welfare of society, and the honour of the gospel: and a life, regulated according to the oracles of God, exceedingly conduces to our true interest and happiness, even in this present world.—We are stewards of our worldly substance, and ought not to dispose of any part of it, but by the allowance of our Lord; we hold it *in trust*, for our families, for the poor, and for the church; with a licence to take a portion for our own use, according to our station: but to waste his goods extravagantly, or in rash schemes and speculations, is a very criminal breach of trust. (*Notes, Luke xvi. 1—8. P. O. 1—12.*) Justice, piety, and charity unitedly call on us to be upon our guard against such engagements, as may entangle us in difficulties and temptations, be injurious to others, or deprive us of the means of being useful. And if any have been thus drawn in; it behoves them to lose no time, spare no pains, and shrink from no difficulties, by which the ruinous effects may be prevented or mitigated, if possible. But such obligations are far more readily entered into than got rid of: and a promise, a letter of credit, or a bond hastily given, may so involve a man, that he can by no means avoid bankruptcy. Hence we learn how much easier it is to ruin than to save ourselves; that our heedless conduct may be long after remembered against us; and that every rash and wicked word, yea, every idle word, must be accounted for at the day of judgment.—But how base are they, who take advantage of a man's indiscreet partiality to draw him in to his ruin; and who will not submit to every hardship, to extricate him whom they have thus involved! In these matters, supposed friends often prove *strangers* to us, and shew that we were not well acquainted with them; and by acting with the cruelty of enemies, painfully teach us to place no confidence in man. If, however, we ought in prudence to stoop, strive, and employ every means, to escape from impending temporal calamities; how should we be in earnest, and make all haste, to flee from “the wrath to come,” and to “recover ourselves from the snare of the devil, who hath taken us captives at his will!” Nor should we forget him, who willingly became our Surety, when we were strangers and enemies, though he well knew how dear it would cost him to pay our debt, and ransom our souls, and how ungrateful we should often prove.

V. 6—15.

It may abate our wonder, that sinners should be so negligent in seeking an interest in his great salvation; when we observe how improvident great numbers are about the present world. Though we are formed wiser than the animal tribes; yet multitudes voluntarily become more foolish than they, and might learn wisdom from the most despi-

5. A fact related, to illustrate the artful way, by which such women draw in the unwary to their destruction, 6—23. Another warning against all approaches to this vice, from its fatal effects on many eminent persons, 24—27.

cable of them, if they were not utterly unteachable. (*Note, Is. i. 3.*) While many incessantly weary themselves to gratify an insatiable avarice, numbers can by no means be induced to a proper degree of attention and diligence; though they see abject poverty marching in pursuit of them as an armed man. We may expostulate with such sluggards, and demand of them, how long they mean to waste their hours in sleep, and their days in inactivity. But they will still crave respite, and require “a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:” and few are recovered from these indolent habits, who have once contracted them. How carefully then should we guard against beginnings, and learn to redeem precious time; to rise early when health permits; and to inure ourselves to diligence and hardiness, in our respective callings! And how carefully should parents and teachers watch over young persons, and prevent their becoming *habitually* slothful and self-indulgent, and to teach them habits of application to some useful study or labour! But it is still more important, that men should avoid indolence in the concerns of their immortal souls; and that, in the present transient and precarious summer of life and health, they should prepare for the approaching winter of sickness, death, judgment, and eternity. To numbers it may well be said, “Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise.” “How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?” “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” (*Notes, Rom. xiii. 11—14. Eph. v. 8—14, v. 14. 1 Thes. v. 4—11.*) But alas! they love their sleep of sin, and their soothing dreams of worldly felicity; and crave a little sleep, and to be excused, as yet, from repentance, prayer, self-denial, and diligence: they mean to set about this irksome work some time, but not now: and so they compose themselves again; yet not without imbibing a deep resentment against those officious intruders, who attempted to awake them. But their destruction slumbers not; it approaches every moment, and will ere long come on them with irresistible violence: and when they “lift up their eyes in hell,” they will have full leisure bitterly to lament their folly. ‘O Lord, awaken them to see their danger, while yet there is a way of escape! and awaken all of us, (for we are yet half asleep, and ready again to close our eyes,) that we may give diligence to ensure our own salvation, and to seize every opportunity of glorifying God, and of doing good to the church, and to the world!’ For the children of the wicked one are vigilant, diligent, sagacious, and persevering in their schemes of mischief: their heart continually devises, their lips utter, and their fingers work wickedness: their eyes look abroad for their prey, or wink while they seize upon it; and they are wholly intent upon their pernicious projects: yet by all this they only serve the cause of Satan, and ensure their own destruction. And shall Christians, who have such glorious prospects, immense obligations, powerful motives, and bright examples,

a i. 8. iii. 1.
b Luke viii. 15.
xi. 28. John xiv.
23. xv. 20. Rev.
i. 3. xxii. 9.
c ii. 1. x. 14. Deut.
xi. 18. Job xxii. 22.
xv. 14. 1 John ii. 3, 4. v. 1—3. Rev. xxii. 14.

^a MY son, ^b keep my words, and ^c lay up my commandments with thee.

2 ^d Keep my commandments, and

live; and my law ^e as the apple of thine eye.

3 ^f Bind them upon thy fingers,

xxx. 8. Jer. xvii. 1. xxxi. 33. 2 Cor. iii. 3.

be inactive, inconstant, and lukewarm? Shall we neglect those things which the Lord loves, by which he is honoured, and which he will graciously reward? God forbid! No, let us be “stedfast, unmoveable, and always abounding in his work, as knowing that our labour is not in vain in the Lord.” (Notes, 1 Cor. xv. 55—58.)

V. 16—26.

We ought to judge of every thing by the rule of the sacred word, and not according to man's judgment. The pride of heart, which appears in a haughty and self-important countenance, may be termed dignity or a noble spirit; but God abhors it, and will resist it, and abase it into the dust. A lying tongue, whether employed in slander, flattery, or polite *simulation*, or *dissimulation*, is an abomination to him. He hateth “hands that shed innocent blood,” though it be done *honourably* in man's erroneous notions, or in ambitious wars, or in order to conduct a lucrative commerce. Whatever decorum appear in the life, the Lord “hateth the heart that deviseth wicked imaginations,” as well as “the feet that be swift in running to mischief.” Not only the false witness, who speaks lies in a court of justice and appeals to God for the truth of his testimony, is “an abomination” unto him; but the tale-bearer also, “that sows discord among brethren.” Let us then shun these things, and watch and pray against every propensity to them: and let us avoid, with marked disapprobation, all who are guilty of them, whatever may be their rank in society. The word of God will likewise instruct young persons to honour and obey their parents, in all things lawful and proper; which will greatly conduce to their honour and comfort: indeed it will guide us all in the path of peace; inspire us with confidence in God by day and night, in life and in death; and be our counsellor and companion, with whom we may pleasantly and usefully commune at all times: and the more we allow heavenly wisdom to speak to us, and the more we relish her discourse, the clearer light will shine upon our path, through this dark and uncomfortable world. Nay, the severest reproofs of instruction tend to keep us in the way of life: especially in warning men from the company of bad women, and guarding against their inveigling flattery. While, with apparent rigour, the Lord declares, that “he who looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart;” he mercifully deters all that regard his word, from the allurements of her beauty, and from the magnetick attraction of her wanton glances; and so keeps them from the paths which lead to disgrace and poverty, as well as to everlasting misery.

V. 27—35.

There is a malignity in adultery, and dangers from it, distinct from other species of licentiousness: and the adulteress especially is Satan's agent, to hunt precious souls into his net. Indeed we in this land have no penal statutes,

by which adulterers are punishable with death; no waters of jealousy to detect the secret offender: so that men may think of escaping detection or punishment. Nay, the frequency of the crime and the numbers, especially in the higher ranks, involved in the guilt of it, have almost obliterated its infamy; and a pecuniary mulct is now commonly considered as a compensation for the crime: not out of Christian forgiveness and gentleness, but from a base and mean spirit, a want of abhorrence of vice, and a proper sense of the inestimable value of female chastity and conjugal fidelity. And so the matter is sometimes compromised, with almost as much disgrace to the injured, as to the injurer: while the poor thief, who steals perhaps for want, is imprisoned, condemned, and executed, with contempt and ignominy, and almost without pity; nay, perhaps, is found guilty by a jury, some of whom are living in this more atrocious crime, (even if the judge himself be blameless,) and injuring individuals and families in such a manner, that all the wealth of the Indies could not countervail the damage! We cannot but observe, that this by no means accords with the scriptural view of these interesting subjects. We should, however, considering the state of this evil world, be thankful for the benefits which we enjoy under civil government and our present rulers; though we think many things far removed from perfection. Yet let no adulterer expect impunity: sooner shall fire cease to burn, than God's displeasure shall cease to wax hot against such workers of iniquity. An hour will soon arrive, when the transgressor's wound (if not previously healed by the good Physician,) will be incurable. Whether the jealousy of an enraged husband can be bribed, or not; an angry God will “not spare in the day of his vengeance: he will not regard any ransom, neither will he rest content” with any gifts. But Christians should avoid all approach to, or appearance of, this horrid crime: he that “toucheth his neighbour's wife shall not be innocent;” every suspicious familiarity will prove a wound, and a reproach to a man's character, which will not easily be wiped away: and he, who ventures within the influence of temptation, in so perilous a case, as much “lacketh understanding,” as if he took fire into his bosom, expecting that it would not burn him. May we then not only pray, not “to be led into temptation,” but keep at the greatest distance from it: and may we close our eyes and ears, and every sense and avenue, by which such insinuating poison can enter into our imaginations or affections!

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1, 2. Notes, ii. 1—5. iii. 1, 2.—Apple.] Notes, Deut. xxxii. 10. Ps. xvii. 6—8, v. 8.

V. 3. ‘Do not merely read what I write, ... but be so well acquainted with them, as to have them (as we speak,) at thy fingers' ends; or rather let them be transcribed from hence into thy very heart.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 4, 5. vi. 20, 21. Deut. vi. 6—9.)

write them upon the table of thine heart.

4 ^g Say unto wisdom, ^h Thou *art* my sister ; and call understanding *thy* kinswoman :

5 That ⁱ they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger *which* flattereth with her words.

6 ¶ For ^k at the window of my house I looked through my casement,

7 And beheld among ^l the simple ones, I discerned among ^m the youths, a young man ⁿ void of understanding,

8 Passing through the streets ^o near her corner: and he went the way to her house ;

9 In ^p the twilight, in the ^q evening, in the black and dark night :

10 And, behold, there met him a woman *with* ^r the attire of an harlot, and ^s subtle of heart.

11 (She *is* ^t loud and stubborn ; ^u her feet abide not in her house :

12 Now *is* ^v she ^w without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)

13 So ^x she caught him, and kissed him, *and* ^y with an impudent face said unto him,

Heb. she strengthened her face and said. Is. l. 7. Ez. ii. 4. 6. iii. 7—9.

V. 4, 5. (Note, Job. xvii. 13—16, v. 14.) ‘Cultivate her most intimate acquaintance, as that of the nearest and most beloved relation.’—‘It is a singular benefit a man hath by true wisdom, to be preserved from such sins and miseries : and therefore we should study wisdom, which alone can secure us from being deceived by such flatteries as bewitch silly and incautious souls to their ruin. ... To preserve thee from the snares of the naughty woman ; who, though her company be so pernicious, that God would have thee perfectly estranged from her, as if she were not of the commonwealth of Israel, yet hath powerful charms about her, to flatter those into her embraces who are not heartily in love with wisdom.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, ii. 16—19. v. 8. 3—14. 20.)

V. 6—23. The whole here related seems to have been an incident, which Solomon had witnessed and investigated, and which he recorded as an illustration of his former observations. (Note, v. 14.) From his window he noticed a raw youth, whose appearance and behaviour shewed him to be “void of understanding.” As he sauntered through the street, perhaps in quest of adventure or amusement, in the dusk of evening, before it was quite dark, he came near the house of a licentious woman. It is not said that he intended to visit her, or that he knew she lived there, or even that he meant to find out a woman of this character : but he was loitering about, in a place where he had no business, and at an unseasonable hour. Accordingly a

14 *I have* ^z peace-offerings with me ; ^a this day have I paid my vows :

15 Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face ; and I have found thee.

16 I have ^b decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved *works*, with ^c fine linen of Egypt.

17 I have ^d perfumed my bed ^e with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

18 Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves.

19 For ^f the good-man *is* not at home, ^g he is gone a long journey :

20 He hath taken a bag of money ^h with him, *and* will come home at ⁱ the day appointed.

21 ^j With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she ^k forced him.

22 He goeth after her ^l straightway, ^m as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to ⁿ the correction of the stocks ;

23 Till ^o a dart strike through his liver ; ^p as a bird hasteth to the snare, ^q and ^r knoweth not that it *is* for his life.

Heb. Peace-offerings are upon me. x xv. 8. xvii. 1. xxi. 27. Lev. vii. 15. Deut. xii. 6, 7. y 2 Sam. xv. 7—9. 1 Kings xxi. 9. 10. John xviii. 28. z Cant. i. 16. iii. 7—10. Rev. ii. 22. a 1 Kings x. 28. Is. xix. 9. Ez. xxvii. 7. b Cant. iii. 6. Is. lvii. 7—9. c Ps. xlv. 8. Cant. iv. 13, 14. d Matt. xx. 11. xxiv. 43. Luke xii. 39. e Matt. xxiv. 48. Mark xiii. 34—36. Luke xii. 45, 46. f Heb. in his hand. g Or, the new moon. h 5. v. 3. Judg. xvi. 15—17. Ps. xii. 2. i 1 Sam. xxviii. 23. 2 Kings iv. 8. Luke xiv. 23. xxiv. 29. Acts xvi. 15. 2 Cor. v. 14. j Heb. suddenly. k Acts xiv. 13. l Job xiii. 27. Jer. xx. 2. Acts xvi. 24. m Num. xxv. 8, 9. n i. 17. Ec. ix. 12. o ix. 18.

woman came forth to meet him, who was married, and consequently the more criminal and dangerous : for her attire was that of a harlot, and her artfulness was equal to her profligacy. Indeed her whole character was of the same stamp : loquacious and vociferous, stubborn and untractable, she hated confinement and employment, and was perpetually gadding abroad in every place, where she had no business except to find occasions of committing iniquity. Observing, it seems, the youth to be bashful, she threw aside all regard to decency, and behaved and conversed with him in the most shameless manner. To represent her prosperity, and the plentiful entertainment which she could give him, she stated that she had been offering a peace-offering in the performance of a vow, and was about to feast upon the sacrifice. (Notes, Lev. vii. 12—18. Deut. xii. 5—7.) Nor will it appear wonderful, that these sacred ordinances should give occasion to carnal feasts attended with every licentious indulgence ; when we reflect how all kind of sensuality is indulged in, under pretence of commemorating the nativity of Christ, who was “manifested to destroy the works of the devil,” and on the other seasons, set apart for Christian festivals ! (Note, Ex. xxxii. 1.)—This wicked woman pretended, that having made all preparations for the gratification of every sense to the utmost, and only wanting an agreeable companion, she came forth on purpose to meet the youth from a peculiar affection ; and that her husband, whom she seems

24 ¶ Hearken unto me now therefore, ^a O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth :

25 Let not ^o thine heart decline to her ways, ^p go not astray in her paths.

26 For she ^q hath cast down many wounded : yea, many strong men have been slain by her.

27 ^r Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

to speak of with contempt, was gone a long journey with a bag of money ; perhaps intimating that he neglected her, and went abroad to indulge himself : so that there was no danger of interruption or detection. By such enticements she overcame his reluctance and timidity, and compelled him with her flattering words to accompany her. Thus he was suddenly induced to commit a crime, punishable with death by the magistrate, and exposing him to the wrath of God : and if he escaped death at that time, it would serve as an introduction to further crimes, and would probably end in his ruin. So that, (however light licentious poets, actors, and artists, and those who delight in their works and exhibitions, may make of such incidents,) the wisdom of God declares, that the youth went, “ as an ox “ to the slaughter, or as a fool,” (or drunkard who knows not what is going forward,) to be set in the stocks and scourged. Nor would he be aware of his danger, “ till a “ dart should strike through his liver : ” and he was as a bird that “ hasteth to the snare,” for the sake of the bait, “ and knoweth not that it is for his life.”

Her feet abide not in her house. (11) *Note, Tit. ii. 3—6, v. 5.*

The day appointed. (20) “ The new moon.” *Marg.* Many think, that *the full moon* is intended : a fixed time, however, was meant, and at some distance.

She forced him. (21) ‘ Having wrought upon his inclinations, she pursued her advantage with so much cunning ; that she rather compelled, than attracted him by ‘ ...her alluring language.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref. g. Notes, Luke xiv. 15—24, v. 23. xxiv. 25—31, v. 29.*)

As a fool to the correction of the stocks. (22) כָּכֶם אֶל מוֹסֵר אֶתְּכֶם. ‘ Sicut compes ad castigationem ... stulti. Sicut vir ‘ compedis ad eruditionem stultorum. The sense is, that he ‘ who follows an harlot, goes as an ox to the slaughter, and ‘ as a man ... is bound, or casts himself into those chains, ‘ and bonds, by which fools are corrected and made wise.’ *Robertson.*

V. 24—27. See on 1, 2.—*Wounded.* (26) Samson, David, and even Solomon himself, were grievously wounded, and numbers of eminent men have been totally ruined, through such tempters. (*Notes, and P. O. Judg. xvi. 2 Sam. xi. xii. 1 Kings xi. 1—8.*) This seems to intimate that these chapters were written towards the close of Solomon’s life. His own example, in taking so many wives, probably, had a very bad effect on his people ; and their abundant prosperity would tend to inflame the disease. His repeated and pathetick admonitions on this subject must have been very painful to him ; and they form no inconsiderable proof of his deep humiliation for his own transgressions. (*Note, Ec. vii. 23—28.*)—*Many strong men, &c.* Literally ‘ all ‘ the strong are her slain : ’ as if these especially were in danger.

Her house, &c. (27) ‘ To follow her to her house, as ‘ this young man did, is the direct way to hell. Every ‘ step ... is in truth a going down to the dismal chambers of

‘ death and to the most horrid miseries.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, ii. 18, 19. xxiii. 27, 28.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The instructions of those, who speak according to the oracles of God, equally demand our attention with that sacred source from whence they are derived. We should, according to the plainest dictates of common sense, be more careful to keep the law of God in our memory, affections, and conduct ; than to preserve our limbs, our senses, or even our lives : and if the Lord guard his people as the “ apple of the eye,” surely we should pay a similar regard to his precepts ; “ binding them upon our fingers,” ready for use, “ and writing them upon the table of our “ hearts.” We are indeed most graciously invited to seek the benefits and honour of relationship unto Christ, by an obedient attention to his word : and thus we may indeed “ say to Wisdom, Thou art my sister ; and call under- “ standing our kinswoman.” In this way we shall be preserved from the fatal effects of our own passions, and the snares of Satan and of his emissaries. And when we can with pleasure employ our leisure-hours, in searching the scriptures, in meditation, pious conversation, and devotion ; our time will not hang heavy on our hands, and we shall have no occasion to go in quest of amusement and dissipation, to get rid of it. (*Note, Ps. i. 1—3.*)—Wise observers of mankind have always noted, that ignorance and inexperience, joined with indolence, and a fondness for roving about and wasting time in vain company, and keeping unseasonable hours, have been inlets to every kind of vice : and they, who thus run themselves into the way of temptation, seldom keep their resolutions of resisting it. For Satan always has his factors at work ; and those who go upon his ground, or near it, will be sure to meet with them.—When women forget the origin and use of raiment, and are fond of decking themselves in a light manner, to attract the notice and excite the passions of beholders, they are far from being innocent ; and they give encouragement to licentious men to accost them with sanguine expectations of success. Indeed a mere speculator would not think it possible, that any virtuous woman would choose to copy fashions, or to be seen in attire, resembling those of a harlot. This unaccountable indecorum, joined with a gadding and dissipated mind, a dislike to domestick employments, and a forward, loquacious, noisy, untractable disposition, commonly lead to further enormities : and if a man is so unhappy, as to be yoked to a female of this description, he must expect heavy trials and sorrows. Such wives often make home uncomfortable to their husbands, and drive them to seek satisfaction elsewhere : and then they take that opportunity of more deeply injuring them ; using every artifice to inveigle others, and to escape detection. In this view, we should recollect that “ a prudent “ wife is from the LORD : ” from him that blessing should be sought, and when granted it demands peculiar gratitude.

CHAP. VIII.

Wisdom calls to the sons of men to hear her invaluable instructions, 1—11. She recommends herself as the giver of numberless blessings, 12—21. She declares her eternity: and that she was present at the creation, as the foundation of JEHOVAH's counsels and the object of his delight, and as rejoicing in the sons of men, 22—31. She renews her exhortations to hear her words, as the only way to obtain life and the favour of the Lord, and to avoid the wilful ruin of men's own souls, 32—36.

DOTH not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?

2 She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths.

3 She ^bcrieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.

^a 1. 20, 21. ix. 1—3. Is. xlix. 1—6. lv. 1—3. Matt. iii. 3. iv. 17. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xiii. 10. xvi. 15, 16. Luke xxiv. 47. John vii. 37. Acts i. 8. xxii. 21. Rom. xv. 18—21. Matt. xxii. 9. Luke xiv. 21—23. John xviii. 20. Acts v. 20.

(Notes, xviii. 22. xix. 14. xxxi. 10—12.)—If once female modesty is surmounted, women commonly become more shamelessly impudent than men; in order to inflame the passions, and overcome the scruples, of those whom they address. And when religious ordinances have been perverted from their sacred use; they are often made a cloke of the most enormous crimes, or an occasion of them: nay, men attend on them, as it were, to purchase licence to commit sin with impunity.—He who will stay to hear the flatteries, and to admit the caresses, of an artful woman, will scarcely ever be able to resist her allurements; for victory over this temptation can in general by no means be obtained but by flight. (Notes, Gen. xxxix. 8—16.) And a man may in an unguarded hour be suddenly persuaded, and as it were *forced*, by fair speeches to commit those crimes, which will cover his character with infamy, load his conscience with guilt, fill his heart with horror, plunge him into inextricable difficulties, and do immense mischief; even if they do not terminate in his final and eternal ruin. A consciousness of our own weakness, and an habitual recollection of the consequences of such sins, form our best security against them; in subserviency to watchfulness, prayer, and dependence upon the Lord. Let us then hear the salutary words of Wisdom, and keep our hearts diligently, that they do not decline to the ways, or wander in the paths, of these seducing destroyers; “whose house is in the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.” And, as many strong, and in other respects wise men, have been wounded and slain in this conflict; we must indeed be void of understanding, if we will rashly venture upon it.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1—3. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, i. 20—23. ix. 1—6.) If by Wisdom, Christ, or the preaching of his gospel by him personally, and afterwards by his apostles, evangelists, and ministers, be meant; or, if we interpret it of him and his doctrine thus promulgated; the appeal to mankind here made, must be far more emphatical and impressive, than on any other interpretation. For even the

4 Unto ^cyou, O men, I call; and my voice *is* to the sons of man.

5 O ^dye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart.

6 Hear; ^efor I will speak of excellent things; and ^fthe opening of my lips *shall be* right things.

7 For ^gmy mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness *is* ^han abomination to my lips.

8 ⁱAll the words of my mouth *are* in righteousness; ^jthere *is* nothing ^kfroward or perverse in them.

9 They *are* ^lall plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

10 ¶ Receive ^mmy instruction, and

14, 15. Jam. i. 5. 1 ii. 4, 5. iii. 13, 14. x. 20. xvi. 16. Ps. cxix. 72. 127. 162. Ec. vii. 11, 12. Acts iii. 6. 2 Cor. vi. 10.

^c Ps. xlix. 1—8. 1. Matt. xi. 16. John iii. 16. 2 Cor. v. 19, 20. Col. i. 23. 28. 1 Tim. ii. 4—6. Tit. ii. 11, 12. Rev. xxii. 17. ^d i. 22. ix. 4. Ps. xix. 7. xciv. 8. Is. xlii. 13. Acts xxvi. 18. Rev. iii. 17, 18. ^e ii. 6, 7. iv. 2. 20—22. xxii. 20, 21. Ps. xlix. 3. 1 Cor. ii. 6, 7. Col. i. 28. ^f Job xxxiii. 1—3. Matt. v. 2. &c. vii. 28, 29. xiii. 35. ^g Job xxxvi. 14. John i. 17. viii. 14. 45, 46. xiv. 6. xviii. 37. Rev. iii. 14. ^h Heb. the abomination of. xii. 22. xvi. 12. xxix. 27. ⁱ Is. xlv. 23. lxiii. 1. ^j 13. John vii. 46. ^k Heb. wreathed. xiv. 6. xv. 14. 24. xviii. 1. 2. 15. Ps. xix. 7. 8. xxv. 12—14. cxix. 98—100. Is. xxxv. 8. Mic. ii. 7. Matt. xiii. 11, 12. John vi. 45. vii. 17. 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15. Jam. i. 5. 1 ii. 4, 5. iii. 13, 14. x. 20. xvi. 16. Ps. cxix. 72. 127. 162. Ec. vii. 11, 12. Acts iii. 6. 2 Cor. vi. 10.

instructions of the law and the prophets were confined within very narrow limits, and kept as it were in a concealment, compared with the publick instructions of Christ, in synagogues, in the streets, in the fields, and at the temple at Jerusalem; and the enlarged commission given by him to his apostles and ministers. (Notes, 22—31. Matt. xiii. 16, 17. 34, 35. xxviii. 19, 20. Mark xvi. 14—16. Luke xxiv. 44—49.)

V. 4. This address likewise being made, not to the seed of Abraham, or Israel, but to “the sons of man,” “the children of Adam,” seems an intimation of that more enlarged publication of Wisdom's instructions, which has taken place under the gospel. Men of the highest and of the lowest ranks are also included.—Nothing short of the most publick and clear instructions, in the great truths and maxims of revealed religion, can answer the language here employed: and to explain it, as the voice of reason and conscience, or as the moral instructions of men unacquainted with the Scriptures, is, in fact, to make heavenly Wisdom declare, that divine revelation is not absolutely necessary to teach men the way of life and salvation, which is nothing less, than to join with infidels in their opposition to “the oracles of God.”

V. 5. Notes, i. 21—23, v. 22. ix. 1—6, v. 4—6. Ps. lxxv. 4. Rev. iii. 17—19.

V. 6—8. None, but the TRUTH himself, and those inspired men by whom he spake, ever could unreservedly adopt these words without high presumption: especially they cannot in the least suit those philosophers and moralists, who indeed taught some useful lessons, but mixed up so much error with them, that the apostle says concerning them, “professing themselves wise, they became fools.” (Notes, Rom. i. 21—23, v. 22. 1 Cor. i. 17—31. ii. 6—9. iii. 18—23, v. 18, 19.)

V. 9. (Marg. Ref.) ‘The word of God is easy to all that have a desire unto it, and which are not blinded by the prince of this world.’ (Notes, ii. 1—5. xiv. 6. xvii. 24. Hos. vi. 1—3. John vii. 14—17, v. 17. 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.)

V. 10, 11. Notes, iii. 13—18. Matt xiii. 44—46

not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

11 For ^m wisdom is better than rubies; ⁿ and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

12 ^o I Wisdom dwell with ^{*} prudence, and find out ^p knowledge of witty inventions.

13 ^q The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: ^r pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and ^s the froward mouth do I hate.

14 ^t Counsel is mine, and ^u sound wisdom: I *am* understanding; ^x I have strength.

x xxiv. 5. Ec. vii. 19. ix. 16—18.

15 ^y By me kings reign, and princes ^z decree justice.

16 By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth.

17 I love them that love me; and ^b those that seek me early shall find me.

18 ^c Riches and honour *are* with me; *yea*, ^d durable riches ^e and righteousness.

19 My ^f fruit is better than gold, *yea*, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.

20 ^g I ^h lead in the way of righteous-

Matt. vi. 19, 20. Luke x. 42. xii. 20, 21. 33. xvi. 11, 12. 2 Cor. vi. 10. Eph. iii. 8. Phil. iv. 19. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19. Jam. v. 1—3. Rev. iii. 18. e xi. 4. Matt. vi. 33. Phil. iii. 8, 9. f 10. iii. 14, 15. Ec. vii. 12. g iii. 6. iv. 11, 12. vi. 22. Ps. xxiii. 3. xxv. 4, 5. xxxii. 8. Is. ii. 3. xlix. 10. lv. 4. John x. 3. 27, 28. Rev. vii. 17. † Or, walk.

y 1 Sam. ix. 17. xvi. 1. 1 Chr. xxviii. 5. Jer. xxvii. 5—7. Dan. ii. 21. iv. 25. 32. v. 18, &c. vii. 13. 14. Matt. xxviii. 18. Rom. xiii. 1. Rev. xix. 16. z 1 Kings iii. 9. 28. v. 7. x. 9. Ps. lxxii. 1—4. xcix. 4. Is. i. 26. xxxii. 1. 2. Jer. xxxiii. 15. Rev. xix. 11. a 1 Sam. ii. 30. Ps. xci. 14. John xiv. 21. 23. xvi. 27. 1 John iv. 19. b Ec. xii. 1. Is. lv. 6. Matt. vi. 33. vii. 7, 8. Mark x. 14. Jam. i. 5. c iii. 16. iv. 7—9. Jam. ii. 5. d Ps. xxxix. 6. Ec. v. 14—16. Eph. iii. 8. Phil. iv. 19. e xi. 4. Matt. vi. 33. Phil. iii. 8, 9. f 10. iii. 14, 15. Ec. vii. 12. g iii. 6. iv. 11, 12. vi. 22. Ps. xxiii. 3. xxv. 4, 5. xxxii. 8. Is. ii. 3. xlix. 10. lv. 4. John x. 3. 27, 28. Rev. vii. 17. † Or, walk.

V. 12. 'What is there comparable to a prudent mind, which is not crafty to deceive, but so cautious as not to be deceived?' *Bp. Patrick*.—'Except a man have wisdom, which is the true knowledge of God, he can neither be prudent nor a good counsellor.'—It is most obvious to interpret the rest of this chapter, as the words of the Messiah, speaking in the name of Wisdom. Thus most of the ancient fathers explained it: and though their too curious speculations led them into some difficulties, which have induced others to adopt another mode of interpretation; yet I can see no well grounded objection to a sober and cautious explanation of it on this supposition, nor can any other give full satisfaction: for the things spoken are exclusively applicable to Christ, and must be in great measure explained away, before they can suit any other view of the subject. Indeed as he communicates divine truth by the sacred scriptures; many things must accord either with the Speaker, or the word spoken: but some parts of this chapter cannot be explained, with propriety, of the sacred oracles. The ingenuity and sagacity, for instance, by which men find out curious and useful inventions, are the gift of God, but not by means of the holy scriptures. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, Ex. xxxi. 1—6. 1 Kings vii. 14. Is. xxviii. 23—29.) And if wisdom, as a divine attribute, be intended, why should the personal Wisdom and Word of God be lost sight of in the exposition, when by him all wisdom is communicated to the sons of men? (*Notes*, John i. 1—3. 1 Cor. i. 26—31, v. 30. Col. ii. 1—4, v. 3.)

V. 13. Though natural knowledge and wisdom are from the same source as divine truth, their value is comparatively small; and men often take occasion from them to indulge that pride, arrogancy, and perverseness, which God abhors. (*Notes*, iii. 34. vi. 16—19.) But "the fear of the LORD" is the principal part, and the sum total, as it were, of true wisdom; and it teaches men to hate all those things which he hates. (*Heb.* i. 8, 9.)—'So that he that doth not hate evil, feareth not God. (*Notes*, i. 7. xvi. 6. Job xxviii. 23—28, v. 28. Ps. cxi. 9, 10. Ec. xii. 11—14, v. 13.)

V. 14. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, Is. ix. 6, 7, v. 6. xl. 12—17.—*Sound wisdom.*] תִּשְׁפִּיָּה . *Note*, ii. 7

V. 15, 16. Christ is called "The WORD OF GOD," and is just after said to have "on his vesture a name written, "King of kings, and Lord of lords." (*Rev.* xix. 11—16, vv. 13. 16.) Accordingly he here reveals himself as the Source of power and authority, as well as of counsel and wisdom. All kings and judges are his deputies, dependent on him and accountable to him. (*Notes*, Jer. xxvii. 4—9. Dan. ii. 37. iv. 10—18, v. 18. v. 18—24.) Magistracy is his appointment, and the benefits of it to fallen man are fruits of his mediation. As far as kings and rulers govern in wisdom and equity, they have their qualifications from him, and do his commandments: when they abuse their authority, they undesignedly scourge the inhabitants of the world for their sins; but will at length be punished themselves by the supreme Judge.—These verses in the original are future, and seem to agree with the predictions, in other parts of scripture, that in the times of the Messiah the world should be blessed with many eminently pious and righteous kings and rulers. These predictions, however, have not yet received their grand accomplishment. (*Notes*, Ps. lxxii. 8—11. cxxxviii. 4, 5. Is. i. 25—27. xlix. 22, 23. Rev. xi. 15—18.)

V. 17. 'They that love me are beloved of me; and as they will not fail to seek what they love; so they will certainly find what they studiously seek.' *Bp. Patrick*.—The word rendered "seek me early," means *seek me at the dawn of the day*: but doubtless it also refers to the early part of life. (*Notes*, Ps. xxvii. 4—6. lxiii. 1—4. Ec. xii. 1. Matt. vi. 33, 34, v. 33. vii. 7—11.)

V. 18. *Durable*, not *uncertain* riches; 'signifying that he chiefly meaneth the spiritual treasures and heavenly riches.'—Some interpret the passage of wealth obtained by prudent and equitable means, which spends better and lasts longer than ungodly gain. Yet even these are "uncertain riches;" and not comparable to "the unsearchable riches of Christ." (*Notes*, Matt. vi. 19—21. Luke x. 38—42, v. 42. Eph. iii. 8. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19.)

V. 19. *See on* 10, 11.

V. 20, 21. *Notes*, iv. 27. Ps. xxiii. 1—3. cxliii. 10.

In the midst. (20) At a distance from the extremes, into which the different schemes of false religion, and their vehement zealots, urge their deluded followers.

^b iv. 25—27. Deut. v. 32. ness, ^h in the midst of the paths of judgment,

ⁱ 18. i. 13. vi. 31. Gen. xv. 14. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Matt. xxv. 46. Rom. viii. 17. Heb x. 34. 1 Pet. i. 4. ^k Ps. xvi. 11. Eph. iii. 19, 20. Rev. xxi. 7. 21 That I may cause those that love me ⁱ to inherit substance; and I will ^k fill their treasures.

^l 18. i. 13. vi. 31. Gen. xv. 14. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Matt. xxv. 46. Rom. viii. 17. Heb x. 34. 1 Pet. i. 4. ^k Ps. xvi. 11. Eph. iii. 19, 20. Rev. xxi. 7. 22 ¶ The LORD ^l possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

^l 18. i. 13. vi. 31. Gen. xv. 14. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Matt. xxv. 46. Rom. viii. 17. Heb x. 34. 1 Pet. i. 4. ^k Ps. xvi. 11. Eph. iii. 19, 20. Rev. xxi. 7. 23 I was ^m set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.

^l 18. i. 13. vi. 31. Gen. xv. 14. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Matt. xxv. 46. Rom. viii. 17. Heb x. 34. 1 Pet. i. 4. ^k Ps. xvi. 11. Eph. iii. 19, 20. Rev. xxi. 7. 24 When *there were* no depths ⁿ I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water.

^l 18. i. 13. vi. 31. Gen. xv. 14. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Matt. xxv. 46. Rom. viii. 17. Heb x. 34. 1 Pet. i. 4. ^k Ps. xvi. 11. Eph. iii. 19, 20. Rev. xxi. 7. 25 Before ^o the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth:

^l 18. i. 13. vi. 31. Gen. xv. 14. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Matt. xxv. 46. Rom. viii. 17. Heb x. 34. 1 Pet. i. 4. ^k Ps. xvi. 11. Eph. iii. 19, 20. Rev. xxi. 7. 26 While ^p as yet he had not made the earth, nor the ^{*} fields, nor the [†] highest part of the dust of the world.

^l 18. i. 13. vi. 31. Gen. xv. 14. 1 Sam. ii. 8. Matt. xxv. 46. Rom. viii. 17. Heb x. 34. 1 Pet. i. 4. ^k Ps. xvi. 11. Eph. iii. 19, 20. Rev. xxi. 7. 27 When ^q he prepared the heavens,

V. 22. “The beginning of his way, before his works ‘of old,’ must mean, ‘the eternal counsels and purposes of God.’—‘He declareth hereby the divinity and eternity ‘of this Wisdom, which he magnifieth and praiseth through ‘this book; meaning thereby the eternal Son of God, Jesus ‘Christ our Saviour, whom St. John calleth “The Word ‘“that was in the beginning.”’—The whole plan of creation and providence was evidently formed, in relation to him, through whom all the perfections of the Godhead were to be displayed and glorified for ever. (Notes, John i. 1—3. 18. Eph. iii. 9—12. Col. i. 15—20. 2 Tim. i. 9.)

V. 23. The word (נִסְּחָה) rendered *set up* is by some translated *anointed*, and by others, *obtained the dominion*. It is used in the second Psalm, concerning the Messiah, “Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion;” and in the margin is rendered *anointed*. (Note, Ps. ii. 4—6.) In the purpose and counsel of God, the divine Redeemer was from everlasting appointed to the mediatorial throne.

V. 24, 25. The word (הוֹלִיחַ) repeatedly rendered *brought forth*, is translated in the old version *begotten*, which in this agrees with the Septuagint, and the language accords to several expressions in the New Testament. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps. ii. 7—9, v. 7. John i. 14. 18. iii. 16—18. 1 John iv. 9—12, v. 9.) But whatever term is employed, it must always be remembered, that no human language can convey to us adequate ideas of the incomprehensible mysteries of God.—Such a declaration as these verses contain, cannot be made concerning the written word of God; and it is not capable of a very easy and natural application to wisdom, as a divine attribute: but it has a peculiar energy and propriety, when applied to the person and work of Christ, as the grand Centre or Scope of all the works of God.

V. 26. ‘As yet the Lord had not put it into this form ‘of lofty mountains and spacious plains: no, there was ‘not the first atom of this globe wherein you tread.’ Bp.

I was there: when he set a [†] compass [†] Or, *circle*. Is. xl. 11, 12 22. upon the face of the depth;

28 When he established the clouds above; when he strengthened the fountains of the deep;

29 When ^r he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; ^s when he appointed the foundations of the earth: ^r Gen. i. 9, 10. Job xxxviii. 8—11. P. xxxiii. 7. civ. 9. Jer. v. 22. Job xxxviii. 4—7.

30 Then I was by him, *as* ^t one brought up *with him*: and ^u I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him; ^t John i. 1—3. 18. xvi. 28, 29. ^u Is. xlii. 1. Matt. iii. 17. xvii. 5. John xii. 28. Col. i. 13.

31 Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; ^x and my delights *were* with the sons of men. ^x Ps. xvi. 3. xl. 6—8. John iv. 34. xiii. 1. 2 Cor. viii. 9.

32 Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children; ^y for blessed *are they* ^z that keep my ways. ^y Ps. i. 1—4. cxix. 1, 2. cxxviii. 1, 2. Luke xi. 28. ^z i. 2, 3. 8. iv. 1. v. 1. Is. lv. 1—3. Rom. x. 16, 17.

33 ^a Hear instruction, and be wise, and ^a refuse it not. ^a i. 21. Ps. lxxxvi. 11, 12. Acts vii. 35—37. Heb. xii. 25.

Patrick. By the highest or chief part, we may understand the formation of man. He was, as to his body, only dust, though the chief and noblest of the dust of the world.

V. 27—29. Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. i. Job xxxviii. 4—11. Ps. xxxiii. 4—8. civ. 5—9. Jer. v. 20—25, v. 22. x. 11—15.

V. 30. ‘Then was I present by him, as one that was ‘coeternal with him; and...we did mutually and infinitely ‘solace each other, from everlasting.’ Bp. Hall.—The word (נִסְּחָה) rendered *brought up with him*, is by some translated, *cherished as in his bosom*. ‘Wisdom had said that she was ‘begotten; now she adds, that she was in the bosom of ‘the Father. Thus the apostle, (John i. 18,) “The only ‘“begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father;” ‘who never was separated from the Father, always saw the ‘Father; who “seeth what the Father doeth, that he may ‘“do the like;” (with the same will and power;) in ‘whom the Father places his pleasure and delight; willing, ‘that by the Son we should approach to him, in the Son ‘we should honour and adore him, and honour the Son as ‘himself.’—Some, however, render the word actively, *a nourisher*, or *a chief worker*; ‘signifying that this Wis- ‘dom, even Jesus Christ, was equal with God his Father; ‘and createth, preserveth, and still worketh with him.’ (Marg. Ref.—Notes, John v. 17—30.)—It is observable, that some of those learned men, who seem inclined to exclude this interpretation, pass over these remarkable expressions without much notice; and indeed deal in general language, to which the reader finds it difficult to annex any precise meaning: except that he will perceive that the divine attribute of wisdom is supposed to be the speaker; but it is not determined in what way her instructions are communicated.

V. 31—33. ‘For man’s sake, the divine Wisdom took ‘man’s nature; and dwelt among us, and filled us with ‘unspeakable treasures; and this is that solace, or pastime, ‘whereof is here spoken.’—Wisdom not only rejoiced in

b i. 21. ii. 3, 4.
Ps. xxvii. 4.
lxxxiv. 10. xcii.
13. Luke i. 6.
x. 39. John viii.
31, 32. Acts ii.
42. xvii. 11, 12.
Jam. i. 22—25.
c i. 33. iii. 13—18.

34 Blessed is the man that heareth me,^b watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.

35 For^c whoso findeth me findeth

John iii. 16. 36. xiv. 6. Phil. iii. 8, 9. Col. iii. 3. 1 John v. ..., 12.

the creation of the world, and man formed in the image of God; but “in the habitable parts of the earth,” and “in the sons of Adam:” but the earth was scarcely inhabited, nor had Adam any sons till after the fall; and it is with respect to redemption, that the Wisdom of God, in any sense of the term, can be said to take its “delights” among the fallen race of Adam. The Redeemer, therefore, here evidently speaks of “the joy set before him,” in the glorious event of his sufferings, to the honour of God, and the salvation of the souls of men; and on that account he immediately uses it, as an argument why they should attend to him.

- ‘ With joy I saw the mansion where
- ‘ The sons of men should dwell
- ‘ My busy thoughts at first
- ‘ On their salvation ran,
- ‘ Ere sin was born, or Adam’s dust
- ‘ Was fashion’d to a man.
- ‘ Then come, receive my grace,
- ‘ Ye children, and be wise:
- ‘ Happy the man that keeps my ways,
- ‘ The man that shuns them dies.’

Watts.

V. 34. *Daily.*] The word of God, and the places where the gospel is faithfully preached, without doubt, are “the gates” and “the posts of the doors” of Wisdom, at which Christ would have his disciples to wait *daily*. Many, in this lukewarm age, question the propriety of hearing sermons on a week-day, and not only absent themselves, but censure those who attend. A few questions may be proposed on this subject. Do such persons generally employ their time better? If other duties demand their attention, they certainly do. But may not Christians, consistently with other duties, redeem time for waiting at Wisdom’s gates; as well as the children of this world find time for their vain amusements and feasting, who yet do not neglect *their* one thing needful? Is not the time, spared from attending on a sermon on a week-day, often spent in unprofitable visits or vain discourse? nay, does it not frequently hang heavy on men’s hands, and prove a temptation to various scenes of dissipation? And is this more for the honour of God, the good of men’s own souls, or the edification of their brethren? Did Christ ever find fault with his hearers for attending him too closely? Were Christians *less judicious*, or *more zealous*, after the day of Pentecost, than at present? (*Acts* ii. 42. 46, 47.) Does it not shew a degree of contempt of Wisdom’s instructions, and form a bad example, when people professing godliness seem glad of an excuse for neglecting the means of grace? And finally, ought ministers to be “instant in season, and out of season,” in preaching the word; and ought not the people to be glad of an opportunity of hearing it?

V. 35, 36. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, i. 24—33.)—Can these things thus be spoken, absolutely and without any limitation, of any other Instructor except Jesus Christ, and those by whom he taught of old, and those by whom he still

life, and shall^d obtain^d favour of the LORD.

36 But^e he that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul; ‘all they that hate me love death.

* Heb. bring forth.
d xii. 2. Eph. i. 6.
e i. 31. John iii. 19.
20. Acts xiii. 46.
Heb. ii. 3. x. 29.
f v. 11, 12. 22, 23.
Ez. xviii. 31.
xxxiii. 11. John
xv. 23, 24.
1 Cor. xvi. 22

teaches?—*Wrongeth*. (36) Or, *Doeth violence to*, &c. He is the murderer of his own soul. (*Notes*, i. 17—19. *Ez.* xviii. 30—32.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

When we observe how readily men listen to the seductions of vice, and run in the ways of folly and misery; we are apt to suppose, that the instructions of wisdom are withheld from them, and that they would act otherwise if not left to unavoidable ignorance. Indeed the supporters of superstition and error have devised many ways to keep men in the dark, or to furnish them with excuses for impenitence and unbelief: and many have pleaded, that there is great uncertainty respecting the knowledge of the truth and will of God, or much difficulty in acquiring it. But the chief difficulty, and indeed almost the only one, is to induce men to attend on instruction. For “doth not Wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice?” It was the manner of Christ and his apostles, and it is that of all his faithful ministers, according to their measure of ability, to publish his truths in the most earnest and open manner; to spread divine instructions, by every means and in every place, when and where they can; and to warn, exhort, and call upon men to hearken to them. For without restriction Wisdom calls upon “all the sons of Adam,” who come within the reach of her voice. She commands “the simple to understand wisdom, and the fools to be of an understanding heart:” and an obedient attention to the words of Christ will guide the most ignorant into the saving knowledge of the truth. But alas! men are far more desirous of *diversion*, than of *instruction*: and places, where folly keeps her school, and demands a high price for admission, are thronged; while the gospel of Christ, freely but faithfully preached, without the trappings of human oratory, is comparatively but thinly attended. Yet the condescension of the holy Saviour, in addressing his words, not to angels, but to the fallen sons of men, and to the most criminal, polluted, and meanest of them, demands our strictest regard: and the excellent things, which he speaks, are worthy to be received by all rational creatures; but especially by sinners, to whom he points out the only way of life and salvation. Every word he utters is right; his lips abominate all guile and wickedness; there is nothing froward or perverse in his instructions; they give no *needless* pain, impose no useless restraints, demand no unreasonable services, and engage us in no abstruse speculations. There is no insincerity in his invitations, or unfaithfulness in his promises, or unkindness in his precepts. And if his words be unintelligible to any, it is because they do not fear the Lord: (*Note*, *Ps.* xxv. 14:) they are not willing to be the disciples of Christ, or to do the will of God; (*Matt.* xiii. 11. *John* vii. 17. *2 Cor.* iv. 3, 4;) or they do not put a proper value on the knowledge of the truth, and bestow due pains to acquire it. For when there is an understanding heart, and a dis-

CHAP. IX.

The feast prepared by Wisdom, and her invitations given, 1—6. The different reception given them :

with instructions to those, who publish them; and the contrary end of the wise and scornful, 7—12.

The foolish woman's feast and invitations, and the doom of her guests, 13—18.

WISDOM hath ^a builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven ^b pillars:

2 She hath ^c killed her ^{*} beasts; ^d she

hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table.

3 She hath ^e sent forth her maidens: ^f she crieth upon the highest places of the city;

4 Whoso is ^g simple, let him turn in hither: *as for* him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

5 Come, ^h eat of my bread, and drink of the wine *which* I have mingled.

e Matt. xxii. 8, 4.
9. Luke xi. 49.
xiv. 17. 21—23.
Rom. x. 15.
2 Cor. v. 20, 21.
f 14. i. 20—23.
viii. 1—3. John
vii. 37. xviii. 20.
g 16. i. 22. viii. 5.
Ps. xix. 7. cxix.
130. Matt. xi.
25. Rev. iii. 17.
18. xxii. 17.
h 2. 17. Ps. xxii
26. 29. Cant. v.
1. Is. lv. 1—3.
Jer. xxxi. 12—
14. Matt. xxvi
26—28. John vi.
27. 49—58.

position to receive the truth in love, it is all plain and obvious, and every preceding lesson prepares the mind for those which are to follow. Such persons value wisdom above silver and gold: they “count all things but loss for “the excellency of the knowledge of Christ;” for him they forsake the world, and renounce the most lucrative employments at his command: for they deem “wisdom “better than rubies, and all things that may be desired, as “not to be compared to it.”

V. 12—21.

Indeed all prudence and ingenuity of every kind are from the Lord; and, if he saw it good, he could discover to his servants such curious inventions, as would render them eminent among men: but they most admire that wisdom by which he has made way for the salvation of sinners, consistently with the honour of the divine law and justice. For, through the redemption of his precious blood, “the “riches of his grace have abounded, in all wisdom, and “prudence.” (Eph. i. 8.) Counsel and sound wisdom are with him and from him: but the pride and arrogance, the evil ways and the froward conversation, which he hates, render men unwilling to be his pupils, and close their minds against his humbling, awakening, and holy instructions. He has strength also, as well as understanding; and being the Fountain of authority, he can advance his friends, and crush his foes at pleasure: and as by him kings reign, it behoves them not only to decree justice, and to exercise their authority according to his precepts; but to come and trust in him for the salvation of their souls. (Notes, 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4. Ps. ii. 7—12.)—Our love to Christ, as expressed by obedience to his commandments and delight in his instructions, is the sure evidence of his love of us: (Note, 1 John iv. 19:) and all, who seek him without delay, shall find him as their Teacher and Saviour. They are peculiarly happy, who begin early in life to seek him: for true riches and honours are with him, yea, “durable riches and righteousness:” whereas the vanishing possessions of this world are often acquired by injustice, and prove dangerous temptations. The fruit of this “Tree of life” is far better than gold; and even the present comforts of his people surpass all that wealth can purchase. He leads those whom he loves in the paths of righteousness, at a distance from perilous extremes, even “in the midst of the paths of judgment;” that he may cause them to inherit, not vain shadows, but *substantial good*, sufficient to satisfy all the capacities and desires of their souls.

V. 22—36.

The consideration of the essential and eternal dignity of the condescending Saviour should greatly endear his instructions to us. From eternity being one with the Father, the Creator and Lord of all, by whom, and for whom, all things were made and disposed of, with a view to the glory of God in the work of man's redemption; having displayed his wisdom, power, and goodness, in the formation of the heavens and the earth, and all things therein; he was yet willing to stoop, and to assume “the form of a Servant” for us men and for our salvation. (Notes, Phil. ii. 5—11.) In the prospect of man's lost estate, he was “set up from “everlasting” in the divine counsels, to be our Deliverer and King: and though well aware of the vast expense of this gracious work, he rejoiced in anticipating the glory that should follow his agonies, and in the delight he should for ever take in his redeemed people, the trophies of his victories, and the monuments of his love. (Note, Heb. xii. 2, 3.) Did he then, and does he still, delight in the thought of thus saving us wretched sinners? Did the Father, on this account especially, delight in his beloved Son? And shall not we delight in him and his salvation? Surely with the docility of children we should hearken to his voice! yea, the youngest, who can read, hear, and understand, should receive his counsels, with thankful, joyful, and obedient hearts. Let us all then hear instruction, and be wise, and not refuse such surprising mercy. For blessed are they, who hear the Saviour's voice, patiently watching and waiting at his gates; and by daily reading, meditation, and prayer, by constantly attending on his ordinances and observing his directions, seek increasing acquaintance with him and experience of his grace. The more diligent we are, the happier we shall be: for “whoso findeth him “findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the LORD.” Let us then not be wearied or discouraged in watching at his gates: let us be careful that we be not allured away by worldly pleasures, frightened away by the reproach or terror of the wicked, or tempted to think that we shall wait in vain; for this no upright soul shall do: but those who “neglect so great salvation,” and hate the instructions of Christ, are murderers of their own souls, and act as if they were in love with death and damnation.

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1—6. Perhaps Solomon here referred to his magnificent temple, to which men were invited to resort for the worship of God, instead of frequenting scenes

6 ⁱ Forsake the foolish, and live; and go ^k in the way of understanding.

7 ¶ He that ^l reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame; and he that rebuketh a wicked man, getteth himself a blot.

8 ^m Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: ⁿ rebuke a wise man, and he will love thee.

9 ^o Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

10 ^p The fear of the LORD is the be-

ginning of wisdom; and ^q the knowledge of the Holy is understanding.

11 For ^r by me thy days shall be multiplied, and the years of thy life shall be increased.

12 ^s If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it.

13 ¶ A foolish woman is ^t clamorous; she is simple, and knoweth nothing.

14 For ^u she sitteth at the door of her house, on a seat ^x in the high places of the city,

of vice and dissipation: but even this was typical of Christ and his gospel.—He, the true Wisdom, has prepared his church and ordinances, as a commodious and stately palace, in order to entertain the souls of all who believe in him. The sacrifice of his death, which was prefigured by all the oblations of bulls and goats, supplies the provisions of a rich and plentiful feast for them. The wine also is mingled, to render it more exquisite; and the table is furnished at an immense expense to him, though none to them. The ministers of the gospel, (called the handmaids of Wisdom, to preserve the propriety of the parable,) are sent forth into all the places of public resort to invite the guests: and the simple, those who want understanding, (or a heart, as the word literally signifies,) are particularly invited to enter in and partake of the feast. But they are exhorted and commanded to forsake their foolish comrades and sinful pursuits, that they may live and be happy, by going in the way of understanding. (Notes, 2 Cor. vi. 14. 18. Rev. iii. 17—19.)—The coincidence of this interpretation with two of our Lord's parables, sufficiently warrants it; (Notes, Matt. xxii. 1—14. Luke xiv. 15—24;) and sanctions the exposition given of the preceding chapters. (Notes, i. 20—31. viii. 1—9. 15—36.)—‘The Son of God, who is the eternal Wisdom of the Father, hath built his house, the church of God; he hath laid sure foundations of it, and hath hewn out all the pillars thereof. He hath instituted all his holy ordinances, whereby he may feed up the souls of men to everlasting life. He hath sent forth his holy and zealous messengers to invite men to ... these sacred mysteries.’ Bp. Hall.—Wisdom. (1) חֵכֶם, plur. Note, i. 20.

V. 7—9. These verses seem to imply directions to the messengers of wisdom, the servants and ministers of Christ, while they invite sinners in general, how to conduct themselves towards men, according to the way in which they behave respecting their warnings and invitations. They must be satisfied with declaring the truth before them, as they have opportunity, and with general warnings, exhortations, and invitations; but must not persist in personal rebukes of those, who shew profane contempt, or are notorious for their wickedness, and harden themselves in it; as that will only render them more outrageous and scurrilous, perhaps excite them to invent and circulate slanders out of revenge; and induce such altercations, as may even exasperate the reprover to say or do things, which

will give them a handle against him: so that nothing can be generally expected from reproving a scorner, but reproach, contempt, and hatred. On the contrary, there is the greatest encouragement to reprove a wise man, when he acts improperly; for he will love the friendly reprover, and grow wiser by every instruction. And as teachableness, and a conscientious regard to the authority of God, are proofs of wisdom; so the attention of instructors should be peculiarly directed to those, who seem disposed to profit by particular addresses. But where obstinacy and contempt of the truth are manifest, Christ says to us, “Let them alone;” ‘you can do them no good at present, but will get harm by them.’ (Notes, i. 5. 7. v. 4—13, vv. 12, 13. xv. 12. xxiii. 9. Ps. cxli. 5. Matt. vii. 6. xv. 12—14.)—‘If a man cannot endure to be told of his faults, it is a shrewd sign he is in the way to be undone; and hath not as yet so much as approached to the gates of Wisdom.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 10. (Notes, i. 7. ii. 1—5, v. 5. viii. 13. Ps. cxl. 9, 10.) ‘The very first, and indeed the principal thing to be instilled into all men’s minds, is a religious sense of the divine majesty, and an awful regard towards him. ... And next to this, that no knowledge deserves the name of understanding, but that which is delivered by the holy men of God, and disposes us to devote ourselves unto him in holy obedience.’ Bp. Patrick.—Holy.] Or Holies, Holy things, or holy persons, or the Holy God, and his truth and will. (Is. vi. 3. Notes, Is. xxx. 8—14.)

V. 11. Marg. Ref.—Notes, iii. 1, 2. 16, 17.

V. 12. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Job xxii. 1—4. xxxv. 4—8.) The consequences of men’s conduct will chiefly affect themselves, whether they act wisely, or scornfully and foolishly. They may do great harm or good to others; yet the most harm or good will accrue to themselves. Their conduct cannot in any way add to the essential glory or felicity of God, or deduct from them: and the scornfulness of scoffers, will not injure the wise and faithful reprover, or prevent his acceptance with God. (Notes, Ez. iii. 17—21. 2 Cor. ii. 14—17. Gal. vi. 1—10, vv. 5, 7, 8.)

V. 13—18. The “foolish woman” may be considered in this place as an emblem, either of sensual pleasures, and the cares, interests, and pursuits of the world; or of those idolatrous and erroneous religions, which, making large allowances to men’s depraved inclinations, allure them

15 To ^y call passengers who go right on their ways:

16 ^z Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and *as for* him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him,

17 ^a Stolen waters are sweet, and bread ^{*} eaten in secret is pleasant.

18 But ^b he knoweth not that ^c the dead are there; and *that* her guests are in the depths of hell.

5. 2 Pet. iii. 5.

c ii. 18, 19. v. 5. vi. 26. vii. 27.

from "the truth as it is in Jesus." (Notes, Rev. xvii. 1—5. xviii. 9, 10.) In this foolish woman, clamorousness and ignorance unite with high pretensions and noisy declamations, and boastings that mean nothing. She is represented as continually seated in the high places of the city, to draw aside those who were before going on their way: as the harlot entices men, who were following their business without previous bad intentions. Some think that she represents the conscientious scruples of those whom she addresses, *to be simplicity and want of understanding*, just as the bashful and virtuous youth is often made the fool in a comedy: or it is shewn, that she singles out and prevails against such as are destitute of wisdom and grace, alluring them into the ways of sin, with an enchanting delineation of the pleasure to be found in prohibited indulgences; as if the forbidden fruit were to be desired above any in the garden of God. Thus men are drawn from Christ, and are not aware that it is to their destruction; not knowing, that all who hearken to the seductions of vice or error are dead in sins, and that the guests of folly are rushing into the depths of hell. (Notes, ii. 18, 19. v. 3—14. vii. 6—23, v. 7, 8, 11, 12.)—^{*} She invites him to his utter ruin both of body and soul; (ii. 18;) and sinks down all those who accept of her invitation to the very bottom of that pit, where the old giants are, who corrupted mankind with such filthiness and violence, that they brought a deluge on the earth. Gen. vi. 4, 5. 11.' Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

As the divine majesty of Christ, and the excellency of his instructions, demand our obedient attention; so the provisions of his grace to supply our urgent wants should endear his invitations. The new covenant which he has mediated, the spiritual house he has builded, the atoning sacrifice he has offered, the inexhaustible treasures reposed in him; the righteousness, grace, peace, and consolations, which he bestows; the eternal inheritance which he has prepared; and the meetness for it which his grace effects; are freely proposed to sinners, and conferred on every believer. Whatever carnal men imagine, Christ has provided a feast for his people; nothing is wanting but a willing mind and a spiritual relish, in order to partake of it: and the invitations, given by his faithful ministers to the simple and sinful, imply a direction to them, to call on the Lord for these preparatory blessings.—Would we partake of Wisdom's feast, we must renounce the society and the foolish pleasures of the ungodly; or we never can enjoy the pleasures of a holy life, or go in the way of understanding: and it is vain for us to continue an acquaintance with wicked men, in order to do them good; as we are far more likely to be corrupted by them; and our best service to them, is to protest against their evil courses by separating from their company. This is *in general* the only rebuke, that it is adviseable to give to infidels, scorners, and

hardened profligates. It is indeed grievous for a minister, by silence and distance, to testify against those who despise his message: but seldom any thing, save contempt and reviling, and increased enmity, is got by neglecting this counsel of wisdom: whereas the same labour and freedom taken with those, who are wise enough to value instructions, would procure love, and do important good. For none are so wise or righteous, as not in many things to need instruction, and even reproofs; and the wiser men are, the better will they take them, and the more will they profit by them, if properly given, and by those, whose place it is to "reprove and rebuke with all authority." (Note, Ps. cxli. 5.)—We are repeatedly reminded that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom:" we should therefore discover, as well as we can, where this fear is planted in men's hearts; that we may lead them forward in the knowledge of God, and into an acquaintance with the holy Jesus; in which all true wisdom and understanding consist, and by which all the blessings of time and eternity are communicated.—All who hear the gospel should consider, that life and death are set before them, and that they are most deeply interested in the choice. If they are wise to choose the one thing needful, ministers and Christian friends, yea angels, will rejoice, and God himself will rejoice over them to do them good, and their wisdom will prove their own eternal advantage: but if men persist in their scorning, they may grieve the hearts of their ministers and friends; yet they alone must bear the consequence in everlasting contempt and misery. We ought then most earnestly to seek and pray for true wisdom: for Satan has emissaries, of various kinds, to withdraw our souls from Christ, with great swelling words of vanity, the result of presumption and ignorance. (Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 10—22. Jude 9—13.) Not only do worldly lusts and abandoned seducers prove fatal rivals to Christ for the souls of men; but false teachers, with damnable doctrines, which flatter the pride and give liberty to men's lusts, compass the destruction of multitudes. These especially draw off such as have received serious impressions, and are disposed to do many things, and to attend on the word of God; but are not experimentally acquainted with the truth, in the love and power of it. Such unstable souls are soon seduced into superstition, enthusiasm, or antinomian licentiousness, or any other plausible corruption of Christianity, according to the fashion of the age: they are persuaded by fair words, that so much diligence and self-denial are unnecessary, and that they may obtain heaven on easier terms: they are allured with the hopes of gratifying their darling passion with impunity; and their natural propensity to covet forbidden objects is readily wrought upon. Thus they are prejudiced against the humbling truths and holy precepts of God's word, and are drawn aside into the ways of error; "not knowing that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell;" for "the last state of such men is worse than the first."—

CHAP. X.

a l. 1. xxv. 1. Miscellaneous maxims, chiefly recommending
1 Kings iv. 32. righteousness, piety, industry; and the government
Ec. xii. 9. of the tongue, and improvement of the gift of speech,
b xv. 20. xvii. 21. 1—32.
25. xix. 13. xxiii. 15, 16, 24, 25.
xxix. 3. 15. Ec. ii. 19.

c xi. 4. Ps. xlix. 6—10. Is. x. 2. 3. Zeph. i. 18. Luke xii. 15—21. xvi. 22, 23. Rom. ii. 1. Jam. v. 1—3.
d xii. 28. Dan. iv. 27. Rom. v. 21.
e Job v. 20. Ps. xxxiii. 19. xxxiv. 9, 10. xxxvii. 3. 19, 25. Is. xxxiii. 16. Matt. vi. 30—33. Luke xii. 22—24. 31. Heb. xiii. 5, 6.

f Job xx. 5—8. 15. 20—22. 28. Hab. ii. 6—8. Zeph. i. 18.
* Or, the wicked for their wickedness. xiv. 32.

THE ^a Proverbs of Solomon. ^b A wise son maketh a glad father; but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother.

2 ^c Treasures of wickedness profit nothing; ^d but righteousness delivereth from death.

3 The LORD ^e will not suffer the soul of the righteous to famish; ^f but he casteth away ^{*} the substance of the wicked.

4 He ^g becometh poor that dealeth ^h with a slack hand; ⁱ but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.

5 He that ^j gathereth in summer is a wise son; ^k but he that sleepeth in harvest is ^l a son that causeth shame.

6 ^m Blessings are upon the head of the just; but ⁿ violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

7 The ^o memory of the just is blessed; but ^p the name of the wicked shall rot.

8 The ^q wise in heart will receive commandments; ^r but ^s a prating fool shall ^t fall,

cxix. 34. Jam. iii. 13. q 10. xii. 13. xiii. 3. xiv. 23.
lips. Ec. x. 12. † Or, be beaten. xviii. 6, 7.

vi. 6—11. xii. 24. xix. 15. 24. xx. 4. 13. xxiv. 30—34. Ec. x. 18. John vi. 27. Heb. vi. 11, 12. 2 Pet. i. 5—10. 1 Cor. xv. 58. i vi. 6. 8. xxx. 11. Is. lv. 6, 7. k xii. 4. xvii. 2. xix. 26. l xi. 26. xxiv. 25. xxviii. 20. Deut. xxviii. 2. Job xxix. 13. 2 Tim. i. 16—18. m 11. Esth. vii. 8. Ps. cvii. 42. Rom. iii. 19. n 1 Kings xi. 36. 2 Kings xix. 34. 2 Chr. xxiv. 16. Ps. cxii. 6. Mark xiv. 9. Luke i. 48. o Job xviii. 17. xxvii. 23. Ps. ix. 5, 6. cix. 13. 15. Ec. viii. 10. Jer. xvii. 13. p i 5. ix. 9. xii. 1. xiv. 8. Ps. † Heb. a fool up

‘From all the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the devil; from all false doctrine and hardness of heart; and from all contempt of thy word and commandment, Good Lord, deliver us.’ Amen.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1. Here the Proverbs, properly so called, begin; ‘what hath been delivered hitherto, being rather a ‘preface to awaken attention, and from sundry arguments, ‘to commend the wise instructions, which now follow.’ Bp. Patrick. These are short maxims of wisdom relating to our conduct in life, in subserviency to our own best interests, to the benefit of mankind, and above all to the glory of God.—The comfort of parents greatly depends on the conduct of their children, and this suggests to both parents and children, powerful motives for attending to their several duties. ‘Nothing contributes so much every ‘way to the happiness of mankind, as a religious care ‘about the education of children. ... Let the father’s care ‘in educating his children... be equal to the joy he will ‘have in their well-doing: and let the mother beware that ‘her indulgence do not spoil them; for she will have the ‘greatest share in the uneasiness, which their untoward- ‘ness will give them.’ Bp. Patrick. The heaviness of the mother may be particularly mentioned, because mothers have previously had a more abundant share of pain and sorrow about their children: and it is therefore the more cruel in them, when grown up, to occasion further distress, by their subsequent misconduct, to such kind friends, whom they ought by all means to requite; and to whom they should aim in every thing to be a comfort.

V. 2, 3. ‘This is more necessary than the care of ‘heaping up riches for them.’ Bp. Patrick. Even great riches, gotten by fraud or oppression, or spent in wickedness or self-indulgence, do no real good to the possessor or his children: for the Lord will soon tear them from him, or him from them; and he will cast them away as worthless and contemptible, and utterly insufficient to ransom the life or soul. (Marg. Ref. c.—Notes, Ps. xlix. 6—8. Luke xii. 15—21. xvi. 22, 23.) Yet such riches are the most valued substance of ungodly men! But, on the other hand, righteousness (the nature of which must be

learned from other parts of scripture,) secures a man from the sting and fatal effects of death: and though the righteous should be poor in this world, the Lord who provides for his soul, will not famish him as to his temporal life. (Notes, Ps. xxxvii. 16—19. Matt. vi. 25—32. Luke xii. 22—34. 1 Tim. iv. 6—10, v. 8.)

V. 4. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, vi. 6—11. xii. 24. xiii. 4. xxi. 5. xxii. 29. 2 Pet. i. 5—11.) The words rendered “with a slack hand,” may signify the hand of deceit. Without diligence, honesty can scarcely be expected. ‘Next unto virtue, let children be bred up to industry... ‘for both poverty and fraud are commonly the effect of ‘negligence and sloth.’ Bp. Patrick.—The Septuagint here add, ‘A well educated son shall be a wise man, and shall ‘use the foolish man as a servant.’

V. 5. Activity and sobriety in youth will enable a man to requite his parents, and render him a credit and comfort to them, as well as establish his credit for prudence. But the sluggard will be a scandal and grief to those, by whom he has been educated, and to all connected with him. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Is. lv. 6, 7. Jer. viii. 20.)

V. 6. Violence.] The consciousness or detection of their violent dealing, in oppressing the poor, will stop the mouths of the wicked; and render them like men, whose faces are covered when led to execution. (Note, Esth. vii. 8.) ‘When their wickedness shall be discovered, they shall ‘be as dumb, and not know what to say.’—The clause, however, may be rendered, “The mouth of the wicked ‘covereth violence.” They use a variety of pleas and employ all their eloquence, to conceal, or excuse and justify, their cruelty and oppressions. For example, who can help thinking of the ingenious, but interested advocates, for the cruel and oppressive slave-trade?

V. 7. The memory of righteous and merciful men shall be celebrated with just commendation, after their death, however clouded by envy and calumny at present: but all the endeavours of the wicked, and their panegyrists, to establish their characters, shall not preserve their memory from merited infamy.

V. 8. True wisdom disposes men to regard and obey the commandments of God, and those of their superiors in all things lawful: but that knowledge, which merely

9 He ^r that walketh uprightly walketh surely; ^s but he that perverteth his ways shall be known.

10 He ^t that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow; ^u but a prating fool shall ^x fall.

11 The ^y mouth of a righteous man is a well of life; ^z but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked.

12 ^a Hatred stirreth up strifes; but ^b love covereth all sins.

13 In ^c the lips of him that hath understanding wisdom is found; but ^d a rod is for the back of him that is void of ^e understanding.

14 Wise men ^f lay up knowledge; but ^g the mouth of the foolish is near destruction.

15 The ^h rich man's wealth is his strong city: ⁱ the destruction of the poor is their poverty.

16 The ^j labour of the righteous tendeth to life; ^k the fruit of the wicked, to sin.

17 The ^l fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: ^m but the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

18 The ⁿ fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: ^o but the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

serves to furnish men with topicks of disputation and loquacity, and the various methods by which the ungodly pervert the gift of speech, will redound to their own disgrace and misery.—‘He that is foolish in talk, shall be beaten.’ *Old Version*.

V. 9. (Note, Ps. cxxv. 4, 5.) The upright believer goes straight forward in the plain path of sincerity, honesty, and piety: thus he is both safe and free from perplexing fears, as there is no secret ill design or practice which dreads detection. But the dissembler, after all his shuffling and subtlety, will certainly be exposed, either here or hereafter; and he lives in continual apprehensions of being put to shame. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 10. (Notes, 8. vi. 12—19.) The dissembling person causeth much sorrow at last, both to himself and those that have been deceived by him: but a prating fool that utters all his heart, procures stripes to himself, without further danger to others.’ *Bp. Hall*.

V. 11. The good treasure of a righteous man's heart, continually furnishes wise, pious, and edifying observations. So that those, who converse with him, may draw from him instructions for the prudent conduct of life, as occasion requires. (Notes, 20, 21. 32. xv. 7. 23. xviii. 4. Ps. xxxvii. 29—31. Matt. xii. 33—37.) But the mouth of the wicked is employed in disguising or palliating his own violent dealings, or those of other wicked men. (Note, 6.)

V. 12. (*Marg. Ref.*) Where hatred prevails in the heart, every trifle excites contention; the least slip is resented and aggravated; the best meant words or actions are misrepresented or misunderstood; and nothing is passed over, or candidly received: so that it constantly excites discord and strife. But where love reigns, mistakes and offences will be either overlooked, or meekly endured, or speedily forgiven: so that, notwithstanding the imperfections of those who live together, they bear with, and make the best of, each other, and peace and harmony are preserved.—The evident meaning of this latter clause should be kept in mind, by all who would interpret the quotations of it by the apostles. (Notes, Jam. v. 19, 20. 1 Pet. iv. 8.) The Septuagint, not having clearly expressed the genuine meaning of the passage, St. Peter does not quote from them: but he gives us the plain meaning of the original: and St. James, in an evident reference to the passage, uses almost the same words.

V. 13. (Note, 11.) The translation of this verse in the

Septuagint is remarkable: ‘He who bringeth forth wisdom from his lips, smites the foolish man with a rod.’—Obstinate sinners should be treated with severity; for such discipline is most calculated to do them good: and indeed they are wilfully preparing misery for themselves, in this world, and in the next.—‘He that would be wise must seek the acquaintance of some intelligent person: but the most knowing person in the world cannot make him wise that is void of consideration; who will never learn, unless perhaps by some great affliction.’ *Bp. Patrick*. (Notes, xxvi. 3. xxvii. 22.)

V. 14. Wise men are always learning: they value useful knowledge as misers do gold, and are continually studying to increase their treasures; which they carefully preserve, till opportunities are afforded of communicating them, for the instruction of others. (Notes, i. 5. ii. 1—7. Matt. xiii. 44—46.) But fools soon speak out all they think, and spend their scanty stock, without regarding consequences; by which they do immense mischief, and ruin themselves.—The word (מַחֲרִיב) rendered *destruction* properly means *consternation*, or *anguish of mind*.

V. 15. Riches indeed commonly preserve men from many hardships and injuries; and poverty exposes them to great oppression and injustice. But the rich confide too generally in this security, which in itself is very uncertain, and cannot ward off pain, death, or damnation: and the poor are too much cast down and disquieted by their difficulties, which can neither prevent their comfort in the favour of God, nor the salvation of their souls. (Notes, xviii. 10, 11. Job xxxi. 29—32. Luke xii. 15—21. xvi. 22. 33.) The word rendered “destruction,” is the same as is used in the foregoing verse; and the clause may be rendered, “The consternation of the poor is their poverty:” that is, they are often more afraid of it, than of sin, and needlessly alarm themselves, and yield to anxious cares about the future. (Notes, Matt. vi. 24—34. Luke xii. 22—34.)

V. 16. The labour of the righteous, being a part of their duty, not only supplies their present wants, but tends to their salvation; and the success which is vouchsafed them, also increases their ability and alacrity in doing good to the bodies and souls of others. While the most valuable inheritances, the extraordinary successes, and every accession of wealth and preferment, however great and beyond expectation, with which a wicked man is favoured, serve only to inflame his passions, and supply him with materials of sinful indulgence; or to increase his pride.

^k iii. 1. 2. 18. ⁱr. 4. 13. ^{xii}. 1. ^{xxii}. 17—19. ^{Matt}. vii. 24—27. ^{Luke} xi. 28. ^{Heb}. ii. 1. 17 He ^{is} ⁱⁿ ^k the way of life that keepeth instruction; but ¹ he that refuseth reproof ^{*er}reth.

ⁱ 1. 25. 26. 30. ^v. 12. ^{xv}. 10. ^{xxix}. 1. 2 Chr. ^{xxv}. 16. ^{Heb}. xii. 25. 18 He ^m that hideth hatred ^{with} lying lips, and he ⁿ that uttereth a slander, ^{is} a fool.

^m xxvi. 24—26. 19 In ^o the multitude of words there wanteth not sin; ^p but he that refraineth his lips ^{is} wise.

ⁿ Ps. xv. 3. 1. 20. 20 The ^q tongue of the just ^{is} as choice silver: ^r the heart of the wicked ^{is} little worth.

^o Ec. v. 3. ^x. 13. 21 The lips of the righteous ^s feed the wicked no more; but the righteous ^t is an everlasting foundation.

many; but ^t fools die for want of [†] wisdom.

22 The blessing of the LORD, ^u it maketh rich, and ^x he addeth no sorrow with it.

23 ^y It is as sport to a fool to do mischief; but a man of understanding hath wisdom.

24 The ^z fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him; but ^a the desire of the righteous shall be granted.

25 As ^b the whirlwind passeth, so ^y is the wicked no more; but the righteous ^c is an everlasting foundation.

4. cxlv. 19. ^{Matt}. v. 6. ^{John} xiv. 18. ^{xvi}. 24. 1 ^{John} v. 14, 15. 19—21. ^{Ps}. xxxvii. 9, 10. ^{lviii}. 9. ^{lxxiii}. 18—20. ^{Is}. xl. 24. ^{vii}. 24, 25. ^{xvi}. 18. ^{Eph}. ii. 20. 1 ^{Tim}. vi. 19. 2 ^{Tim}. ii. 19.

ⁱ 29. 31. ^v. 2. 23. ^{Hos}. iv. 6. ^{Matt}. xiii. 10. ^{John} iii. 19, 20. ^{Rom}. i. 28. [†] ^{Heb}. ^{heart}. xvii. 16. ^u ^{Gen}. xii. 2. ^{xiii}. 2. ^{xiv}. 23. ^{xxiv}. 35. ^{xxvi}. 12. ^{Deut}. viii. 17. 18. 1 ^{Sam}. ii. 7. 8. ^{Ps}. cvii. 38. ^{cxiii}. 7, 8. ^x ^{xx}. 21. ^{xxviii}. 22. ^{Josh}. vi. 18. ^{vii}. 1, &c. 1 ^{Kings} xxi. 19. 2 ^{Kings} v. 26, 27. ^{Job} xxvii. 8, &c. ^{Hab}. ii. 6—12. ^{Zech}. v. 4. ^{Jam}. v. 1—5. ^y ^{xiv}. 9. ^{xv}. 21. ^{xxvi}. 18, 19. ^{Ec}. xi. 9. ^z ^{Job} iii. 25. ^{xv}. 21. ^{Heb}. x. 27. ^a ^{Ps}. xxi. 2. ^{xxxvii}. 1. 27. ^{Job} xxvii. 1. 27. ^b ^{Ps}. xv. 5. ^{Matt}. c 30.

avarice, and love of the world, in one form or other: and thus eventually they add to his guilt and condemnation.—The verse may be rendered: “That which a righteous man obtaineth by his labour, is unto life: but the income,” or *revenue*, “of the wicked, unto sin.”

V. 17. *He is in the way of life that keepeth instruction.*] Or rather; “Instruction, (or discipline,) keepeth the way of “life, &c.” *Ὁδὸς ζωῆς φυλάσσει παιδεία.* *Sept. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, iv. 13. Matt. vii. 24—27.)*—The traveller, who has missed his way, and is too proud to hearken to directions, is likely to wander still further from his road: and the sinner, who disdains to be reproofed, will scarcely be convinced of his mistake, till he opens his eyes in the pit of destruction. (*Notes, i. 21—31. v. 3—14. xv. 10. Jer. viii. 4—7.*) Some understand the clause actively:—“He that ‘leaves off to give reproof, encourages men in their errors.’ *Bp. Patrick. (Marg.—Note, Lev. xix. 17.)*

V. 18. The man, who flatters those whom he hates, and covers malicious devices with professions of friendship, and then propagates slanders to the ruin of their reputation, is evidently destitute both of wisdom and grace. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxvi. 20—27. Ps. v. 2—6. 9. xii. 1—4. lv. 20—22.*)

V. 19. ‘Nor are calumny and flattery the only vices of ‘the tongue, but much speaking is rarely innocent: therefore he that is sparing of his words, and considers well ‘both when, and where, and what he speaks, is a truly ‘prudent person.’ *Bp. Patrick. (Notes, xvii. 27, 28. Ps. xxxix. 1—4, vv. 1, 2. Ec. v. 1—3, v. 3. Jam. i. 26. iii. 1, 2.)*

V. 20, 21. The gift of speech is too valuable a talent to be buried: like the precious metals it should not be squandered; but on proper occasions it should be liberally used. And indeed the righteous, though poor, by their pious conversation do as much good, as the rich man by his bounty: so that their lips *feed*, that is, instruct, counsel, and comfort, many. (*Notes, 19. xii. 18, 19. xxv. 11, 12. Job. iv. 3—6, vv. 3, 4. John xxi. 15—17. 1 Pet. v. 1—4.*) But the wicked man, being destitute of good principles, intentions, and dispositions, and his heart being even worthless and full of iniquity, cannot be expected to do good, either by his example or conversation: and at last he will perish as a fool, for want of true wisdom,

whatever proficiency he has made in science, and whatever reputation for sagacity he has acquired. (*Marg. Ref. r.*)

V. 22. In a chapter peculiarly recommending industry, the wise man, or rather the Spirit of God by him, has given a most important admonition in this verse. ‘Upon ‘which’ (diligence) ‘...no man is so to depend, as to imagine to obtain what he would have by that alone: but to ‘look up to God, as the Donor of all good things, and giving ‘success to our industry: which was a thing little thought of ‘by heathens, who were too prone to imagine all things requisite to happiness to be placed in themselves. But the ‘scriptures every where inculcate this, that it is God who ‘gives wisdom to the wise, and victory to the valiant, and ‘riches to the diligent, and good success to the prudent ‘and potent.’ *Bp. Patrick.* In fact, a large majority of nominal Christians, especially the active, sagacious, and managing, in worldly business, are in this respect heathens, at least practically. Perhaps they acquire their wealth by using many sinister methods; and thus with it they ensure vanity and vexation. But when riches are given, by the blessing of God upon the honest industry of one, who depends on him, and uses them to his glory; they are possessed without perplexing care, or a guilty conscience, or dread of consequences. (*Marg. Ref.—Deut. viii. 17, 18. Notes, xx. 21. 1 Sam. ii. 4—8. Ec. ix. 11, 12. 1 Tim. vi. 6—10. 17—19.*)

V. 23. Foolish and wicked men often divert themselves with injuring and disquieting others, or with tempting them to sin: and the greatest impieties or iniquities, which they can commit with present impunity, are to them a cause of laughter and mirth. But a man of understanding is too wise to act so absurdly; nay, he takes far more delight in wisdom than they do in mischief. (*Notes, xiv. 9. xxvi. 18, 19.*)

V. 24. The most overwhelming dread, which a wicked man feels of punishment, will certainly come upon him: and the largest desires, that the righteous can form of spiritual and eternal blessings, will assuredly be granted. The one can fear nothing so bad, and the other can desire nothing so good, as is really intended for them. (*Notes, Ps. xxxvii. 4. xc. 11.*)—*Shall be granted.*] Or, “He,” that is, God, “will grant.”

V. 25. The triumphs and boastings of prosperous sin-

d xxv. 13. 20.
e Is. lxxv. 5.
f Matt. xxv. 26.
Rom. xii. 11.
Heb. vi. 12.
g iii. 2. 16. ix.
11. Ps. xxi. 4.
xxxiv. 11—13.
xci. 16.
h Heb. addeth.
Job xv. 32, 33.
xxii. 15, 16. Ps.
lv. 23. Ec. vii.
17. Jer. xvii.
11. Luke xii.
20.
i Ps. xvi. 9. lxxiii.
24—26. Rom. v.
2. xii. 12. xv.
13. 2 Thes. ii.
16.
k xi. 7. xiv. 32. Job viii. 13. xi. 20. Ps. cxii. 10. Luke xvi. 23—26. 1 Ps.
lxxxiv. 7. Is. xl. 31. Zech. x. 12. Phil. iv. 13.

26 As ^d vinegar to the teeth, and ^e as smoke to the eyes, ^f so is the sluggard to them that send him.

27 The ^g fear of the LORD ^{*} prolongeth days; but ^h the years of the wicked shall be shortened.

28 The ⁱ hope of the righteous *shall* be gladness; ^k but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.

29 The ^l way of the LORD is strength

to the upright; ^m but destruction *shall* be to the workers of iniquity.

30 The righteous shall ⁿ never be removed; but ^o the wicked shall not inhabit the earth.

31 The ^p mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom; but ^q the froward tongue shall be cut out.

32 The lips of the righteous ^r know what is acceptable; ^s but the mouth of the wicked *speaketh* ^t frowardness.

m xxi. 15. Job xxxi. 3. Ps. i. 6. xxxvi. 12. xxxvii. 20. xcii. 7. Matt. vii. 22, 23. Luke xiii. 26, 27. Rom. ii. 8, 9.
n 25. Ps. xvi. 8. xxxvii. 28, 29. cxii. 6. cxxxv. 1. Rom. viii. 35—39. 2 Pet. i. 10, 11.
o Ps. xxxvii. 9, 10. 22. lli. 5. Ez. xxxiii. 24—26. Mic. ii. 9, 10. Matt. xxi. 41.
p 11. 13. 20, 21. Ps. xxxvii. 30. lxxiii. 11. cxx. 3, 4.
q Ec. xii. 10. Dan 4.
r Heb. frowardnesses.

iv. 27.

s xi. 11. xii. 6. 18. xv. 2. 28. xviii. 6—8.

t Heb. frowardnesses.

ners, resemble the short-lived mischievous fury of a whirlwind, which soon spends itself and is gone. (*Marg. Ref. b.—Notes, Ps. lviii. 6—9. lxxiii. 18—22.*) But “the righteous is an everlasting foundation;” trusting in the mercy and faithfulness of God through Christ unto eternal life, his stability is ensured. (*Marg. Ref. c.—Note, 2 Tim. ii. 19.*)

V. 26. As vinegar, or eating what is sour, gives pain to the teeth, and as smoke causes the eyes to smart; so the sluggard is a continued vexation to those who employ him in any business, and in proportion to the importance of it.

V. 27. *Notes, iii. 2. 16, 17. Ps. lv. 23. Jer. xvii. 11.*

V. 28. ‘The hope of the former,’ (the righteous,) ‘concludes in a joyful possession of what he waits for: but the other, failing of his expectation, ends his days in sadness.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—It should also be added, that a well grounded hope is in itself a source of present gladness: “Rejoicing in hope.” (*Notes, xi. 7. xiv. 32. Luke xvi. 19—31. P. O.—Notes, Rom. v. 3—5. vi. 21—23.*)

V. 29. By uprightly walking in the way of the Lord, habits of obedience acquire strength: and thus the believer, instead of fainting and wearying through difficulties or temptations, grows stronger in faith and grace, and goes forward with increasing vigour and delight. (*Notes, Job xvii. 8, 9. Ps. lxxxiv. 6, 7. Is. xl. 27—31.*)—Some understand the word to mean *courage*, rather than *strength*.—The upright man has ‘great courage and undaunted resolution, when any evil threatens him: but the workers of iniquity...are terribly shaken, nay broken with the fear of that destruction which is coming on them.’ *Bp. Patrick.—Destruction.*] Or *consternation*. (*Note, 14.*) The same word is there used. The wicked “are consumed with terrors.” (*Notes, Job. xv. 17—35, vv. 20—24. Ps. lxxiii. 18—22.*)

V. 30. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, 25. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Ps. xv. 5. xxxvii. 23, 24. 27, 28. cxxxv. 1. 1 Pet. i. 3—5. 2 Pet. i. 5—11.—Inhabit.*] The wicked would be glad to have this earth for their perpetual home and inheritance; but is cannot be so: they must die and leave their idols behind them: and they have no title to that inheritance which Canaan typified. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps. xxxvii. 9—11. Matt. v. 5.*)

V. 31. “The mouth of the just shall be fruitful in wisdom.” *Old Translation.*—As the perverseness, lies, malice, slanders, perjuries, and impieties of a wicked man, might be justly punished by cutting out his tongue; so the froward tongue of the ungodly man shall be silenced,

and punished in the flames of hell. (*Note, Jam. iii. 3—6.*)

V. 32. The righteous know how to speak what is pleasing to God, and suited to satisfy wise and good men: and in proportion to their proficiency in heavenly wisdom and holy love, they learn to adopt the least offensive, and most acceptable method, of communicating instruction to those without; as far as this consists with faithfulness, and the single aim to please God and not man. (*Notes, Ec. xii. 8—10. Dan. iv. 27. Rom. xv. 1—3.*) But in these things, the language of the wicked is entirely of a contrary nature and tendency.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

If parents would not experience heaviness from their children, but gladness, they should be very attentive to their education; both giving them good instructions and setting them good examples: they should far more desire, that their children may be wise and pious, than rich, or accomplished, or renowned: and they ought to pray for them, without ceasing, to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. It is likewise important, in the greatest degree, that they should consult the permanent advantage of their children, rather than their inclinations; and early habituate them to self-denial and industry. For without diligence there can be no wisdom, or even justice: and a sluggard is always a reproach to those who had the care of his education, a vexation to those who employ him, a dead weight on society, and a burden to himself.—Young persons also ought to recollect the labour and sorrow, which they have already cost their parents; and consider that they may, nay must, if they behave ill, give them still deeper disquietude and anguish. On the other hand, they should endeavour so to behave, as to prove both a comfort and credit to them. They should apply to business, with redoubled alacrity, from this motive especially, that, if needful, they may be able to support their parents during their declining years.—Opportunities once lost can seldom be recalled. In temporal concerns, “he that dealeth with a slack hand, becometh poor,” though he had fair prospects and considerable property: thus many, highly favoured with religious advantages, will sink into final misery through sloth and procrastination. Indeed, negligence in any degree will proportionably impoverish the soul, and prevent the Christian from enjoying that confidence and consolation, and being honoured with that usefulness, with which his more diligent brother is favoured. Nay, sloth

CHAP. XI.

Maxims of wisdom; chiefly contrasting honesty, humility, faithfulness, and liberality, with the opposite vices, 1—31.

and self-indulgence are here far more culpable and pernicious, and diligence far more valuable than in the trifles of this world: for riches are not to be compared with righteousness, or temporal things with eternal. Riches, however abundant, when, as is too generally the case, connected with wickedness, cannot eventually profit any man: nor can the righteous, in any respect, want what is good for him, either here or hereafter. The confidence, which the wealthy generally place in affluence, will certainly disappoint them: for the Lord will cast their idolized treasure away with disdain; 'in the hour of death and in the day of judgment:' and how worthless are all advantages which must forsake us, when we most need their help! But in those important seasons, which are speedily approaching to each of us, the righteousness of the despised servants of God will appear in its inestimable value; and all will either envy or congratulate them. In the mean time, should they be called to hard labour and mean fare, even this shall conduce to their good.—It is not easy to estimate the blessings which the righteous enjoy, in answer to the prayers of their brethren; while the confusion and frivolous pleas of the wicked, when attempting to palliate their crimes, form an awful anticipation of their unspeakable anguish, when they shall stand speechless before the Judge, and be sent away into everlasting punishment.—Indeed, it can be of no consequence to any man, either in heaven or hell, what his fellow-creatures say or think of him: but it is our duty to honour the memory of the righteous, and in general they are honoured after their decease; competition, and envy, and enmity, dying with them; and this honour is a token of their felicity in a better world: while infamy commonly is, and always ought to be, the lot of the wicked, and will certainly be their doom in the eternal state.—It is of great moment, exactly to discriminate the characters of the righteous and the wicked: and we can hardly touch on any subject, which does not direct us in so doing.—The wise in heart, that is, the righteous, first practises what he has learned, and then speaks to the edification of his neighbours: but the wicked is loquacious and vain-glorious; and he talks, sometimes fluently and plausibly, on the deepest mysteries, while he neglects the plainest and most important duties. Indeed, there is no small number of these "prating fools," even among those that profess, nay preach, the gospel. Yet are they all, every moment, liable to fall into destruction.—Again, the righteous treasures up useful knowledge; and bestows pains to render all he knows useful: and if he has any genius or eloquence, he employs it in recommending truth and enforcing holiness. But the wicked, according to the particular kind of vice to which he is addicted, perversely uses his talents to varnish over crimes, and palliate enormities.—The righteous man simply and honestly walks in the ways of God; but the hypocrite has always something in his conduct, which requires concealment and dreads detection.—The righteous man is long-suffering, forgiving, and kind; tender to the faults of others, and only severe on his own. He follows peace; and the love of his

^a * **A FALSE balance is abomination to the LORD; but [†] a just weight is his delight.**

* Heb. Balances of deceit are.

† Heb. a perfect stone. xvi. 11. Ez. xlv. 10—12.

brother is a mantle to "cover all sins:" but the wicked is clement to himself, and severe on others. Self-love is his mantle to cover his own sins: envy or hatred prompts him to expose the faults of others, and to stir up strife and contention. And if he be rich, his wealth increases his vain confidence and carnal security; while he despises the poor, though pious, instead of relieving their distresses, and giving them encouragement and protection.—And finally, while the righteous employ the fruit of their labours in doing good; the wicked spend their estates, or large incomes, "in making provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof."

V. 17—32.

Whatever may have been the character and conduct of a man hitherto; if indeed he begins seriously to receive the instruction of the sacred oracles, and to obey them, he is in the way of life, or shall soon find admission at the strait gate: but alas! multitudes, having gone wrong, are determined to proceed, however palpable and egregious their errors. Thus they refuse reproof and hate the reprover; and this so discourages numbers, that they leave men to the most fatal mistakes, for fear of offending them. So that the world, nay the church, is little stored with such as can and will give, and such as meekly and humbly receive, "the reproof of life." Alas! flattery and slander are far more common: and those, who "hide hatred with lying lips," generally spread slanders also, and often concerning the very persons whom they most flatter. But the word of inspiration has called such men *fools*; and the day of judgment will shew how justly.—How different the character of the truly wise and righteous man! He learns to bridle and govern his tongue; and to avoid all corrupt, false, angry, and useless conversation; yet, in refraining his lips from a conviction that "in the multitude of words there wanteth not sin," he will not neglect to improve the talent intrusted to him.—Wisdom is found in his lips; his words are as choice silver and wholesome provisions, enriching and feeding many. His wise counsels and cautions, his reproofs, instructions, and encouragements, will be acceptable and useful: and while his grand object is to glorify God; he aims also to "please all men for their edification," and to propose truth in the most winning and attractive manner.—This is his joy and delight: thus his lips are fruitful in wisdom, and many will remember his words, for their good, when his tongue is silent in the grave.—But what a contrast to this character is that of the fool, whose joy and sport is sin and mischief! who pours forth frowardness, malice, lies, reproaches, and profaneness, without fear or concern; and the effect of whose daily conversation, in exciting contentions, and propagating delusions and impiety, exceeds all calculation! Indeed, it is the character of the fool, to use his scanty measure of capacity in doing mischief. Here alone he manifests any sagacity or ingenuity, and here indeed a little will go far; "for behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!"—Men who are slow to hear, swift to speak, swift to wrath, implacable in resentments, and delighting

2 When ^b pride cometh, then cometh shame; ^c but with the lowly is wisdom.

3 ^d The integrity of the upright shall guide them; but ^e the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

4 ^f Riches profit not in the day of wrath; ^g but righteousness delivereth from death.

5 The righteousness of the perfect shall ^h direct his way; ⁱ but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.

6 The ^j righteousness of the upright

shall deliver them; but ^k transgressors shall be taken in *their own* naughtiness.

7 When a wicked man dieth, ^l his expectation shall perish; and the hope of unjust *men* perisheth.

8 The ^m righteous is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked cometh in his stead.

9 An ⁿ hypocrite with *his* mouth destroyeth his neighbour; but ^o through knowledge shall the just be delivered.

6. vi. 23, 24. Mark xiii. 14, 22, 23. Eph. iv. 13, 14. 2 Pet. iii. 16—18. 1 John ii. 21, 27.

k 1 Kings ii. 82, 33. 44. Ps. vii. 16. Ec. x. 8. l x. 28. xiv. 32. Ex. xv. 9, 10. Job viii. 13, 14. xi. 20. Ps. cxlvi. 4. Ez. xxviii. 9. Luke xii. 19, 20. m xxi. 18. Esth. vii. 9, 10. Is. xliii. 3, 4. Dan. vi. 23, 24. n 1 Kings xiii. 18—22. xxii. 6, 20—23. Job xxxiv. 30. Ps. lv. 12, 20, 21. Matt. vii. 15. xv. 5—14. Acts xx. 30. 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. 2 Thes. ii. 8—10. 1 Tim. iv. 1—8. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3. o ii. 10—16. iv. 5. 1 John ii. 21, 27.

in contentions, may for a while be very successful in mischief: but it will all soon fall on their own head; and, unless they be brought to deep repentance, they will be driven away as by a whirlwind; and their worst fears, coming upon them, will sink them into final destruction and misery.—But the hope of the righteous is gladness. If the Lord see good he can give them wealth, and exempt them from the sorrow and vexation attending ungodly prosperity. He can prolong their days, while vice shortens the lives of wretched multitudes. He will make their diligence acceptable and useful, while disgrace attaches to the slothful. He will give them strength and courage in his ways; and they shall not be moved for ever, being built on an immoveable foundation. “This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD; and their righteousness is of me,” saith the LORD.” (Note, Is. liv. 15—17.)

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1. ‘Under this word,’ (balances,) ‘he condemneth all false weights, measures, and deceit.’—The strong language of scripture, in many places, on this subject, demands the most serious consideration of all persons engaged in buying and selling. (Notes, xvi. 11. xx. 10. 23. Ex. xx. 17. Deut. xxv. 13—16. Hos. xii. 7—9. Amos viii. 4—10, vv. 4, 5. Mic. vi. 10—15.) ‘It is not so small a sin as men imagine of, to cheat their neighbour (though it be only in a little matter,) but extremely hateful and detestable to the great Lord and Governor of the world; as on the other side, exactly just and equal dealing, in all our commerce one with another, is highly pleasing unto him.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 2. “Pride cometh, and shame will come,” &c. A proud conceit of a man’s own ability or excellency, accompanied with boastings and arrogant contempt of others, commonly makes way for his being put to shame, by having his ignorance and insufficiency detected and exposed.—‘When man forgetteth himself, and thinketh to be exalted above his vocation, then God bringeth him to confusion.’—Indeed pride is always incompatible with true religion, and will surely end in everlasting shame and contempt. But true wisdom is attended with humility, which prepares the heart for the exercise of every Christian temper, the practice of every duty, and the honourable performance of every useful undertaking. (Notes, iii. 34, 35. xv. 33. xvi. 18, 19. xviii. 12. Dan. iv. 28—37. v. 18—24. Luke xiv. 7—11. xviii. 9—14, v. 14. Jam. iv. 4—6, v. 4. 1 Pet. v. 5—7.)

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V. 3. Strict integrity is commonly the best casuist. The upright Christian simply desires to know his duty, that he may do it. He is not bewildered by corrupt motives, or blinded by domineering passions. He has spiritual discernment, and a tender conscience. So that, in ordinary cases, his path is plain and obvious; and when he is at a loss, he depends on God, and looks to him for direction, and thus is preserved from fatal or distressing mistakes: but the crooked, winding policy of ungodly men involves them in increasing wickedness, and terminates in their ruin. (Notes, 5, 6. iii. 5, 6. xiii. 6. xxviii. 18. Ps. xxv. 21. cxxv. 4, 5.)

V. 4. (Notes, x. 2, 3. Job xxxvi. 16—21, v. 18, 19. Ps. xlix. 6—8. 15. Ez. vii. 16—19, v. 19. Matt. xvi. 24—28, v. 26.) The word rendered *wrath* denotes the *most vehement indignation*.—Seasons of temporal calamities are days of wrath; but the final judgment is emphatically “the day of wrath.” (Note, Rom. ii. 4—6.)

V. 5, 6. (Note, 3.) The single aim and dependance of upright and consistent believers deliver them from those snares, in which the wicked are taken: for the corrupt intentions and inordinate desires of bad men dispose them to catch at the baits, and thus to be caught in the traps, which Satan lays for them.—(Notes, v. 21—23. 2 Sam. xvii. 23. Esth. vii. 3—10. Ps. ix. 15, 16. Matt. xxvii. 3—5.)

V. 7. Solomon would never have made this observation, had not the belief of a future state been fixed in his mind, and prevalent among his people: for, as to this world’s prosperity, the hopes of the righteous at death perish equally with those of the wicked.—The last clause may be rendered “yea, their strongest hope perisheth:” but the strongest hope of the righteous does not then perish. (Notes, x. 24. 28. xiv. 32. Luke xii. 15—21. xvi. 19—31. Rom. vi. 21—23.)

V. 8. The righteous are often wonderfully prevented from going into perilous situations, and ungodly men go in their stead: this seems to be *chance*, but is in effect the secret disposal of God’s providence. Indeed he frequently removes the righteous by death, before overwhelming judgments come upon wicked nations; and others succeed and bear the calamity. (Notes, xxi. 18. 2 Kings xxii. 15—20. Esth. vii. 9, 10. Is. xliii. 3, 4. lvii. 1, 2. Dan. vi. 18—24.)

V. 9. ‘Wisdom... instructs many, how to evade those snares, which the profane hypocrite, with counterfeit professions of friendship, lays to destroy his neighbours.’

p xxviii. 12. 28.
Esth. viii. 15, 16.
q Ex. xv. 21.
Judg. v. 31. Job
xxviii. 23. Ps.
lviii. 10, 11. Rev.
xix. 1—7.

r xxix. 8. Gen.
xli. 38—42. xlv.
8. 2 Chr. xxxii.
20—22. Job xxii.
30. Ec. ix. 15.

s 2 Sam. xx. 1.
Esth. iii. 8—15.
ix. 1—16. Jam.
iii. 6.

t Judg. ix. 27—29.
38. Neh. iv. 2—
4. Ps. cxliii. 3.
4. Luke xvi. 14.
xlviii. 9. John
vii. 48—52.

* Heb. destitute of
heart. u x. 19. 1 Sam. x. 27. 2 Kings xviii. 36. 1 Pet. ii. 23. † Heb. He
that walketh being a tale-bearer. xx. 19. Lev. xix. 16. x xxv. 9. xxvii. 20—22.
Neh. vi. 17—19.

10 When ^pit goeth well with the
righteous, the city rejoiceth; and
^qwhen the wicked perish, *there is*
shouting.

11 By ^rthe blessing of the upright
the city is exalted; but ^sit is over-
thrown by the mouth of the wicked.

12 He ^tthat is ^{void} of wisdom de-
spiseth his neighbour; but ^ua man of
understanding holdeth his peace.

13 [†]A tale-bearer ^{*re}vealeth secrets;

but ^yhe that is of a faithful spirit con-
cealeth the matter.

14 Where ^zno counsel is, the peo-
ple fall; but in the multitude of coun-
sellors *there is* safety.

15 He ^athat is surety for a stranger
shall [†]smart *for it*; and he that hateth
[‡]suretiship is sure.

16 A ^bgracious woman retaineth
honour; ^cand strong *men* retain riches.

17 The ^dmerciful man doeth good

14, 15. Rom. xvi. 2—4. 6. 2 John 1 c Luke xi. 21, 22.
cxii. 4—9. Is. xxxii. 7, 8. lviii. 1. lviii. 7—12. Dan. iv. 27. Matt. v. 7. vi. 14, 15. xxv.
34—40. Luke vi. 38. 2 Cor. ix. 6—14. Phil. iv. 17.

y xiv. 5. Josh. ii.
14. 20. Jer.
xxxviii. 27.
z xvi. 22. xxiv. 6.
1 Kings xii. 6—
19. Is. xix. 1—
14. Acts xv. 6,
&c.
a vi. 1—5. xvii.
18. xx. 16. xxii.
26, 27.
† Heb. be sore
broken.
‡ Heb. those that
strike hands.
b xxxi. 30, 31.
1 Sam. xxv. 32.
33. 2 Sam. xx.
16—22. Esth. ix.
25. Matt. xxvi.
13. Luke viii. 3.
x. 42. xxi. 2—4.
Acts ix. 39. xvi.
d Ps. xli. 1—4.

Bp. Patrick.—It should, however, be further recollected, that hypocrites draw numbers aside from the religion of the Bible, and delude them into heresy and wickedness, to their eternal destruction, by plausible professions and insinuations; by misrepresenting the nature of godliness, and slandering faithful teachers; by prejudicing men's minds against the humiliating truths and holy precepts of God's word, and persuading them that they may be saved in some easier and more pleasing way; or by giving them false impressions in these important concerns, from their conduct and conversation as compared together. But the true and established Christian, by his knowledge of the sacred oracles, and his experience of their truth and excellency, is preserved from such fatal snares, and is an instrument of preserving others also. (*Marg. Ref. n, o.*—*Notes*, ii. 10—16. vi. 23. 1 *Kings* xiii. 11—22. xxii. 6. 19—23. *Matt.* vii. 15—20. 1 *Tim.* iv. 1—5. 2 *Tim.* ii. 14—19. 2 *Pet.* ii. 1—3.)

V. 10, 11. 'Men of unbiassed virtue make a city flourish, by the blessings they procure it from heaven, by their prayers, by their prudent advice, their pious admonitions, and their constant study of the publick good. But the wicked, by their blasphemies, their evil counsels, their pestilent maxims, their impious doctrines, whereby they corrupt men's manners, utterly subvert the good estate thereof.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Men therefore should rejoice when the righteous are exalted to places of trust and power, and frequently great multitudes do: and they commonly triumph and exult, when notoriously unjust and oppressive counsellors or magistrates are cast down, and punished for their crimes. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xxviii. 12. 28. xxix. 8. *Judg.* v. 31. *Esth.* viii. 15—17. *Ps.* lviii. 10, 11. *Ec.* ix. 15—18. *Rev.* xix. 1—8.)

V. 12. A self-conceited man, being destitute of true knowledge and experience, is disposed to express his contempt of others, and expose them to ridicule, when they make mistakes or fall into trouble; and thus he exposes his own folly. But a man of understanding knows how to make proper allowances: he is aware of the instability of human affairs; he does not judge of men's ability or integrity by their success; and if he sees any thing reprehensible, he is reluctant to speak of it, or mentions it with caution and candour. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* x. 26, 27. 2 *Kings* xviii. 28—37. *Ps.* xxxviii. 13—15. 1 *Pet.* ii. 18—25, v. 23.)

Void of wisdom.] "Destitute of heart." (*marg.*) The same expression frequently occurs. (vii. 7. x. 13. xv. 21. xvii. 18. xxiv. 30.) It denotes the want of a right state of

mind, judgment, and affections, or in general of all the faculties of the soul, through ignorance, carelessness, and the prevalence of evil propensities of various kinds. Such a man is *without heart* to what is wise and good. (*Notes*, xvii. 16. *Jer.* xxxii. 38—41, vv. 38, 39. 2 *Thes.* ii. 8—12.)

V. 13. *A tale-bearer.*] The word signifies *a trafficker*; that is, in his neighbour's fame and honour.—'As a merchant carries about his goods, for the sake of gain, so he carries about words, that he may perhaps get advantage by them; but often from a certain levity and curiosity: it may be added, and from proud malevolence.'—Scandalous intelligence, true or false, is the article in which the tale-bearer deals: he is a travelling pedlar, vending such wares: whatever therefore he discovers of *this kind*, he publishes, let who will be disgraced or ruined. But a man of fidelity conceals those secrets with which he is intrusted: and will not disclose what he knows, by any means, when it may injure another's peace or credit; except the honour of God, and the good of society, require it. (*Marg.*—*Notes*, xviii. 8. xx. 19. xxvi. 20—22. *Lev.* xix. 16. *Neh.* vi. 17—19. 1 *Tim.* v. 13—15, v. 13.)

V. 14. When affairs, either publick or private, are conducted with rashness, and directed by ambition, avarice, resentment, or other corrupt passions, nothing but ruin can be expected. But when many wise and experienced men are consulted, and their counsel is deliberately and impartially considered, before a determination is taken; there is a reasonable prospect of safety and success.—'They who have no government fall as leaves: but safety is found in much counsel.' *Sept.*—A ship without a pilot is the figure employed; and the *abundance of good counsel*, rather than the *number consulted*, is stated as the ground of safety. (*Notes*, xxiv. 3—6. 1 *Kings* xii. 6—15.)

V. 15. (*Note*, vi. 1—5.) *A stranger*, 'whose conversation he knoweth not.'—'He doth not, without judgment and consideration of the circumstances, put himself in danger.' (*Marg.*—*Notes*, xvii. 18. xx. 16. xxii. 26, 27.)

V. 16. A pious and discreet woman is as careful of her chastity and reputation, as any worldly men are of their riches: and she will acquire and preserve the esteem and affection of her husband, and the respect of all around her, when old age has effaced her beauty; even as strong men keep possession of the wealth which they have once obtained. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xxxi. 10—31, vv. 10. 28—31. *P. O.* 10—31.)

V. 17. The compassionate, forgiving, and friendly man,

to his own soul; *but *he that is cruel* troubleth his own flesh.

18 The wicked worketh a deceitful work; *but to him that soweth righteousness, *shall be a sure reward.*

19 As ^h righteousness *tendeth* to life; so ⁱ he that pursueth evil *pursueth* it to his own death.

20 They that are ^k of a froward heart *are* abomination to the LORD; but *such as are* ^l upright in *their* way, *are* his delight.

21 Though ^m hand *join* in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished; but ⁿ the seed of the righteous shall be delivered.

in every sense, best ensures his own comfort and happiness: whereas, cruelty to others, in its very nature, as well as consequences, renders a man miserable; a torment to himself, as well as a terror and plague to his family and neighbours. (*Marg. Ref. d, e.—Notes, xv. 27. Job xx. 10—29, vv. 19—27. Ps. xli. 1—3. Ec. iv. 7, 8. Is. lviii. 8—12. Matt. v. 7. Jam. ii. 8—13, v. 13. v. 1—6.*)

V. 18. Wicked men, who attempt to deceive others, deceive themselves, and are ruined by the very measures from which they expected the greatest advantage: but “patient continuance in well-doing” has a happy event, far more uniformly, than good husbandry and good seed secure a good crop of corn; for the *faithfulness* of God to his promises ensures the gracious reward. (*Notes, i. 17—19. Job xxvii. 13—23. Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. Ec. x. 8—10. Hos. x. 12, 13. Gal. vi. 6—10, vv. 8, 9. Eph. iv. 22—24, v. 22.*)

V. 19. “Thus righteousness to life; and he that pursueth evil to death.” The connexion with the preceding verse seems to be preserved.—It can hardly be supposed, that in all these contrasts between *life* and *death*, temporal prosperity or adversity is exclusively meant; when the words, in other parts of the scripture, denote eternal happiness or misery. (*Notes, 7. x. 16. xii. 28. Rom. ii. 7—11.*)

V. 20. *Marg. Ref.—Notes, vi. 12—19. viii. 13. xv. 8. 2 Sam. xxii. 21—28. Ps. xi. 7. xxxvii. 32—34. cxlvii. 10, 11.*

V. 21. “Though wicked men conspire, and join all their forces together; yet all their combination and power shall not free them from just punishment.” *Bp. Hall.* (*Notes, Ex. xxiii. 1—3. Is. lviii. 9, 10. Mic. vii. 1—4, v. 3.*)—On the contrary, God is pleased to protect and bless the posterity of his faithful servants, in order to put honour on those who have honoured him. (*Marg. Ref. n.—Notes, xiii. 22. Gen. xvii. 7, 8. 1 Sam. ii. 30. Ps. cxii. 2, 3. Acts ii. 37—40, v. 39.*)

V. 22. A costly ornament of gold in the snout of a swine, would be continually employed in raking in the filth and mire: thus beauty, in a woman void of prudence and virtue, is disgraced by being rendered subservient to the basest and most ruinous crimes. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.*)

22 As ^o a jewel of gold in a swine’s snout; so is a fair woman, which ^p is without discretion.

23 The ^q desire of the righteous is only good; but ^r the expectation of the wicked is wrath.

24 There is ^s that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and *there is* that withholdeth more than is meet, ^t but *it tendeth* to poverty.

25 ‘The ^u liberal soul shall be made fat; and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

26 He ^v that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him; but ^w blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it.

V. 23. The righteous desire only what is good in itself, and beneficial to others; and this they may confidently hope to obtain: but the wicked, conscious of their selfish and base motives and objects, can only expect the heavy wrath of God, and indeed they are often “consumed with terrors.” (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 7. x. 28. xiv. 32. Ps. x. 17, 18, v. 17. xxxvii. 4. Matt. v. 6. Luke xvi. 24—26. Rom. ii. 7—11. Heb. x. 26, 27.*)

V. 24, 25. ‘There are those, who, sowing their own, make it more; and those who gather, and are impoverished.’ *Sept.—Liberality*, exercised from right motives, is sowing seed; and God gives the increase generally even in temporal things: but he that withholds, when a just and right occasion offers, seldom prospers much even in this world. For God metes to men in their own measure: and bad crops, bad debts, expensive sickness, and a variety of similar deductions, soon amount to far more, than liberal alms would have done; while, if God see it best, large increase, flourishing trade, kind friends, and various other supplies or savings, soon reimburse the expenses of genuine charity. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 18. xix. 17. xxviii. 8. 27. Gen. xxvi. 12. Deut. xv. 9, 10. Ec. xi. 1, 2. Is. xxxii. 6—8. Hag. i. 5—11. ii. 15—19. Matt. v. 7. Luke vi. 37, 38, v. 38. 2 Cor. ix. 8—11.*)

V. 26. ‘He that hoardeth corn in a time of scarcity, on purpose to raise the price, shall fall into the popular hatred, and be loaded with many a curse: but he who then opens his granaries and sells at a moderate rate, shall not only have the people’s good word, but the blessing of God.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—In distressing seasons of scarcity there are individuals, who refuse to sell, nay, who hoard up provisions, in a cruel hope of enriching themselves by enhancing the prices still more: but they not only incur the publick odium, (in which great multitudes of innocent characters are commonly involved,) but are very generally losers by their avarice, as well as exposed to the wrath of God. Whereas he, who sells at a moderate price, is commended by those who are relieved, and best consults his own benefit, as well as the publick good.—The original word, (מַשְׁכֵּן) however, at least equally includes those who give, or *break* their bread to the hungry; who certainly are more generally blessed and prayed

27 He that diligently seeketh good, procureth favour; but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.

28 He that trusteth in his riches shall fall; but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.

29 He that troubleth his own house

shall inherit the wind; and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart.

30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.

31 Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner.

v xvii. 1. Esth. vi. 10. Ps. vii. 15, 16. ix. 15, 16. x. 2. lviii. 6. x. 15. Deut. viii. 12—14. Job xxxi. 24, 25. Ps. lii. 7. lxii. 10. Mark x. 24. Luke xii. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 17. a Ps. i. 3. lii. 8. xcii. 12—14. Is. lx. 21. Jer. xvii. 8.

b Gen. xxxiv. 30. Josh. vii. 24, 25. 1 Sam. xxv. 3. 17. 38. Hab. ii. 9, 10.

c Ec. v. 16. Hos. viii. 7. d iii. 18. xv. 4. e Dan. xii. 3. John iv. 36. 1 Cor. ix. 19—23. 1 Thes. ii. 19. Jam. v. 20. f Heb. taketh. Luke v. 9, 10. f 2 Sam. vii. 14. 15. xii. 9—12. 1 Kings xiii. 24. Jer. xxv. 29. 1 Cor. xi. 30—32. 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18.

for. (Notes, xxviii. 27. Job. xxix. 12—17. Is. lviii. 5—12, v. 7. 2 Cor. ix. 12—15.)

V. 27. 'He that from the time he rises, studies nothing but how to do good to others, shall obtain favour both of God and man: but he whose business it is to do mischief, shall draw upon himself the evil he designs against others.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, xvii. 11. 2 Sam. xvii. 1—4. 23. Esth. vii. 10.)—*Diligently seeketh.*] *שָׁרַף*, signifies *to rise very early to seek* any thing which is greatly desired. (Notes, 2 Chr. xxxvi. 14, 15. Ps. lxiii. 1—4, v. 1.)

V. 28. 'He, whose confidence in riches... makes him... unjust and unmerciful, shall fall to decay like a withered leaf; but they whose pious dependence upon God makes them just and charitable, like a flourishing tree, shall thrive and prosper.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, x. 15. Ps. xlix. 6—8. 15. lii. 6—8. lxii. 8—10. xcii. 12—15. Is. lx. 15—22, v. 22. Jer. xvii. 5—8. Luke xii. 15—21, v. 20. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19.)

V. 29. Many, by their furious passions and contentiousness, or by their pride and prodigality, their avarice and other vices, become a plague and vexation to their families; but they can expect nothing except disappointment and trouble for their own portion: and in general those who are destitute of prudence or industry, will soon become servants to those who are more diligent and discreet. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 17. Gen. xxxiv. 30. xlix. 5—7. Josh. vii. 25, 26. 1 Sam. xxv. 14—17. 35—38. Ec. v. 13—17, v. 17. Hos. viii. 7, 8. Hab. ii. 9—11. Zech. v. 1—4.)

V. 30. The good example, pious discourse, wise instructions, fervent prayers, and zealous good works, of the righteous, become exceedingly beneficial to those around them: they are as fruit from the Tree of Life; they promote the salvation of sinful men. (Note, iii. 18.) And, as immortal souls are valuable beyond all estimation; he who thus wins souls, and allures them into the way of eternal life, is emphatically the *wise man*: he proposes to himself the noblest end, he uses the only proper means, he perseveres, and is prospered by God himself. (Notes, Dan. xii. 2, 3. John iv. 35—38. 1 Cor. ix. 19—23. 2 Cor. xi. 14, 15. Jam. v. 19, 20.)—*Winneth.*] "Taketh." Marg. (Note, Luke v. 1—11, v. 10.)

V. 31. Even the righteous, when they offend, shall be "recompensed in the earth" with sharp corrections: much more then will the wicked, who dare the vengeance of heaven, meet at length with the due reward of their impiety and iniquity.—It is remarkable that St. Peter has quoted the Septuagint translation of this verse:—"If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?" (Notes, 2 Sam. xii. 9—12. 1 Kings xiii. 20—32. Ps. lxxxix. 19—37, vv. 30—33. 1 Cor. xi. 29—34. 1 Pet. iv. 17—19.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

The righteous God, who weighs all our actions in an impartial balance, will never allow his subjects to defraud each other with impunity. It is, alas! very common for men to give short weight and measure, and in various ways to cheat and rob their neighbours; and numberless crimes of this kind here escape detection and punishment: but let it not be overlooked, that they "are an abomination to the LORD;" and that they will be produced at the day of judgment, as decisive proofs of the hypocrisy of multitudes even of those who have been zealous, in their way, for evangelical doctrines. This is so far from a light matter, that it is a most grievous oppression; and thousands of the poor are sometimes deprived almost of necessary food, to enrich a few fraudulent dealers. But let it be remembered, that "he shall have judgment without mercy, who hath shewed no mercy:" on the other hand, he who is kept from growing rich, by conscientiously avoiding all exaction, and by acting with strict honesty, may recollect that "a just weight is the LORD's delight." Indeed "the integrity of the upright guides them" far from such fraudulent practices: while the perverseness of transgressors destroys them: for "the wicked shall fall by their own wickedness," and be ensnared by Satan, through their own covetousness and selfishness.—But what are those wonderful advantages derived from riches, that men are universally so prone to seize the golden bait? In times of public calamities, they generally expose the possessor to peculiar danger; they will not profit in the day of wrath; and he who trusts in them, will certainly be left without resource in the hour of death and the day of judgment. How much more valuable then is that "righteousness which delivereth from death!" How reasonable to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness!"—Every one's conscience testifies, that "when a wicked man dieth, his expectation perisheth," and all his hopes expire in eternal despair: and even the irreligious are constrained, when an eminently pious person is removed, to allow that he is delivered from trouble, and gone to a happier world. These salutary convictions might be more generally productive of abiding good, did not "the hypocrite with his mouth destroy his neighbour;" persuading the unstable to rest satisfied with a name, a notion, a form of godliness, an easy, worldly religion.—May God grant to every reader that "knowledge by which the just is delivered."—Indeed, the same conduct, which best secures our own happiness, is most conducive to the good of others: and if a truly wise and pious man be advanced to authority, many will eventually have great cause for rejoicing: whereas the

CHAP. XII.

Maxims of wisdom; distinguishing the righteous

prosperity of the wicked is a publick calamity, and their downfall a most desirable event. In private and even obscure situations, the righteous are both blessed and blessings: by their example and prayers, publick calamities are often prevented or retarded; they are the light and the salt of the earth; and the fatal tendency of wicked counsellors, and impious opinions industriously circulated, are counteracted by their means. And who can say, to what extent such mischiefs would proceed, were all the righteous expelled from any country?—Those who are “void of understanding” despise their neighbours; and go about as tale-bearers, slanderers, and betrayers of secrets, to the unspeakable mischief of society: but the wise and righteous hold their peace, if they cannot speak to good purpose; they scorn to betray such as confide in them, or even to injure those whose infirmities they witness; and they *pity* such as are not entitled to their esteem.—True religion, however, should be carefully distinguished from self-righteousness, for “when pride cometh, then cometh shame; but with the lowly is wisdom:” and also from all kinds of antinomian licentiousness. But, as in kingdoms, “where no counsel is, the people perish,” so it is in this respect: unless able and faithful ministers are raised up to instruct mankind, almost all run into one or the other of these fatal extremes. What need then is there for us to “pray the Lord of the harvest, to send forth labourers into his harvest!” for “in the multitude of these counsellors is safety.” What pains should all ministers take, that they may be wise and faithful counsellors in concerns of this immense importance! and how should all consult such as are approved for integrity and knowledge, especially in difficult cases, where their present comfort and usefulness, and eternal salvation, are deeply concerned!

V. 15—31.

True religion is true wisdom: and while it prompts to all justice and mercy, it teaches men to avoid whatever is rash and pernicious. The wise and pious Christian will be very careful not to commit himself, by “becoming surety for a stranger:” not only lest he should smart and be sore broken (*marg.* 15) for it: but lest his family and friends should be involved with him, and his ability to relieve the poor should be diminished. Unless, therefore, the case be peculiar, he will stand aloof, knowing that “he who hateth suretiship is sure.” At the same time, he will endeavour, in this world of sin and misery, to do what he can towards the relief of distress and the communication of happiness. Indeed this is one of the most delightful and satisfactory of all human enjoyments. While the selfish and sordid, the envious and malicious, the sensual, profligate, and dissipated, are tortured in various ways by their own passions, and by the effects of them, and trouble their families by their misconduct; “the merciful man doeth good to his own soul.” He doubles his own enjoyments, secures a blessing on his undertakings and possessions, has inward peace and confidence, and the satisfaction of knowing, that many are blessing him and praying for him. By diligently seeking the good of others,

from the wicked, by their thoughts, words, and works; noting the different event of their conduct; and teaching discretion both in temporal and spiritual things,
1—28

he procures favour from man, and obtains assurance of the Lord’s merciful acceptance. “He soweth righteousness and his reward is sure.” Even if he be poor, his “desire is only good,” and his prayers and example will be useful. According to the degree in which God has prospered him, he waters others, and shall himself be abundantly watered: and experience proves, that those, who on Christian principles abound in liberality, even beyond what rigid prudence would allow, so far from impoverishing their families, are generally prospered in a remarkable manner.—On the other hand, those who profess to “know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,” and learn, by hints at least, from various quarters, that they are thought to “withhold more than is meet,” and plead that they cannot afford to be charitable, should consider whether God does not withhold his blessing from their temporal concerns, on this very ground; and whether they ought not to *prove him* by adopting a more liberal plan.—Indeed, almost in every thing, *that* is best for us, which is best for our neighbours: in giving, lending, selling, or the contrary, covetousness commonly defeats its own ends; and he who grasps at unfair advantages, comes short of such as he might conscientiously and creditably have secured. This indeed is one effect of human selfishness, and exposes its folly: yet it still continues to influence the conduct of almost all men, even amidst general execration, and in circumstances of such cruelty, as are shocking to relate.—Indeed the common excuse for covetousness is, regard to a man’s family: yet this should, in fact, teach a contrary lesson; for “the seed of the righteous shall be delivered” from those evils, which overwhelm the posterity of the wicked.—So that the most prosperous sinner, in every sense, “worketh a deceitful work:” he “pursueth evil to his own death:” and, as “they who are of a froward heart are an abomination to the LORD,” it must certainly follow, that “though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished.” For if “the righteous be recommended in the earth;” if God sharply corrects his children, in whom he delights; what will be the doom of his determined enemies?—Alas! vast numbers throng the broad road to destruction; and keep one another in countenance and in spirits, notwithstanding the awful warnings given them in the sacred scriptures: while the narrow way to life is still little frequented. (*Note, Matt. vii. 13, 14.*)—But those who have found the way of life, should be unwearied in their endeavours to *win* over others, to accompany them in it. They should study to recommend the gospel by a harmless and kind, as well as pious behaviour; and by a constant attention to all the proprieties of relative life: and they ought to use every means consistent with their station in society, to make their connexions and neighbours wise unto salvation. As one soul is more valuable than the whole world; and as successful endeavours for the conversion of sinners is a peculiar evidence of true wisdom; so no disappointments, or unmerited reproaches, should prevent the Christian’s persevering in his benevolent and zealous efforts: for if at length he prevails but in one instance, this will amply

WHOSO ^aloveth instruction loveth knowledge; but ^bhe that hateth reproof is brutish.

2 A ^cgood man obtaineth favour of the LORD; but ^da man of wicked devices will he condemn.

3 A man ^eshall not be established by wickedness; but ^fthe root of the righteous shall not be moved.

4 A ^gvirtuous woman is a crown to

her husband; but ^hshe that maketh ashamed, is ⁱas rottenness in his bones.

5 The ^kthoughts of the righteous are right; but ^lthe counsels of the wicked are deceit.

6 The ^mwords of the wicked are to lie in wait for blood; but ⁿthe mouth of the upright shall deliver them.

7 The ^owicked are overthrown, and

secured by the root from material detriment.—‘They are ‘so grounded in the favour of God, that their root shall ‘prosper continually.’ (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 4. A prudent and faithful woman, who has strength of mind to govern her passions, and who diligently attends to domestick affairs, will prove a great comfort to her husband, and conduce more to his credit than the wearing of a crown could do. But a contentious, imperious, extravagant, improvident, or adulterous woman, is like a disease which wastes the bones. She injures her husband’s character, ruins his circumstances, prevents the proper care of his family, leads him into temptation, drives him into bad company and excess, or perhaps shortens his days by the inward anguish which she causes him. (*Notes*, xiv. 1. xix. 13, 14. xxi. 9. xxxi. 10—31.)

V. 5. (*Note*, Ps. cxix. 113.) The righteous habitually devise, contrive, and purpose those things which are good and just; they desire to know and to do the will of God, and have no sinister or malicious intentions covered over with fair professions.—But the wicked secretly contrive how to compass their interested and selfish purposes, and to avoid detection and disgrace on account of their concealed iniquities; they consult with themselves how to over-reach, and obtain undue advantages in bargains; and they would commit more fraud, injustice, or other wickedness, if they were not afraid of injuring their reputation, or of falling under the lash of human laws. (*Notes*, xi. 23. xxiv. 8, 9. Ps. xxxvi. 1—4. cxl. 1—3.)

V. 6. Wicked men frequently consult together, concerning the most effectual means of gratifying their avarice, ambition, revenge, lust, or enmity against the servants of God; and they are ready to lie in wait for blood, when they can do it with impunity. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, i. 10—19. iv. 16, 17. vi. 16—19.) Hence unrighteous wars, massacres, assassinations, oppressions, persecutions, and murders of various kinds, have prevailed in the world, ever since Cain lay in wait for the blood of righteous Abel: and far more innocent blood would be shed, were the restraint of human laws removed. But the mouth of the upright, pleading their own cause with wisdom which cannot be gainsayed, often delivers them from false accusers and persecutors: and they frequently give such information, cautions, and counsels to those, who are laid wait for, as deliver them also from the danger. (*Notes*, xiv. 3. 1 Kings i. 11—14. Esth. iv. 13, 14. vii. 2—6.)

V. 7. When ungodly men have attained the summit of prosperity; through the fickleness of their patrons, or the multitude and envy of rivals; the instability of human affairs, the failure of their projects, or the detection of

make amends for all his past discouragements. In this view how good is *the work* of the ministry! How honourable and useful the diligent and faithful minister! What encouragement is there for all, employed in this sacred service, to labour incessantly, even amidst contempt and hardship! Here especially “the fruit of the righteous is “a tree of life:” and it will soon appear, that “those who “win souls” are far wiser, than those who heap up wealth: for “he that trusteth in his riches shall fall; but “the righteous shall flourish as a branch.”—Indeed we cannot turn any way without seeing the excellency of the righteous: it may be useful to many readers, to compare the prudent and pious matron, who retains her reputation, and grows into the affections of those related to her, and increases respect, when external accomplishments are wearing out; who often wins to the paths of holiness the souls of her children or servants, and perhaps even that of her husband; with the fair woman that wants discretion, whose beauty only serves to render her more conspicuously infamous and mischievous. Let the young then contemplate this contrast; and seek wisdom and grace, as the only enduring embellishments, and recommendations to constancy of affection and esteem. Finally, let us all desire and pursue those blessings, which our Surety purchased for sinners by his sufferings and death; and study to imitate his instructions, to copy his example, and to keep his commandments.

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1. *Notes*, ii. 10, 11. v. 9—13, v. 12, 13. viii. 17. 34. ix. 7—9. xviii. 1, 2. Ps. xxxii. 8—11, vv. 8, 9. 2 *Thes.* ii. 8—12.—*Brutish.*] *Note*, Ps. xcii. 7, v. 6.

V. 2. *A good man, &c.*] That is, a man of a kind, friendly, and merciful disposition. Where this is genuine and habitual, and pervades a man’s whole conduct, without allowed exceptions of persons or cases, it must be the effect of divine grace: and such a person will be proportionably favoured by the Lord, both with inward peace, and a blessing on his undertakings. But he who allows himself to devise wickedness, waiting for an opportunity of committing it; or who covers selfish and vicious designs under a profession of religion, friendship, or affection, will be condemned by the righteous Judge of the world. (*Notes*, vi. 16—19. Ps. cxii. 5, 6. Is. xxxii. 5—3.)

V. 3. The prosperity, which is obtained by wickedness, cannot be permanently established, by any sagacity or power: but the righteous resemble trees that strike deep root in the earth, and grow up gradually: the branches of which may be shaken by furious tempests, but they are

^p xiv. 1. xxiv. 3, *are not*; but ^p the house of the righteous shall stand.

^q Gen. xli. 39. 1 Sam. xvi. 18. xviii. 30. Ec. viii. 1. Luke xii. 42—44. xvi. 8. 1 Cor. iii. 10—15. iv. 5. 2 Cor. x. 18. 8 A man shall be ^a commended according to his wisdom; but ^r he that is ^s of a perverse heart shall be despised.

^r i. 26. iii. 35. v. 23. 1 Sam. xiii. 13. xxv. 17. Ps. cxxxii. 18. Dan. xii. 2. Mal. ii. 8, 9. Matt. xxvii. 4, 5. Acts xii. 23. 9 *He that is* ^r despised, and hath a servant, *is* better than he that honoureth himself, and lacketh bread.

^s Heb. *perverse of heart.* 10 A ^r righteous *man* regardeth the life of his beast; ^r but the ^t tender mercies of the wicked *are* cruel.

^t Gen. xxxiii. 13, 14. Num. xxii. 28—32. Deut. xxv. 4. Jon. iv. 11. 11 He that ^x tilleth his land shall

their wickedness; or through their own insolence, cruelty, and rashness; they are often overthrown at once, their families and party are ruined with them, and they are gone and neglected in a very short time. (*Notes, Esth. vi. vii.*) But the moderate prosperity of the righteous stands on a firmer basis, and, by the blessing of God, is often continued to their descendants. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, x. 25. 30. xi. 21. xiv. 11. xv. 25.*)

V. 8. Whatever transient reputation a man may acquire, for external or superficial accomplishments, or even for abilities, learning, and achievements; if he be of a perverse disposition, and go on in the crooked ways of iniquity and impiety, he will at length sink into contempt. (*Notes, 2 Sam. xiv. 25—27. xv. 1—6. xvi. 20—23, v. 23. xvii. 23. xviii. 17, 18.*) But the man of true wisdom and piety, though for a time neglected, will at length assuredly be approved, commended, and had in honour.—The first clause is literally, “According to the mouth of his wisdom a man shall be praised;” and the capacity of giving wise counsel, in an agreeable and impressive manner, seems especially intended.

V. 9. Many persons, who have been brought up in the higher ranks of life, but have not the means of living according to that station in society, are too proud or slothful to employ themselves in inferior occupations; and thus they become miserably poor, want things necessary for themselves and families, are a burden upon their friends, and even defraud their creditors, to maintain a vain appearance of dignity. But he who is despised for engaging in a mean employment, and making a homely appearance, but by so doing can have the comforts of life, without dependence or disingenuous arts, is more happy, wise, useful, and respectable, than “he that honoureth himself and lacketh bread.” (*Notes, xiii. 7.*)—The old translation, (with which many versions agree,) gives a different sense to this proverb. “He that is despised, and is his own servant, is better than he that boasteth himself and wanteth bread.” The poor man, who is despised, yet lives by his honest labour, is more valuable and happy than the proud boaster.

V. 10. A pious or truly righteous man is always compassionate; (*Notes, Ps. cxii. 4;*) and would deem it cruelty to put even an animal to needless pain; and especially to abuse those useful creatures, which conduce greatly to the

be satisfied with bread; but ^y he that followeth vain *persons is* ^r void of understanding.

12 The wicked ^a desireth the ^t net of evil *men*; but ^o the root of the righteous yieldeth *fruit*.

13 The ^r wicked is ^c snared by the transgression of *his* lips; ^d but the just shall come out of trouble.

14 A man shall be ^c satisfied with good by the fruit of *his* mouth; ^r and the recompence of a man's hands shall be rendered unto him.

xviii. 6, 7. 1 Kings ii. 23. Ps. v. 6. lxiv. 8. Dan. vi. 24. Matt. xxvii. 25. Gen. xlviii. 16. 2 Sam. iv. 9. Ps. xxxiv. 19. Ec. vii. 18. Rom. viii. 35—37. 2 Pet. ii. 9. e xiii. 2. xviii. 20, 21. Ps. lxiii. 5. f Is. iii. 10, 11. Matt. x. 41, 42. xvi. 27. 2 Thes. i. 6, 7. Heb. ii. 2. xi. 26.

comfort of life. But wicked men are hard-hearted and cruel, even in their tenderest mercies. Thus they deem themselves very merciful, when their oppressions are not quite so cruel as they might be, or as those of some oppressors are: and they often affect to speak of the poor and distressed, as being very well used, and in a very desirable situation; when they themselves could not endure such treatment for a single day. (*Marg. Ref.*)—“It is very laudable to exercise kindness towards brute creatures, that we keep ourselves the more remote from all manner of cruelty towards men.” *Grotius*, quoted by *Bp. Patrick*. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Num. xxii. 29, 30. P. O. 22—41.*)

V. 11. “He that takes pains in an honest employment, suppose in tilling his land, shall find it requite him with sufficient, if not plentiful provision for himself and his family: but he that is idle, falling into the company of loose and wicked persons, will find at last, ... that he wants not only bread, but understanding.” *Bp. Patrick*. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, i. 10—19. xiii. 20. 23. xiv. 23. xxviii. 19. 1 Thes. iv. 9—12. 2 Thes. iii. 10—12.*)

V. 12. When the ungodly see others prosper by iniquity, they straightway wish that they could act with similar ingenuity, or obtain the same opportunities: they would be glad of the advantages of sin, forgetting or despising its guilt and the judgment to come: and if they are not so great plunderers or cheats as some are, it is merely because they cannot or dare not. But the root of divine grace, in the heart of the righteous, produces good desires and purposes, and yields more comfort to themselves, besides doing much good to others.—“The wicked man affects those methods of fraudulent invention, which he sees some fraudulent oppressors use to their advantage.” *Bp. Hall*. (*Notes, i. 10—19. Jer. v. 26—29. xvii. 5—8. Rom. vi. 21—23.*)

V. 13. Perjuries, treasonable words, defamations, and lies, and rash engagements, often involve wicked men, however subtle, in most perplexing troubles and inevitable ruin, and they are snared by the transgression of their own lips: while a frank and open conduct eventually tends to credit and comfort. (*Notes, vi. 1—5, v. 2. xviii. 6, 7. 1 Kings ii. 23—25.*)

V. 14. When a man speaks that which is useful to others, he receives a satisfaction from it himself; by counselling and instructing others, he edifies himself; and

15 The ^g way of a fool is right in his own eyes; ^h but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.

16 A ⁱ fool's wrath is ^j presently known; ^k but a prudent man covereth shame.

17 He ^l that speaketh truth, sheweth forth righteousness; ^m but a false witness, deceit.

18 There is ⁿ that speaketh like the piercings of a sword; ^o but the tongue of the wise is health.

19 The ^p lip of truth shall be established for ever; ^q but a lying tongue is but for a moment.

20 ^r Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil; ^s but to the counsellors of peace is joy.

21 There shall ^t no evil happen to the just; but the wicked shall be ^u filled with mischief.

22 ^v Lying lips are abomination to the LORD; ^w but they that deal truly are his delight.

23 ^x A prudent man concealeth knowledge; ^y but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness.

24 The ^z hand of the diligent shall bear rule; ^a but the ^b slothful shall be under tribute.

12. xxvii. 24—26. Jer. xvii. 16. Mark vii. 21, 22. xii. 14—17. Rom. i. 29. s. Is. ix. 6, 7. Zech. vi. 13. Matt. v. 9. Heb. xii. 14. 1 Pet. iii. 8—13. t. Rom. viii. 28. 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. 2 Cor. iv. 17. u. i. 31. xiv. 14. Jer. xiii. 12—14. Hab. ii. 16. Rev. xviii. 6. x. vi. 16, 17. Ps. v. 6. Is. ix. 15. Ez. xiii. 19, 22. Rev. xxi. 8, xxii. 15. y. xi. 1. 20. xv. 8. Jer. ix. 24. z. x. 19. xi. 13. xiii. 16. a. xv. 2. Ec. x. 3. 12—14. b. x. 4. xiii. 4. xvii. 2. xxii. 29. 1 Kings xi. 28. † Or, deceitful. c. 27. xix. 15. xxi. 25, 26. xxii. 13. xxiv. 30—34. xxvi. 13—16.

God will graciously recompense the good words and works of his servants, as well as punish the wicked according to their deserts. (Notes, xiii. 2. xviii. 20, 21. Is. iii. 10, 11.)

V. 15. A fool is so conceited and headstrong, that he is incapable of taking warning or counsel; and he is determined to vindicate all that he does, and to persist in all his rash enterprizes, as if he were infallible. But a wise man distrusts his own judgment and heart; he is afraid of being misled, and desires to be convinced of his errors and misconduct; and so he hearkens to instruction, that he may grow wiser and wiser. (Notes, iii. 7, 8. ix. 7—9. xiv. 16. xvi. 2. xxvi. 12.)

V. 16. A foolish man is soon made angry, and is hasty in expressing his resentment, without regard to company or circumstances; and thus he is ever embroiled in quarrels, and running into mischief. (Notes, xxv. 28. xxix. 11. 1 Sam. xx. 30—33. 1 Kings xix. 1, 2.) But a prudent man carefully represses his resentment, and avoids such words and actions, as would afterwards cover him with shame: or he covers the shameful behaviour of such as abuse him, and lets it pass unnoticed. (Note, x. 12.)—The old translation is more literal; “A fool in a day shall be known by his anger,” &c.—The word rendered prudent, commonly means *cunning*; and so may point out the shrewd, crafty man, who seems to take no notice of affronts, because he designs hereafter either to revenge them, or to turn them in some way to his own advantage. (Note, 2 Sam. xiii. 22—29.)

V. 17. He who, in a court of justice, unreservedly testifies to the whole truth, promotes the cause of equity, and assists the magistrate in decreeing righteous judgment: but false witnesses impose on him, and may thus lead him unintentionally to decide in favour of the wicked.—The maxim holds equally good, in many other cases, when a full and fair declaration of the truth effectually serves and establishes the cause of justice and piety. (Notes, 18, 19. xiv. 25. xix. 28. 1 Sam. xxii. 9, 10. 14—16. 1 Kings xxi. 8—14.)

V. 18, 19. False accusations and perjuries may murder like a sword, or rob a man of his estate: and even rash and hasty calumnies may wound his credit, or excite suspicions and contentions destructive to domestick comfort,

and to the peace of his mind. But the tongue of the wise is employed in composing differences, in vindicating aspersed characters, in comforting the distressed, and in promoting justice, piety, and charity. And he who thus makes truth his standard, and equity and peace his aim, will gradually establish his own character, and will not have cause to fear any investigation: but lies and deceit only serve a present purpose, expose a man to speedy detection, and render him suspected and distrusted in every thing. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, x. 20, 21. xv. 4. 7. xix. 9.)

V. 20. (Marg. Ref.) Those who imagine evil dare not openly avow their designs; so that malice and mischief are always attended with dissimulation, and productive of terrors and perplexities: (Notes, 12. xxvi. 24—27:) but such as consult the peace and happiness of others, have joy and serenity in their own minds.

V. 21. ‘Divine Providence takes a peculiar care of good men, to avert the harm that the iniquity of the wicked intends them; which shall fall upon themselves ... to overwhelm them.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Rom. viii. 28—31. 2 Thes. i. 5—10. 2 Pet. i. 3, 4.)—The Septuagint render the first clause of this verse, “Nothing iniquitous shall please the righteous.”

V. 22. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, vi. 16—19. Is. ix. 13—17. Jer. ix. 23, 24.) ‘It is thought no great matter, if a man break his word, or any way deceive his neighbour: but know, that this is a thing exceeding hateful to the divine majesty: and on the contrary, they that faithfully perform their promises, and in all things deal truly with their neighbours, are no less acceptable to him.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 23. Men of prudence and discretion make no ostentation of their knowledge; but reserve it for suitable occasions, and shew it in their conduct. On the contrary, ignorant and frivolous persons are generally vain-glorious, and by attempting to display their wit or learning, they commonly proclaim their own emptiness and folly. (Notes, xv. 2. Ec. x. 2, 3. 11—15.)

V. 24. Diligence has a natural tendency to advance men in society, and will generally conduct them to eminence in their occupations, or to influence or authority in the community: but the slothful are never likely to be any thing but dependents or slaves.—The word (רָמַץ), rendered

^d xiv. 10. xv. 13. 15 xvii. 22. xviii. 14. Neh. ii. 1. 2. Ps. xxxviii. 6. xlii. 11. Mark xiv. 33, 34. 25 ^d Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop; ^e but a good word maketh it glad.

^e 18. xv. 23. xvi. 24. xxv. 11. xxvii. 9. Is. 1. 4. Zech. i. 13. 2 Cor. ii. 4—7. 26 The ^f righteous is more ^g excellent than his neighbour; ^h but the way of the wicked seduceth them.

^f xvii. 27. Ps. xvi. 3. Matt. v. 46—48. Luke vi. 32—36. 1 Pet. ii. 18—21. ^g Ps. lxxxi. 12, 13. Jam. i. 13, 14. 2 Pet. ii. 18—22. 1 John ii. 26. ^h Or, abundant. Rev. xii. 9. xiii. 14.

slothful may mean *deceitful*: (*marg.*) and indeed sloth is commonly an inlet to dishonesty, which exposes a man to penalties, confinement, and severe treatment. (*Notes*, x. 4, 5. xiii. 4. xxi. 25, 26. xxii. 29.)

V. 25. Distress of conscience, sharp afflictions, and discouraging fears, deject the heart, and unfit a man for his duty: but a kind and encouraging word may often give a favourable turn to his thoughts, inspire him with hope, and animate him to activity.—This maxim points out an easy and cheap way of being useful. (*Notes*, xiv. 10. xv. 15. 23. xviii. 14. Is. xxxv. 3, 4.)

V. 26. Though wicked men cannot but see, that the righteous are more excellent than their neighbours, and in general more abound in comforts; yet the pleasures and gains of their iniquities *seduce* their minds, and cause them to continue in their disgraceful, perilous, and wretched courses. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 27. The slothful, or deceitful, man (*Note*, 24.) makes no good use of the advantages, which Providence throws in his way, and has no comfort of them: if at any time he make a vigorous exertion, or seem successful, he loses all the benefit for want of perseverance, and so brings nothing to perfection. But the possessions of a diligent man are valuable to himself, and to others also. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 28. 'True goodness leads unto endless prosperity and happiness; nor is there any one action of virtue that tends to make a man miserable, as all manner of wickedness doth.' *Bp. Patrick*. What is the meaning of this verse, if Solomon confined his views, as some would persuade us, to this mortal life and dying world? (*Note*, *Rom.* vi. 21—23.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

The degree of our love to any object may fairly be measured by our value for the means of obtaining it. He who loves science, loves study, and prizes information. He who chooses wisdom and grace, values the word and ordinances of God; and is thankful even for reproofs, which conduce to his improvement. On the other hand, the man, whose main object it is to gratify his appetites and passions, cannot but despise instruction and hate reproof: and consequently he chooses to reside in places, and frequent companies, where he is least likely to meet with any check in his evil courses.—The Lord sees, and will at length discover to the whole world, the secret thoughts of every heart. Then the contrivances, speculations, and desires, of those who "devise evil," will be condemned, though they have never been reduced to practice: and the benevolent intentions, the pious meditations, the plans and counsels of the righteous to do good, though here frustrated, will be made known and graciously rewarded. And when the concealed part of every character shall be made publick and manifest; the difference between the right-

27 The ^h slothful *man* roasteth not ^h that which he took in hunting; ⁱ but ⁱ the substance of a diligent man is precious.

28 ^k In the way of righteousness is life; and *in* the path-way *thereof* there is no death.

^h xlii. 4. xliii. 21. xxvi. 15. ⁱ xv. 16. xvi. 8. Ps. xxxvii. 16.

^k viii. 35. ix. 11. x. 16. xi. 19. Ez. xviii. 9. 20—24. Rom. v. 21. vi. 22, 23. Tit. ii. 11, 12. 1 John ii. 29. iii. 7. 3 John 11.

eous and the wicked will appear so evident and immense, that none shall have one word to speak against the sentence awarded to each of them.—Let us for a moment realize the idea of every word, which men have spoken during their whole lives, being disclosed at the day of judgment: what a discovery will thus be made of men's hearts! Not to dwell on the vain and corrupt communication, which proceeds out of the mouths of the ungodly: all the secret cabals of those who lie in wait for blood; all the perjuries and calumnies, by which men accomplish their cruel or unrighteous purposes; all their lies, flatteries, reproaches, proud boastings, and blasphemies; when made known before the assembled world, will form such a discovery, as must overwhelm the wicked with unutterable confusion.—On the other hand, the pious discourse and wise counsels of the righteous, by which they rescued many from snares and dangers, or endeavoured to be useful to their souls; and every good and profitable word, which they have spoken, will be made known to their joy, and contribute to evince their real character. Thus they shall be "satisfied with good by the fruit of their mouths," as well as recompensed according to the work of their hands.—Even those men of the world, who are the wisest in their generation, are unable to establish themselves by their wickedness: and frequently they and their families fall and perish, as rapidly as they at first prospered. But the righteous, being rooted in the favour of God, and secured by his promises, shall never be moved: they are fruitful and useful, and "the generation of the upright shall be blessed." Many of them indeed are poor in this world, and earn their bread by hard labour: but having food and raiment, they are content and satisfied. They think no honest employment a disgrace: and while the proud and slothful, and those who follow after vain persons, who affect the appearance of affluence, who honour themselves and despise the industrious, often sink into deep distress; the very persons whom they slight, possess very many comforts, and also find something to spare to relieve the indigent.—Again, who are they that enjoy most comfort, and prove the greatest blessings, in domestick life? Mark the difference between the pious and prudent woman, who is "a crown to her husband;" and her "that maketh ashamed, and is as rottenness in his bones."—Can any one seriously consider this subject, and endure the thought of ever becoming the disgrace, misery, and ruin, of the nearest relation on earth? Yet vice and folly commonly produce this dreadful consequence: and there is no security against it, or reasonable hope of becoming creditable, comfortable, and useful, in any relation of life, without piety and heavenly wisdom. How then are they deluded, who, in forming the conjugal union, prefer beauty, wit, or external accomplishments, to substantial excellency of character!—Indeed the real and consistent Christian not only endeavours to make his rela-

CHAP. XIII.

The advantages of prudence, diligence, piety, and sincerity; and the mischiefs resulting from the opposite vices, 1—25.

tions, domesticks, and neighbours comfortable; but he sympathizes in the sufferings of the very animals; he is incapable of cruelty to them, will not allow others to abuse them if he can hinder it, and takes pleasure in seeing them enjoy that kind of happiness of which they are capable. Surely then, he will never “desire the net of evil men:” but rather at any time renounce his own indulgence and interest, than add to the miseries of human beings, in any part of the globe. But “the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.” They lavish outward favours, while they would seduce the objects of their selfish affection to those crimes, which are most ruinous in this world and in the next. They are prodigal to the worthless, and harsh and penurious to the industrious. They exact by merciless oppression from one set of men, what they bestow on another with ostentatious liberality. They weep over the tragick tale of imaginary woe, and are callous to real misery. They affect the praise of philanthropy, by a specious conduct abroad; while their severe spirit, and furious passions, render their own families a scene of confusion and misery.—It is indeed most wonderful, how generally these *truths*, or rather *facts*, are overlooked or forgotten; and how little effect they produce on the judgment and conduct even of professed Christians. But at length “a man shall certainly be commended according to his wisdom,” “the righteous shall come out of trouble,” “and he that is of a perverse spirit shall be despised.”

V. 15—28.

In proportion as men are foolish, they commonly are self-sufficient. “Their way,” however rash and absurd in itself, “is right in their own eyes:” and, instead of growing wiser by hearkening to prudent counsel, they consider every intimation that they are mistaken, as an almost unpardonable affront.—The first appearance of this spirit should be carefully checked, in young people especially; for when it has got the ascendancy, there is little hope of repressing it. (*Note*, ix. 7—9.)—When persons of this character take offence, their wrath is presently known, by passionate language, upbraidings, and slanders, if not by furious endeavours to revenge themselves. They “speak like the piercings of a sword;” not regarding whose character, interest, or comfort they wound or destroy: but in thus pouring out of the abundance of their hearts, they proclaim their own foolishness, and will soon be filled with mischief.—“Lying lips are abomination to the LORD; but they that deal truly are his delight.” Among the several ways in which this maxim may be improved to practical purposes; it peculiarly applies to the ministers of religion. “He, that” in this respect “speaketh truth, sheweth forth righteousness; but a false witness deceit.” And that minister, who “shuns not to declare the whole counsel of God,” and “keeps back nothing profitable;” who never wounds, but in order to heal; who injures no man’s credit or peace, as with the piercings of the sword of an enemy; but often lays open the conscience with the faithful wounds of a friendly surgeon, to prepare the way for

A WISE son *heareth* his father’s instruction; ^a but a scorner *heareth* not rebuke.

^a iv. 1—14. 20—22. x. 1. xv. 5. 20.
^b ix. 7, 8. xiv. 6. 1 Sam. ii. 25.

heavenly consolations: this man, I say, however despised and hated at present, will at length “receive the crown of glory which fadeth not away.” In this case especially, “the lip of truth shall be established for ever; but the lying tongue is but for a moment.”—Even the silence of a pious man, while he represses resentment; meekly endures provocation; hides the shame that folly would expose; conceals the knowledge which ostentation would display; or frowns silent disapprobation, where a more direct reproof would be improper; is an evidence of wisdom, and is full of instruction. In short, in every thing, “the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour,” and far more happy also.—While “deceit in the heart of those who imagine evil,” often fills them with alarm and anguish; “to the counsellors of peace is joy:” and when their good words or kind actions make glad the hearts of the afflicted or desponding, they share the comfort which they communicate.—The diligence, modesty, prudence, and integrity, which true religion teaches, procure men influence and respect, frequently among such as are themselves irreligious; and so advance them to desirable and useful situations: while sloth, prodigality, and duplicity, tend directly to abject dependence, deep distress, or general contempt, even in this world.—These things indeed are undeniable; and many ungodly men have transient convictions, nay, sometimes an abiding opinion, that their pious neighbours or relations are and will be happier than themselves: but they are seduced by evil companions and indulged passions, and so remain the slaves of sin. Their temporary efforts at reformation, with all their knowledge and advantages, prove unavailing, from want of resolution and perseverance: they either adopt false principles, and so are hardened in presumption; or, being baffled in their feeble and heartless endeavours, they lie down in despondence.—Oh then, let every reader hear the Saviour’s call, when he says, “Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able.” But happy indeed are they, who are walking “in the way of righteousness;” for in it “is life, and in the path-way thereof there is no death.”—Generally, when the wicked take a hasty resolution, or make a vigorous effort, they lose all the benefit for want of persevering diligence and dependence on the Lord: so that, whilst the diligent acquire dominion over their passions, the slothful is under tribute to his lusts and evil habits. Every advantage is precious to the former, but useless or ruinous to the latter; and he is always either buoyed up in presumption, or sunk down into despondency. In short, all the knowledge and convictions of the ungodly settle in something short of conversion to God, and a holy life: but the prudent Christian makes no ostentation of his knowledge, except in his exemplary conduct and useful conversation, or by instructing the ignorant and encouraging the dejected to hope, and wait upon the Lord.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIII. V. 1. A young man of prudence and

2 A man shall ^eeat good by the fruit of *his* mouth; but ^dthe soul of the transgressors *shall eat* violence.

3 He ^ethat keepeth his mouth keepeth his life; *but* he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.

4 The soul of the sluggard ^fdesireth, and *hath* nothing; ^gbut the soul of the diligent shall be ^hmade fat.

5 A ⁱrighteous *man* hateth lying; but a wicked *man* ^kis loathsome, ^land cometh to shame.

6 ^mRighteousness keepeth *him* that is upright in the way; but ⁿwickedness overthroweth ^{*}the sinner.

ⁿ v. 22. xxi. 12. 2 Chr. xxviii. 23. Ps. cxi. 11. * Heb. sin.

good sense will pay attention to his father's good *instruction*, and not require reproofs or corrections, to induce his obedience: on the contrary, a scorner will not hear, obey, or be influenced, even by the severest rebukes. (*Notes*, ix. 7—9. xii. 1. xv. 5. 20. 1 Sam. ii. 23—25.)

V. 2. "A man shall eat good things by the fruit of *his* mouth; but the soul of the trespassers *shall suffer* violence." *Old Version*. (*Notes*, i. 17—19. x. 11. xii. 14. xviii. 20, 21.)—'If he use his tongue to God's glory and the profit of his neighbour, God shall bless him.'

V. 3. 'He that looks carefully to his tongue, ... takes a safe course for preserving his life, which is oft endangered by much and wild talking.' *Bp. Hall*. 'He that carefully observes every word he speaks, preserves himself from much trouble and danger: but he that blurts out at every thing that comes into his head, not minding what he saith, is in the ready way to ruin.' *Bp. Patrick*. The word rendered *destruction* properly means, *terror*, or *consternation*. (*Notes*, x. 19. xii. 13. *Jam*. i. 26. iii. 3—12.)

V. 4. 'He ever desireth, but taketh no pains to get any thing.'—This applies both to things temporal and things eternal. God gives every thing; but only in a way of diligence.—He works in us to will and do; but, in all things, his plan has connected industry and prosperity, sloth and misery. (*Notes*, x. 4. xii. 24. xxvi. 13—16. *Num*. xxiii. 10. *John* vi. 22—27, v. 27. *Heb*. vi. 11, 12. 2 *Pet*. i. 5—11.)

V. 5. A pious man abhors deceit and lies, as detestable in themselves; and he has no occasion for such base *means*, because he has no bad *ends* to accomplish: but the wicked endeavour to impose on their neighbours, to conceal their crimes, and to gratify their passions by deceit; till at length they render themselves generally contemptible and odious. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, vi. 16—19. xxx. 7—9. *Rev*. xxi. 5—8, v. 8. xxii. 14, 15.)

V. 6. (*Notes*, xi. 3. 5, 6.) 'Wicked contrivances are *overthrown* by their own iniquity.' *Bp. Patrick*. (*Marg.*—*Notes*, 2 *Chr*. xxviii. 22, 23. *P*s. cxi. 11.)

V. 7. Many persons make a shew of wealth, and live at a great expense, and engage in large concerns, who are indeed possessed of little or no property; and thus they become publick cheats. (*Note*, xii. 9.) Others, who are very rich, pretend to be poor, and live as if they were

7 There ^ois that maketh himself rich, yet *hath* nothing: *there is* ^pthat maketh himself poor, yet *hath* great riches.

8 The ^qransom of a man's life *are* his riches; but ^rthe poor heareth not rebuke.

9 The ^slight of the righteous rejoiceth; but ^tthe [†]lamp of the wicked shall be put out.

10 ^uOnly by pride cometh contention; but ^vwith the well advised is wisdom.

^u xxi. 24. *Judg*. xii. 1—6. 1 *Kings* xii. 10, 11. 16. 2 *Kings* xiv. 10. *Luke* xxii. 24. 1 *Tim*. vi. 4. *Jam*. iii. 14—16. iv. 1. 5, 6. 3 *John* 9, 10. 16. xvii. 14. xix. 20. xx. 18. xxv. 8. *Judg*. viii. 1—3. *Luke* xiv. 28—32. *Acts* vi. 1—5.

xii. 9. *Luke* xviii. 11—14. 1 *Cor*. iv. 8. 2 *Pet*. ii. 19. *Rev*. iii. 17. 1 *Cor*. iv. 10. 11. 2 *Cor*. iv. 7. *Rev*. ii. 9. vi. 35. *Ex*. xxi. 30. *Job* ii. 4. *Ps*. xlix. 6—10. *Jer*. xli. 8. *Matt*. xvi. 26. 1 *Pet*. i. 18, 19. 2 *Kings* xxiv. 14. xxv. 12. *Jer*. xxxix. 10. *Zeph*. iii. 12. *iv*. 18. 1 *Kings* xi. 36. *Ps*. xcvi. 11. cxii. 4. xx. 20. xxiv. 20. *Job* xviii. 5, 6. xxi. 17. *Is*. i. 10, 11. *Matt*. xxii. 13. xxv. 8. [†] Or, candle.

so: and thus they bereave themselves and their families of good, and refuse to improve the talents committed to their stewardship.—Pharisees and hypocrites also make a shew of that piety which they have not, and so impose on others and deceive themselves; (*Notes*, *Luke* xviii. 9—14. 1 *Cor*. iv. 8. *Rev*. ii. 8, 9. iii. 17;) while some true Christians are always discouraging themselves by groundless fears. And in many instances men impose on multitudes, by pretending to skill which they have not: whereas others, through excessive or affected modesty, obstruct their own usefulness.

V. 8. Men are often tempted to rob, or to raise prosecutions against, those who possess riches; who in that case, if they can ransom their lives by parting with their treasures, think themselves well off. (*Notes*, *Job* ii. 4, 5. *Jer*. xli. 4—8, v. 8.) But the poor man is exempt from rebukes, perils, and terrors; for no one thinks it worth while to lodge an accusation against him, for such purposes: and he commonly escapes best in publick calamities. Some indeed take the sentence quite otherwise.—'A rich man when he fears any evil from his enemies, can divert it by a sum of money; but a poor man, when he is threatened, dare not stay, but runs away.' *A quotation in Bp. Patrick*.—The latter clause is taken in an unfavourable sense in the first verse: but in other respects the first interpretation seems best grounded.

V. 9. 'The happiness of the just is great and illustrious, like the light of the sun: and increases still to their endless joy: but the happiness of the wicked is weak and dim, like the light of a candle, and will be at last utterly extinguished.' *Bp. Patrick*. (*Notes*, iv. 18, 19. *Is*. i. 10, 11. *Hos*. vi. 1—3.)

V. 10. "Only by pride will a man engage in contention, &c." The various discords and quarrels, which disquiet the world, whether in families, churches, or communities, or between nations, with all the fatal consequences of them, are in general excited and perpetuated by pride. From that odious principle arise resentment, revenge, envy, and ambition: and though other vicious dispositions excite contentions; yet disputes would more easily be prevented or terminated, if pride did not intervene. Some point of honour must be maintained, some affront must be resented, some rival must be crushed or eclipsed, some renowned character emulated, or some au-

11 ^y ^x ² ^{xx} ²¹ ^{xxviii} ⁸ ^{Job} ^{xv} ²⁸ ²⁹ ^{xx} ¹⁵ ¹⁹ ²² ^{xxvii} ¹⁶ ¹⁷ ^{Ec} ^v ¹⁴ ^{Jer} ^{xviii} ¹¹ ^{Hab} ⁱⁱ ⁶ ⁷ ^{Jam} ^v ¹ ⁵ ¹¹ ¹² ¹³ ¹⁴ ¹⁵ ¹⁶ ¹⁷ ¹⁸ ¹⁹ ²⁰ ²¹ ²² ²³ ²⁴ ²⁵ ²⁶ ²⁷ ²⁸ ²⁹ ³⁰ ³¹ ³² ³³ ³⁴ ³⁵ ³⁶ ³⁷ ³⁸ ³⁹ ⁴⁰ ⁴¹ ⁴² ⁴³ ⁴⁴ ⁴⁵ ⁴⁶ ⁴⁷ ⁴⁸ ⁴⁹ ⁵⁰ ⁵¹ ⁵² ⁵³ ⁵⁴ ⁵⁵ ⁵⁶ ⁵⁷ ⁵⁸ ⁵⁹ ⁶⁰ ⁶¹ ⁶² ⁶³ ⁶⁴ ⁶⁵ ⁶⁶ ⁶⁷ ⁶⁸ ⁶⁹ ⁷⁰ ⁷¹ ⁷² ⁷³ ⁷⁴ ⁷⁵ ⁷⁶ ⁷⁷ ⁷⁸ ⁷⁹ ⁸⁰ ⁸¹ ⁸² ⁸³ ⁸⁴ ⁸⁵ ⁸⁶ ⁸⁷ ⁸⁸ ⁸⁹ ⁹⁰ ⁹¹ ⁹² ⁹³ ⁹⁴ ⁹⁵ ⁹⁶ ⁹⁷ ⁹⁸ ⁹⁹ ¹⁰⁰ ¹⁰¹ ¹⁰² ¹⁰³ ¹⁰⁴ ¹⁰⁵ ¹⁰⁶ ¹⁰⁷ ¹⁰⁸ ¹⁰⁹ ¹¹⁰ ¹¹¹ ¹¹² ¹¹³ ¹¹⁴ ¹¹⁵ ¹¹⁶ ¹¹⁷ ¹¹⁸ ¹¹⁹ ¹²⁰ ¹²¹ ¹²² ¹²³ ¹²⁴ ¹²⁵ ¹²⁶ ¹²⁷ ¹²⁸ ¹²⁹ ¹³⁰ ¹³¹ ¹³² ¹³³ ¹³⁴ ¹³⁵ ¹³⁶ ¹³⁷ ¹³⁸ ¹³⁹ ¹⁴⁰ ¹⁴¹ ¹⁴² ¹⁴³ ¹⁴⁴ ¹⁴⁵ ¹⁴⁶ ¹⁴⁷ ¹⁴⁸ ¹⁴⁹ ¹⁵⁰ ¹⁵¹ ¹⁵² ¹⁵³ ¹⁵⁴ ¹⁵⁵ ¹⁵⁶ ¹⁵⁷ ¹⁵⁸ ¹⁵⁹ ¹⁶⁰ ¹⁶¹ ¹⁶² ¹⁶³ ¹⁶⁴ ¹⁶⁵ ¹⁶⁶ ¹⁶⁷ ¹⁶⁸ ¹⁶⁹ ¹⁷⁰ ¹⁷¹ ¹⁷² ¹⁷³ ¹⁷⁴ ¹⁷⁵ ¹⁷⁶ ¹⁷⁷ ¹⁷⁸ ¹⁷⁹ ¹⁸⁰ ¹⁸¹ ¹⁸² ¹⁸³ ¹⁸⁴ ¹⁸⁵ ¹⁸⁶ ¹⁸⁷ ¹⁸⁸ ¹⁸⁹ ¹⁹⁰ ¹⁹¹ ¹⁹² ¹⁹³ ¹⁹⁴ ¹⁹⁵ ¹⁹⁶ ¹⁹⁷ ¹⁹⁸ ¹⁹⁹ ²⁰⁰ ²⁰¹ ²⁰² ²⁰³ ²⁰⁴ ²⁰⁵ ²⁰⁶ ²⁰⁷ ²⁰⁸ ²⁰⁹ ²¹⁰ ²¹¹ ²¹² ²¹³ ²¹⁴ ²¹⁵ ²¹⁶ ²¹⁷ ²¹⁸ ²¹⁹ ²²⁰ ²²¹ ²²² ²²³ ²²⁴ ²²⁵ ²²⁶ ²²⁷ ²²⁸ ²²⁹ ²³⁰ ²³¹ ²³² ²³³ ²³⁴ ²³⁵ ²³⁶ ²³⁷ ²³⁸ ²³⁹ ²⁴⁰ ²⁴¹ ²⁴² ²⁴³ ²⁴⁴ ²⁴⁵ ²⁴⁶ ²⁴⁷ 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^y Gen. iv. 7. Num. xxxii. 23. Ps. cxl. 11. Acts xxviii. 4. ^z Is. iii. 10, 11. Rom. ii. 7—10. ^a Gen. xvii. 7, 8. Ps. xxv. 12, 13. cii. 28. cxii. 2. cxxviii. 6. ^b xxviii. 8. Job xxvii. 16, 17. Ec. ii. 26. ^c xii. 14. xxvii. 18, 23—27. xxviii. 19. Ec. v. 9.

21 Evil ^r pursueth sinners; but to the ^r righteous good shall be repayed.

22 A good *man* ^a leaveth an inheritance to his children's children; and the wealth of the sinner *is* laid up for the just.

23 Much ^e food *is* in the tillage of

the poor; but there is *that is* ^d destroyed for want of judgment.

24 He that ^e spareth his rod ^f hateth his son; but ^g he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.

25 The ^h righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul; but ⁱ the belly of the wicked shall want.

^d vi. 6—11. xi. 5. 6. Ps. cxii. 5. Ec. viii. 5, 6. Jer. viii. 7—10. ^e xix. 18. xxii. 15. xxiii. 13, 14. xxix. 15, 17. ^f viii. 36. Luke xiv. 26. John xii. 25. ^g iii. 12. Heb. xii. 6—8. ^h Ps. xxxiv. 10. xxxvii. 3. 16, 18, 19. 1 Tim. iv. 8. Heb. xiii. 5. ⁱ vi. 11. xxiv. 24. Deut. xxviii. 48. xxxii. 24. Is. lxv. 13, 14.

when wise and good companions are habitually preferred: and by continual intercourse with them, good principles are strengthened, good habits formed, and wisdom matured. But he who chooses bad company proves his folly, and is in the way of learning and practising, more and more, all those evils which lead to ruin temporal and eternal. (Notes, i. 10—19. ii. 12—22. ix. 6. Ps. cxix. 63. Mal. iii. 13—18. 1 Cor. xv. 31—34, vv. 33, 34. 2 Cor. vi. 13—18. Eph. v. 8—13.)

V. 21. (Marg. Ref.) The sinner may long escape: but evil pursues him, and will at length surely overtake him; as the hounds steadily follow their prey, and, after many windings, seize on it. (Notes, vi. 6—11, v. 11. Gen. iv. 6, 7. Num. xxxii. 23. Is. iii. 10, 11. Rom. ii. 4—11.)

V. 22. The liberal servant of God, while he shakes his hands from iniquitous gain, and is not solicitous about riches, and even disperses in charity as if about to impoverish his family, takes the best method of providing for his posterity: for the wealth, which wicked men get by crimes, with great labour and inquietude, is laid up for the righteous and their families; and by the secret disposal of providence shall come into their possession, when they have occasion for it. (Notes, xxviii. 8. Esth. viii. 1, 2. Ps. xxv. 12, 13. cxii. 2, 3.)

V. 23. The poor and industrious, who labour to cultivate a little spot of land, often live in a plentiful though homely manner: while those who have inherited large estates, are reduced to poverty by negligence, indiscretion, ostentation, and extravagance. (Notes, xii. 24. 27. xxvii. 18. xxviii. 19. Ec. viii. 6, 7.) This is one way, in which the wealth of the covetous hoarder is often, in the next generation, transferred to the good man's family.

V. 24. The perverseness of our fallen nature renders correction necessary to children. He therefore, who indulges his son, connives at his perverseness, suffers him to contract vicious habits, and to grow stubborn in rebellion, through want of correction, acts as if he hated him: for he permits those diseases of the mind to gather strength, which will prove the sources of inexpressible sorrow to him in this world, and perhaps of eternal misery. Whereas the parent, who wisely loves his child, will *early* begin to teach him submission, application, and the government of his passions: and having thus bent the tender twig, and established his authority, he will gradually be enabled to rule him more by persuasion and argument, and to treat him with the lenity of a kind and prudent friend. But when children are permitted to get the mastery in their tender years, they can scarcely ever after be taught subjection, and the attempt is often made by a severity which is both perilous and painful. (Notes, iii. 11, 12. xix. 18. xxii. 15. xxiii. 13, 14. xxix. 15. 17.)—The word ren-

dered *chasteneth*, is often translated *instruction* (18). 'He ^e that spareth the rod hateth his son; but he that loveth ^f him, diligently educates him.' Sept.—The same term being used, in the original both of the old and new Testament, for *tuition* and *correction*, strongly indicates the close connexion between them, in a *scripturally* good education. (Comp. Eph. vi. 4. with Heb. xii. 5—11. Gr.)

V. 25. The servants of God are satisfied with their temporal provisions, though mean or scanty, and use them with cheerfulness and thankfulness. But the wicked are never satisfied; have no enjoyment of their possessions; and will sink at last into final and eternal want and misery. 'Wicked men, some of them bring themselves to extreme ^g poverty by their luxury and riot; and others of them are ^h indigent even in the midst of the greatest abundance; ⁱ because their desires are insatiable, and they never think ^j they have enough.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10. xxxvii. 16—19. Is. lxv. 13—15. 1 Tim. vi. 6—10. Heb. xiii. 5, 6.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

Teachable and dutiful children commonly, if spared, become wise, useful, and prosperous men: but such as scorn reproof, and harden themselves under rebukes and corrections, are likely to be miserable themselves, and causes of misery to others.—He who speaks "that which ^k is good, to the use of edifying," will generally share the comfort and benefit which he imparts: and in every way, the government of the tongue tends exceedingly to the happiness of life; and preserves a man from numberless troubles, temptations, and sins, into which those ^l "who open wide their lips," fall, and often perish.—In what various ways, and emphatical language, are we reminded, that sloth tends to dissatisfaction, vexation, and ruin; and industry to credit, prosperity, and comfort! and can we imagine, that these maxims of heavenly wisdom relate only to the affairs of this poor transient world? Can we doubt, whether the difference between the indolent and the diligent, in spiritual concerns, will or will not be at least equally manifest, both here and hereafter?—The hateful nature likewise of lies and duplicity is shewn, in scripture, in every way most suited to convince and affect us. God hates lies, and the righteous hate lies: for every man of genuine piety abhors and loves what his Lord abhors and loves. Let then such as allow themselves to belie, in their professions of whatever kind, the secret purposes and thoughts of their hearts, look well to themselves: and if they profess a regard to religion, let them tremble, lest at last they should have their portion with the hypocrites. They may, at present, deceive others, and

CHAP. XIV.

Integrity, prudence, piety, meekness, and dili-

even themselves: but when the whole shall be laid open, (and the awful day approaches,) they will appear loathsome, and be overwhelmed with confusion. It does not indeed consist with Christian simplicity, for a man to assume the appearance of wealth, knowledge, or skill in any profession, which he does not possess; or even to deny, under an affectation of modesty, the talents which he ought to improve, to the benefit of his brethren and the honour of God. (*Note, Rom. xii. 3—5.*) But righteousness preserves the upright in the middle path; and an honest desire to do the LORD's will secures a man from important mistakes, and from that "wickedness which overthroweth the sinner," far better than the most exact casuistical decisions.—In all things, the knowledge, grace, and success of the righteous, are a source of increasing joy, which will be perfected in heavenly felicity; but the lamp of the wicked will soon be extinguished, and his transient mirth be exchanged for everlasting darkness and despair.—Even when men grow rich and great in a course of ungodliness; beside the secret curse of God, which eats out all the comfort of their prosperity, and often diminishes their ill gotten wealth; their affluence and grandeur expose them to the envy, enmity, and rapacity of their less successful rivals, to whose rebuke the poor are strangers: and should they be able to ransom their lives by their wealth, they cannot in the same way bribe the great Judge of the world, or redeem their souls from hell. (*Notes, Ps. xlix. 6—9.*)—The pride, also, and ambition of ungodly men commonly involve them in quarrels, destructive of their comfort and that of their families. From this source, not only domestick discords, and fierce contentions between the nearest relations, arise; but ruinous lawsuits, fatal duels, and perpetuated implacable resentments; and a large proportion of the wars, which desolate the earth. Whereas, true religion teaches us to be humble, harmless, meek, patient, and forgiving; to conquer our own spirits by looking to the example of the bleeding Saviour; and to overcome our enemies by persevering kindness.—Thus "only by pride cometh contention; but with the well advised," who are taught by the word of God, "is wisdom:" and every Christian finds, that he enjoys peace and happiness, in exact proportion, as he exercises meekness, forbearance, and love.—It is indeed allowed, that our gracious God, for wise and holy purposes, often *defers the hope* of those who seek his holy consolations; and pains their hearts, while he proves their sincerity, abates their self-confidence, and excites their earnest exertions, and more fervent and importunate prayers: but when the desired peace and joy are given, (and there will be no needless delay,) it will prove "a tree of life," and satisfy their souls with inexpressible delight. And if the earnest be so sweet, what will the incorruptible inheritance itself be! But while we wait for this blessedness, let us recollect the painful feelings of such as wait for good, and experience delays and disappointments; and never prolong the uneasiness of those who expect relief from us, when we can with propriety at once alleviate their sorrows, or fill their hearts with gladness.

gence recommended. and the ruinous effects of pride, injustice, sloth, hypocrisy, anger, envy, and oppression; and the vanity of carnal mirth and ungodly prosperity, pointed out, 1—35.

V. 13—25.

Again and again, because of our unteachableness, we are reminded, that "poverty and shame shall be to him that despiseth instruction;" and that "whoso despiseth the word" of God, "shall be destroyed:" while "he that regardeth reproof," and "feareth the commandment," shall be honoured and rewarded. And indeed, every reflecting man's observation or experience must confirm the truth of these maxims, and make it evident, that "the law of the wise is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."—"A good understanding," especially that which the intelligent Christian possesses, conciliates respect and favour, and introduces a man to many advantages, and opportunities of usefulness: whereas irreligion generally makes way for those vices, which embitter this present life, and render the thoughts of another most dreadful.—Again, prudent men, observing the counsels of the Bible, conduct their affairs with caution, and deal with knowledge in forming and executing their plans: but those who foolishly reject the instructions of the sacred oracles, though considered by themselves or their admirers as politick and sagacious men, often venture on perilous undertakings, engage in ruinous contests, and lay open their folly to the view of all men.—It should also be considered, that nothing inspires such fortitude and perseverance in the pursuit of objects, worthy of our desires, as faith in the truths and promises of scripture; nothing so strengthens the soul for exertion and self-denial; nothing so animates a man "to lay aside every weight, that he may run with patience the race set before him." The zealous Christian therefore will most enjoy the pleasure of having his desires accomplished: while those, to whom "it is an abomination to depart from evil," will find, that their ineffectual wishes, temporary convictions, and feeble endeavours, serve only to increase the bitterness of their final disappointment.—Those who sustain the character of ministers are especially concerned in these important words; "A wicked messenger falleth into mischief; but a faithful ambassador is health." They, whose ignorance, (the general effect of negligence,) whose vices, sloth, or unfaithfulness, have prejudiced, deceived, and ruined the souls of others, will themselves be most miserable: but the vigilant and skilful, the exemplary and faithful servant of God, while he is the messenger of salvation to others, will himself soon hear the gracious words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—In every way "evil pursueth sinners:" the very persons with whom they associate, on whom they lavish their favours, and who pretend to be their friends, help forward their destruction: their *temporal* concerns are often neglected for want of judgment; their *spiritual* always are: and the wealth, of which some are possessed, is laid up for the righteous and their posterity.—How wonderful then is it, that not only the young and inexperienced should overlook these truths, but that the aged, the fathers of families, should so little regard them, either in their own behalf or that of their children; and should so mis-

EVERY ^awise woman buildeth her house; but ^bthe foolish plucketh it down with her hands.

2 He ^cthat walketh in his uprightness feareth the LORD; ^dbut *he that* is perverse in his ways despiseth him.

^a xxiv. 3, 4. xxxi. 10—31. Ruth iv. 11. ^b ix. 13—15. xix. 13. xxi. 9. 19. 1 Kings xvi. 31. xxi. 24, 25. 2 Kings xi. 1. ^c xvi. 17. xxviii. 6. 1 Kings iii. 6. Job i. 1. xxviii. 28. Ps. cxii. 1. Ec. xii. 13. Mal. ii. 5, 6. Acts ix. 31. x. 22. 35. ^d xi. 12 Job xii. 4. Ps. cxxiii. 3, 4. Luke x. 16. xvi. 14. Rom. ii. 4, 5. 2 Tim. iii. 2, 3.

take in their expressions of affection to those whom they tenderly love, as if a part of themselves!—Yet it may be asserted, without dread of refutation, that the errors of parents in educating their children are quite as pernicious, as the rashness and self-indulgence of young persons.—It will probably be discovered at length, that the modern improvement of *sparing the rod and spoiling the child*; and of teaching children various kinds of knowledge, without habituating them to submit to the authority of superiors, to apply at stated times to things useful, and to exercise self-denial; has not only made way for much indolence, dissipation, and profligacy, but has also introduced a system of *insubordination* which has shaken Europe to its very centre. Obedience to the authority of parents, even in infancy, is the best preparation for “subjection to every ordinance of man” in future life; nay, it is a good means of bringing young persons to submit to God, as inuring them to the idea, that self-will must be subdued. And when destructive and irrational fondness prevents parents from thus subduing the rebellious spirits of their children; the event will generally prove, that their worst enemies could not have done them a greater injury.—It should however be observed, that correction is properly the province of *parents*: and that important and delicate trust can seldom be safely delegated, at least it should be done with extreme caution. For when this exercise of *authority* is separated from tender affection, it often becomes a species of tyranny, productive of most pernicious consequences. How dire then the effect, when the parent himself, not knowing how to govern his passions, sets his child an evidently bad example, even when correcting him for his faults! In general no man can well govern others, who cannot govern himself: and it too often happens, that chastisement, having been neglected in early years, and afterwards attempted with violence and severity, drives young persons for refuge among bad companions, renders the company of the parent terrible, or at least unpleasant, and lays the foundation of a ruinous alienation in future life. Happy then are those young persons, whom early and judicious correction, good instruction, with kind and wise regard to their time of life, and advances to maturity, have taught to consider their parents as their best friends and counsellors, and their most pleasant companions, nay, their most faithful confidants! In this way they will readily be led to “walk with wise men,” and so learn wisdom. They will also be inured to application, and form habits of industry, which even in the lowest condition seldom fail of securing a comfortable support, with a good conscience, and a satisfied mind, that wealth cannot purchase. Nor let it be thought superfluous to remark, that “the tillage of the poor,” is far preferable to most

3 In ^ethe mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride; ^fbut the lips of the wise shall preserve them.

4 Where no oxen *are* the crib is ^gclean; ^hbut much increase is by the strength of the ox.

5 A ⁱfaithful witness will not lie; ^jbut a false witness will utter lies.

^e xviii. 6. xxi. 24. xxii. 8. xxviii. 25. 1 Sam. ii. 3. Job v. 21. Ps. xii. 3. xxxi. 18. lii. 1, 2. lvii. 4. Dan. vii. 20. Jam. iii. 5, 6. 2 Pet. ii. 18. Rev. xlii. 5, 6. ^f xii. 6. Rom. x. 9, 10. Rev. iii. 10. xii. 11. ^g Am. iv. 6. ^h xii. 23. 1 Cor. ix. 9—11. ⁱ 25. vi. 19. xii. 17. xiii. 5. xix. 5, 9. Ex. xx. 16. xxiii. 1. 1 Kings xxi. 13. xxii. 12—14.

of those more lucrative employments, which are little useful to society, and too often subserve men's vices and follies.

NOTES.

CHAP. XIV. V. 1. A prudent woman, by her proper management of domestick concerns, exceedingly promotes the durable advantage and credit of the family to which she belongs, or into which she is married; and even raises it from obscurity and embarrassments, to permanent credit and prosperity. But an indiscreet woman, who wastes time, and squanders away money, in vain ornaments, trifling visits, and expensive pleasures, often proves the ruin of the family; even though it have been in a thriving condition, and though her husband be frugal and industrious: for she acts as if she would pull down the house with her own hands. This coincides with a common observation, ‘That a fortune *in* a wife, is better than a fortune *with* a wife.’ (Notes, xviii. 22. xix. 13, 14. xxxi. 10—31. Ruth iv. 11, 12. 1 Kings xxi. 25, 26. 2 Kings ix. 5—10. 22. x. 1—11. xi. 1, 2.)

V. 2. “The tree must be known by its fruits:” and a man's conduct, as it is either conscientious and upright, or perverse and disobedient, shews whether he reverences God, or despises him. (Notes, xvi. 17. Job xxviii. 28. Ps. cxi. 9, 10. cxii. 1. Rom. ii. 4—6.)—The last clause may denote, that men of immoral and vicious characters despise the piety and holiness of such as fear God and walk in his ways; “thinking it strange that they will not run with them to the same excess of riot.” (Notes, Ps. cxxiii. 3, 4. 1 Pet. iv. 3—5.)

V. 3. The profane, insolent, and abusive language, which foolish men utter, springs from excessive pride: and while they smite others with it, as with a rod or staff, they prepare severe corrections for themselves. Whereas the prudent and conciliating words of wise men preserve them from contentions, and extricate them out of difficulties. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xii. 6. 8. 17. xviii. 6, 7. xxi. 24. xxviii. 25.)

V. 4. ‘If the fields lie fallow and be neglected, a fallow must needs follow; but good husbandry bestowed on them makes great plenty.’ Bp. Patrick.—There is no profit without labour and inconvenience: and he that would have the crop of corn, must take the trouble of tending the oxen, and cleansing the stall; which the indolent or over delicate care not to do. (Note, xiii. 23.)

V. 5. According to this maxim, when a man “utters lies,” in declaiming against the real or supposed misconduct of others, especially of persons bearing dignified or sacred offices, or differing from him and his party in political or religious opinions; or even in religious contro-

^k xviii. 2. xxvi. 12. Is. viii. 20. Jer. viii. 9. Matt. vi. 22, 23. xi. 25—27. Rom. i. 21—28. ix. 31. 32. 1 Cor. iii. 18, 19. viii. 2. 2 Pet. iii. 3—5. i. viii. 9. xvii. 24. Ps. cxix. 18. 98—100. Matt. xiii. 11, 12. Jam. i. 5. m ix. 6. xiii. 20. xix. 27. 1 Cor. v. 11. Eph. v. 11. n ii. 9. viii. 20. Ps. cxi. 10. cxix. 5. 34. 35. 73. cxliii. 8. Eph. v. 17. Col. i. 9. 10. 2 Tim. iii. 15—17. Jam. iii. 13.

6 A ^k scorner seeketh wisdom, and *findeth it not*; but ^l knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth.

7 Go ^m from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not *in him* the lips of knowledge.

8 The ⁿ wisdom of the prudent is to

understand his way; but ^o the folly of fools is deceit.

9 ^p Fools make a mock at sin; but ^q among the righteous *there is* favour.

10 The ^r heart knoweth ^s his own bitterness; and ^t a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy.

r xv. 13. xviii. 14. 1 Sam. i. 10. 2 Kings iv. 27. Job vi. 2—4. vii. 11. ix. 18. x. 1. Ez. iii. 14. Mark xiv. 33, 34. John xii. 27. * Heb. *the bitterness of his soul*. Gen. xlii. 21. s Ps. xxv. 14. John xiv. 18. 23. Phil iv. 7. 1 Pet. i. 8. Rev. ii. 17.

versy; he is no more entitled to credit, when once detected, than a witness is, when detected of lying and perjury in a court of justice: for “a faithful witness will not lie,” to serve any cause whatever. (Notes, 25. vi. 16—19. xii. 17—19. xiii. 5. xix. 9. Ex. xx. 16.)

V. 6. A scorner is one, who treats divine things with profane contempt. He thinks his own understanding equal to the investigation, and even comprehension, of every subject: he therefore rejects as false what he cannot account for, or finds contrary to his preconceived sentiments and vain reasonings; and indeed all, which tends to condemn his conduct or expose his folly. In this presumptuous frame of mind he may seek for wisdom, even in the scriptures, without success. The state of his heart disposes him to despise the sacred mysteries, the humbling doctrines, and the holy precepts of revelation: he will therefore, by criticisms and bold conjectures, alter the text, or explain away its meaning. Or, disgusted by finding, that those doctrines which he dislikes are certainly contained in the Bible, he will at length take shelter in infidelity. These are indeed *modern* ways, in which “scorners seek wisdom and find it not:” but doubtless the scorners of former days had methods equally successful of evading conviction, and closing their eyes against the light of truth.—‘He that comes to seek after knowledge with a mind to scorn and censure, shall be sure to find matter enough for his humour, but none for his instruction.’ Lord Bacon, quoted by Bp. Patrick.—‘This humour, of deriding all things springs from a great pride and conceit of their own wit, which disposes them to seek wisdom, not from others, but wholly from themselves; and so ... they are not likely to find it, where it is not to be had. ... It may be applied to those who, having mocked at religion all their days, at last desire to understand it; but cannot, through their own inveterate indisposition to it.’ Bp. Patrick.—“A scorner seeketh “wisdom,” for the maintenance of his own ambition, and not for God’s glory, as Simon Magus.’

‘Hear the first law, the judgment of the skies!’

‘He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies.’ Cowper.

But he, who is humbly conscious of his ignorance and unworthiness, will search the scriptures in a teachable spirit, and with seriousness, reverence, and prayer: thus the Author of wisdom will deliver him from prejudice, preserve him from error and uncertainty, and shew him his truth and will. And with this state of the heart, the understanding is as well suited to receive the instructions of the sacred scriptures, as sound and strong eyes are to receive the light of the sun; so that knowledge becomes easy to those who are of an understanding heart. (Notes, viii. 9. xvii. 24. xviii. 1, 2. xxvi. 12. Matt. vi. 22, 23. xi.

25, 26. xiii. 10, 11. John v. 39—44. vii. 14—17, v. 17. Acts xvii. 18. 32—34. 1 Cor. i. 17—24.)

V. 7. ‘It is best to flee the company of such persons, whose discourse thou perceivest tends to nothing but vice and mischief.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, xiii. 20. xix. 27.)

V. 8. The prudent man does not value that wisdom, which consists in abstruse speculations, or profound policy: but that which teaches him the path of safety and of duty; and directs him to escape the dangers, avail himself of the advantages, and surmount the difficulties of his situation in life, that he may proceed with increasing satisfaction, credit, and usefulness. But that which ungodly men call wisdom, is indeed folly; it is mere craft and imposition, which at length deceives them, and they are taken in their own net.—‘New stratagems must be every day devised, the old failing and growing useless; and ... as soon as ever a man has got the name ... of a cunning crafty companion, he hath deprived himself utterly of the principal instrument for the management of his affairs, which is *trust*.’ Lord Bacon, quoted by Bp. Patrick. (Notes, xi. 18. Job xxviii. 28. Ps. xi. 9, 10. cxix. 5. cxliii. 10. Eph. iv. 20—24.)

V. 9. Foolish and profane men consider sin as a mere trifle, or diversion, rather a laughing matter than a dreadful and hateful evil. They divert themselves with tempting others to sin: they commit iniquity without scruple, in pursuit of pleasure or gain; and then, in a jesting manner, talk over their knavish or licentious practices, and recount how many they have over-reached, debauched, or surpassed in profaneness or intemperance.—The word (פֶּחַח) translated *make a mock at*, may signify also *palliate*, or *excuse*. ‘There may be this sense of the words:—Fools endeavour to make handsome apologies for their fault, and to find out colourable excuses. ... Or, ... fools laugh and jeer at those who have committed a sin; but good men pity them, and by kind reproofs seek their amendment. ... When fools offend God in the highest manner, they make nothing of it: but if good men in the least offend, they presently beg his pardon, and seek his grace and favour. The former part of the sentence may also be inverted. ... Sin will expose those to scorn, who are so foolish as to commit it. ... A good admonition to those who make a mock at sin, which will in time make a mock of them, and expose them as ridiculous fools.’ Bp. Patrick. Indeed these are no more than particular illustrations of the general exposition before given. (Notes, x. 23. xiii. 15. xxvi. 18, 19. Rom. xiv. 13—18, vv. 17, 18.)

V. 10. No man is competent to judge of the inward anguish or pleasure of others, who are often more happy, or more miserable, than they appear to be. None can tell what stings of conscience or corroding passions torment the prosperous sinner, while he appears gay, and indulges

11 The 'house of the wicked shall be overthrown; but ^athe tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.

12 There ^xis a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof ^aare the ways of death.

13 Even ^yin laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth is heaviness.

14 The ^zbackslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways; and ^aa good man *shall be satisfied* from himself.

t iii. 33. xii. 7. xxi. 12. Job viii. 13. xv. 34. xviii. 14, 15. 21. xx. 26—28. xxi. 28. xxvii. 13—23. Zech. v. 4. Matt. vii. 26, 27. x xi. 28. xxi. 20. Job viii. 6. Ps. cxii. 2, 3. cxxviii. 3. Is. lviii. 11, 12. x xii. 15. xvi. 25. xxx. 12. Matt. vii. 13, 14. Luke xiii. 24. Gal. vi. 3. Eph. v. 6. Jam. i. 22. y Ec. ii. 2, 10, 11. vii. 5, 6. xi. 9. Luke xvi. 25. Jam. iv. 9. Rev. xviii. 7, 8. z i. 32. Jer. viii. 5. xvii. 5. Hos. iv. 16. Zeph. i. 6. Heb. iii. 12. 2 Pet. ii. 20—22. a i. 31. xii. 14. Ez. xxii. 31. b 10. John iv. 14. 2 Cor. i. 12. Gal. vi. 4. 8.

15 The 'simple believeth every word; but ^cthe prudent *man* looketh well to his going.

16 A wise *man* ^efeareth, and departeth from evil; but ^ethe fool rageth, and is confident.

17 *He* ^fthat is soon angry dealeth foolishly; and ^fa man of wicked devices is hated.

18 The simple ^finherit folly; but ^kthe prudent are crowned with knowledge.

c xxii. 3. xxvii. 12. Rom. xvi. 18, 19. Eph. iv. 14. v. 17. 1 John iv. 1. d See on 8.—Am. v. 13. Acts xiii. 7. e iii. 7. xvi. 6. 17. xxii. 3. Gen. xxxix. 9. xlii. 18. Neh. v. 15. Job xxxi. 21—23. Ps. cxix. 120. 1 Thes. v. 22. f vii. 22. xxviii. 14. xxix. 9. Kings xix. 2. xx. 10, 11. 18. Ec. x. 13. Mark vi. 17—19. 24. 25. John ix. 40. g 29. xii. 16. xv. 18. xvi. 32. xxii. 24. xxix. 22. Ec. vii. 9. Jam. i. 19. h vi. 18. xii. 2. Esth. iii. 6. vii. 5, 6. Is xxxii. 7. Jer. v. 26—29. i iii. 35. xi. 29. Jer. xvi. 19. xlv. 17. Matt. xxiii. 29—32. 1 Pet. i. 18. k iv. 7—9. xi. 30. Dan. xii. 3. 2 Tim. iv. 8. 1 Pet. v. 4.

in mirth. Nor can ungodly men know, what satisfaction a serious Christian enjoys, at a distance from scenes of vain merriment; or even in poverty, sickness, and at the hour of death.—‘It is an advice to every one not to censure too heavily the passions of grief or of joy in others, because the causes of them may be unknown to us.’ *Bp. Patrick*. ‘As a man’s conscience is witness of his own grief, so another cannot feel the joy and comfort which a man feeleth in himself.’ (*Notes*, xv. 13. xviii. 14. 1 *Sam.* i. 12—16. *Job* vi. 1—4. *Ps.* xxv. 14. *John* xiv. 21—24. 1 *Pet.* i. 6—9. *Rev.* ii. 17.)

V. 11. (*Marg. Ref.*) The contrast between the *house* or grand mansion of the wicked, and the *tabernacle* or mean tent of the righteous, is especially to be noted. (*Notes*, iii. 33. xii. 7. *Zech.* v. 1—4.)

V. 12. (xvi. 25.) Open iniquity or impiety must seem wrong to every reflecting person. But there is another way, which joins those ways of death at last, yet at present “seems right to a man.”—Formal worship, superstition, self-righteousness, enthusiasm, and in short, all that is called religion, but is unscriptural, must certainly be intended.—This idea of a man confidently thinking himself right, till, on ending his journey, he finds he had all along been in the road to hell, is tremendous beyond the power of expression, or even conception. ‘Shadows too often cheat us of the reality; against which there is no remedy, but the word of God, and invoking his direction.’ *Bp. Patrick*. (*Notes*, xii. 15. xxx. 11—14, v. 12. *Matt.* vii. 13, 14. 24—27. *Eph.* v. 5—7.)

V. 13. That shew of happiness, which attends laughter and noisy mirth and sensual indulgence, is a mere imposition. In the midst of such turbulent scenes the heart is often oppressed with sorrow, and when they are over, the mind becomes more gloomy than ever: especially, when these are used as expedients to banish reflection, or quiet convictions, as they frequently are. Such ways of driving away care bring numbers to bankruptcy, nay, to suicide; and hurry great numbers by various ways into everlasting misery. (*Notes*, *Ec.* ii. 1, 2. 9—11. vii. 2—6, vv. 5, 6. xi. 9, 10. *Luke* vi. 24—26. xvi. 22, 23. *Jam.* iv. 7—10.)

V. 14. ‘He that forsaketh God shall be punished, and made weary of his sins, wherein he delighted.’—“The backslider in heart” once appeared religious; but after a while, through persecution or temptation, he deliberately renounces his profession, and shews that the world always

had his heart and supreme affections. The last state of such a man will be worse than the first: his case is peculiarly hopeless, and he will be filled with his own devices. This was Judas’s case: in betraying his Lord, he acted according to the habitual state of his heart. But Peter, when overcome by a sudden temptation, he denied Christ, behaved inconsistently with his real character: his heart was not apostate; he repented and was pardoned.—But he, whose delight is in doing good, will have a spring of satisfaction in his own soul, which will preserve him from returning to the world, through desire of its friendship, or dread of its power. (*Notes*, i. 32, 33. xii. 14. *Gen.* xix. 26. *Zeph.* i. 6. *Luke* xvii. 32. *John* iv. 10—15. *Heb.* x. 35—39.)

V. 15. Heedless and unstable men are easily imposed on, not only as to their worldly concerns, but also in religion. Confidence, insinuation, flattery, and plausible eloquence, easily entangle them in error and delusion. They are at best “children tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men.” And “Satan transformed into an angel of light,” fatally deceives numbers of them.—But the “prudent man looks well to his going:” and the word of God teaches us more caution, and warns us to “beware lest any man deceive us;” and he who attends to it will shun the snares of Satan and his servants. (*Notes*, 8. xxii. 3. *Matt.* x. 16—18, v. 16. *Rom.* xvi. 17—20. 1 *Pet.* iii. 13—16, v. 15.)

V. 16. A wise man fears God and hates sin, and distrusts his own heart, in the prospect of temptation: thus he avoids the occasion and appearances of evil; and is thankful for cautions, reproofs, and directions. But the foolish are self-confident and regardless of the consequences: they are vehement in their course, and enraged at those who would give them warning or advice. Thus they rush forward to the brink of the precipice, and at length fall headlong into destruction. (*Notes*, iii. 7, 8. xvi. 6. 17. xxii. 3. xxviii. 14. xxix. 1. 9. *John* ix. 39—41.)

V. 17. He that is hasty in resentment, very foolishly exposes himself to manifold troubles, and often does much mischief, and is both pitied and blamed: yet he who conceals his hatred, and devises how to take deliberate revenge, is a far more odious and dangerous character. (*Notes*, 29. xii. 2. 16. xxii. 24, 25. 2 *Sam.* xiii. 22—29. *Esth.* iii. 6. v. 13, 14.)

V. 18. The careless and heedless seem to claim ignorance as their patrimony, and to consider it as their privi-

¹ Gen. xlii. 6. 19 The ¹ evil bow before the good ;
xliii. 28. Ex. and the wicked at the gates of the
viii. 8. ix. 27. 28. righteous.
xi. 8. 2 Kings
iii. 12. Esth. vii.
7. 8. Is. lx. 14.
Mic. vii. 9. 10.
16, 17. Acts xvi.
39. Rev. iii. 9.

^m x. 15. xix. 7. 20 The ^m poor is hated even of his
Job vi. 21—23. own neighbour ; ⁿ but ^{*} the rich *hath*
xix. 13, 14. xxx. many friends.

ⁿ xix. 4. 6. Esth. 21 He ^o that despiseth his neighbour
iii. 2. v. 10, 11. sinneth ; but ^p he that hath mercy on
^{*} Heb. many are the lovers of the the poor, happy is he.

^o xi. 12. xvii. 5. 22 Do they not ^q err that devise
xviii. 3. Job evil ? ^r but mercy and truth *shall be*
xxxi. 13—15. to them that ^s devise good.
xxxvi. 5, 6. Ps.
xxii. 24. Luke
xviii. 9. Jam. ii.
5, 6. 14—16.

^p 31. xi. 24, 25. 23 In ^t all labour there is profit ;
xix. 17. xxviii. 27. Ps. xli. 1, 2. cxii. 5—9. Ec. xi. 1, 2. Is. lviii. 7—12. Dan. iv. 27. Luke vi. 30—
36. Acts xx. 35. 1 John iii. 17—22. ^q See on 17.—xii. 2. Is. xxxii. 7, 8. ^r Gen.
xxiv. 27. Ps. xxv. 10. lxi. 7. Matt. v. 7. John i. 17. ^s xix. 22. 2 Chr. vi. 8.
^t xii. 24. xxviii. 19. John vi. 27. Heb. vi. 10, 11.

^u x. 10. Ec. v. 3. ^u but the talk of the lips *tendeth* only
2 Thes. iii. 10— to penury.

24 The ^x crown of the wise is their
cxii. 9. Ec. vii. riches ; *but* ^y the foolishness of fools is
11, 12. Is. xxxiii. folly.
6. Luke xvi. 9.

25 A true ^y witness delivereth souls ;
y xxvii. 22. Ps. but a deceitful *witness* ^z speaketh lies.
xlix. 10—13. Luke xii. 19,
20. xvi. 19—25.

26 In the ^z fear of the LORD is
z See on 5.—Acts strong confidence ; and ^a his children
xx. 21. 26, 27. shall have a place of refuge.
xxvi. 16—20. a 1 Tim. iv. 1—3.

27 The fear of the LORD is ^b a foun-
b iii. 7, 8. 25, 26. tain of life, ^c to depart from the snares
xix. 23. Gen. of death.
xxxi. 42. Ps. cxv. 13, 14. Mal.
xxxiv. 7—11. iii. 16—18. iv. 2.
cxii. 1. 6—8. Acts ix. 31.

28 In ^c the multitude of people is
c xviii. 10. Is. d xiii. 14. Rev. the multitude of people is
xxvi. 20, 21. Jer. f Ex. i. 12. 22. Deut.
xv. 11. xxxii. 39. 40.

xxi. 6. e ii. 10—18. xxii. 5. Ps. xviii. 5. Ec. vii. 26. i. 11. 1 Kings iv. 20, 21. xx. 27. 2 Kings x. 32, 33. xiii. 7.

lege to act without reflection ; and thus folly, with all its consequences, will be their final portion. But the prudent consider useful knowledge, especially that of the path of peace and duty, according to their station in life, as their grand object ; and having obtained it, will be crowned with honour and immortality. (Notes, iii. 35. iv. 7—9. Jer. xvi. 19—21, v. 19. Dan. xii. 2, 3.)

V. 19. It often happens in the course of Providence, that wicked men are reduced to the necessity of making submissions to the righteous, and are brought to crave their assistance and prayers. Thus the Egyptians waited on Joseph, and Pharaoh called for Moses : and this is a pledge of their final prevalence and pre-eminency. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. xi. 8. xii. 31—36. Esth. vii. 7. Is. lx. 10—14. Rev. iii. 8, 9.)

V. 20. This is an illustration of the selfishness and dissimulation of mankind. It is made evident by facts, continually ; that when a man is impoverished, his former friends and acquaintance grow shy of him, and treat him with neglect and unkindness. But when a man grows rich, he has friends in abundance, who profess great esteem and respect for him. (Notes, x. 15. xix. 4—7. Esth. iii. 2. viii. 15—17. Job vi. 15—23.)

V. 21. ‘ But let such men know, that it is a greater sin ‘ than they imagine, and shall be severely punished, to ‘ overlook their poor neighbour, and deny him their charitable relief.’ Bp. Patrick.—The wicked man is an object of pity rather than of contempt : but to despise men on account of their low circumstances, or mean employment, is peculiarly foolish, and ungrateful to God who alone has made the difference.—The latter clause is peculiarly emphatical, “ Oh, the felicities of him that sheweth “ favour to the poor,” and humble ! He shall be happy beyond expression. (Notes, 31. xi. 12. 24, 25. xvii. 5. xviii. 3. xix. 17. Job xxxi. 13—23. Ps. xli. 1—3. cxii. 3, 4.)

V. 22. Are they not fatally deceived who expect to prosper by craftily devising mischief ?—‘ But they that take... ‘ pains to study how to do men good, shall never fail of ‘ that bountiful reward, which is secured to them by the ‘ faithful promise of God.’ Bp. Patrick.—Those who trust in the mercy and faithfulness of God, will be followers, or imitators, of him, in their conduct towards men. They *devise good*, and experience abundantly the truth and good-

ness of God. (Notes, 17. xii. 2. Ps. xxv. 10. Matt. v. 7. John i. 17.)

V. 23. ‘ Solomon here separates the fruit of the labour ‘ of the tongue, and of the labour of the hands ; as if want ‘ was the revenue of the one, and wealth the revenue of ‘ the other. For it commonly comes to pass, that they who ‘ talk liberally, boast much, and promise mighty matters, ‘ are beggars.’ Lord Bacon, quoted by Bp. Patrick. (Notes, xii. 24. xiii. 4. 23. xxviii. 19. 2 Thes. iii. 10—12. Heb. vi. 11, 12.)

V. 24. When men of wisdom and piety possess riches, they do so much good with them, that they are as *a crown* to them, enhancing their reputation, and enlarging continually their sphere of usefulness. But foolish and wicked men act foolishly in all situations, and riches only render their folly more egregiously and emphatically *foolishness*. (Notes, 18. xxvii. 22. Ps. xlix. 13. cxii. 7—9. Ec. vii. 11, 12. Luke xii. 15—21. xvi. 19—23.)

V. 25. *A deceitful witness, &c.* “ Deceit poureth out “ lies.”—If a man be influenced by deceit, he is very ingenious in inventing lies, and ready in propagating them, without regarding the mischief arising from them : but a faithful witness often preserves the lives of such as were in danger of perishing by false accusation.—The maxim is still more important, when interpreted of the faithful minister, and of the teacher of lies ; and the consequences of their conduct, in the salvation, or the ruin, of immortal souls. (Notes, 5. Acts xx. 18—21. 25—27. 1 Tim. iv. 1—5, v. 2. 11—16, v. 16. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3.)

V. 26, 27. They who fear the Lord have a strong ground of confidence in his promises, and will generally be preserved from distressing fears in life and death. Indeed they are *his children*, and have a refuge in their Father’s love, power, and truth, to which they may always resort. So that their faith and piety prove a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death. (Notes, iii. 23—26. xiii. 14. xv. 24. xviii. 10, 11. xix. 23. Ps. xxxiv. 7—10. cxii. 7. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. Acts ix. 31.) Some interpret the clause “ his “ children have a place of refuge,” as referring to the believer’s posterity. ‘ His children after him may flee to ‘ God for safety, and hope to fare the better for their pious ‘ father’s sake.’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 28. ‘ The honour and splendour of a king depends ‘ on the multitude, wealth, and strength of his subjects ;

the king's honour; but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince.

29 *He that is* ^s slow to wrath is of great understanding; ^h but *he that is* ^h hasty of spirit ⁱ exalteth folly.

30 A ^k sound heart is the life of the flesh; but ^l envy the ^m rottenness of the bones.

31 He ⁿ that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker; ^o but he that

honoureth him hath mercy on the poor.

32 The wicked is ^p driven away in his wickedness; but ^q the righteous hath hope in his death.

33 Wisdom ^r resteth in the heart of him that hath understanding; but *that which is* in the midst of fools is made known.

34 ^s Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to ^t any people.

Jer. ii. 2, &c. Hos. xiii. 1. t Deut. xxviii. 15, &c. xxix. 18—28. Ps. cvii. 34. Ez. xvi. xxii. xxiii. † Heb. nations.

whom therefore he ought to cherish: for if they be wasted by unnecessary wars, or forced into other countries by oppression and unjust exactions, it proves the ruin of his kingdom. *Bp. Patrick.* Various other ways of discouraging population, and destroying or driving away industrious subjects, might be mentioned, and illustrated by examples, from the times of Pharaoh, to this present day. (*Ex. i.*)—The crusades, especially against the Albigenses, and others; the persecutions of the infamous Duke of Alva in the Low Countries; the revocation of the edict of Nantz, by Lewis XIV; the expulsion of the Moors from Spain; the Inquisition; and finally the cruel treatment of slaves in the West Indies, which renders the detestable slave-trade in some sense necessary to prevent depopulation; are a few instances of that ruinous policy, which is here so strongly reprobated. (*Notes, Ex. i. 9, 10. Deut. i. 11. 1 Sam. xiii. 6, 7. 1 Kings iv. 20. xx. 27.*)

V. 29. *Exalteth folly.*] The passionate man “exalteth folly” to the throne, and willingly executes her senseless commands. (*Notes, 17. xv. 17, 18. xvi. 32. xxv. 8—10. 28. Ec. vii. 9. Dan. ii. 10—13. iii. 19—23. Jam. i. 19—21.*)

V. 30. An upright, contented, and benevolent mind, conduces greatly to health and long life, as well as to comfort and enjoyment. Whereas envy and other malignant passions prey upon the spirits, and often ruin the constitution, like some incurable disease. (*Notes, iv. 23. xii. 4. xvii. 22. Job v. 2. Ps. cxii. 10. cxix. 80.*)

V. 31. The oppression of the needy seems to reproach the Creator, as if he had formed the poor of another species; or had cast them down on purpose that they should be trampled on. The oppressor reproaches the Lord, by despising, or defying, his engagement to avenge the cause of the poor and oppressed. Nay, he does his best to bring reproach on the providential government of God, in that he has put so much in the power of such cruel wretches, and connives so long at their crimes.—But every one who honours God, will for his sake treat the poor with attention and compassion; and endeavour to alleviate their distresses, not to add to them. (*Notes, 21. xvii. 5. xix. 17. xxii. 2. 16. 22, 23. Ps. xii. 5, 6. Ec. v. 8. Matt. xxv. 34—46.*)

V. 32. The wicked, at death, (for that is evidently spoken of,) is not only cast away for his crimes, but driven out of the world by irresistible force, with all his unrepented guilt upon his soul; and under the power of all his domineering evil propensities, and long-continued bad habits; the slave of pride, avarice, malice, envy, and other hateful passions; “a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction.”

“But the righteous hath hope in his death;” his sins being pardoned, and his heart renewed: and while he gives thanks for being “made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light,” he trusts in the promises of God, that he shall speedily join them, and at length be re-united to those whom he most loved here on earth.—What meaning can be put upon this proverb, worthy to be compared with this obvious interpretation, if we do not take in the belief and expectation of the eternal world? (*Marg. Ref. —Notes, Gen. xlix. 18. Job xix. 23—27. xxvii. 13—23. Ps. xlix. 19. Is. viii. 21, 22. Dan. v. 25—28. John viii. 21—26. 2 Cor. v. 1—8. Phil. i. 21—26. 2 Pet. i. 12—15.*)

V. 33. Wisdom possesses the mind and heart, and regulates the judgment, affections, and tempers, of him that has understanding; and it is not spent in ostentatious displays. But it soon appears how the head and heart of a fool are furnished; for he continually betrays his ignorance and wickedness, by his words and actions, as if ambitious of being known in his true character. (*Notes, xii. 23. xiii. 16. xxix. 11. Ec. x. 2, 3.*)

V. 34. Righteousness powerfully tends to promote publick peace and prosperity, and to give an ascendancy to that nation in which it generally prevails. Genuine piety is inseparably connected with industry, sobriety, equity, and mercy, and also with frugality; and these conduce to health, population, union, and competency. Moreover they ensure the divine blessing to the community, which must exalt any nation. But every kind of sin has the contrary tendency: the prevalency of vice and impiety is a national reproach; conduces to disunion, weakness, and disgrace; and exposes any people to the wrath and vengeance of God.—The word translated *reproach* is the same as is commonly rendered *mercy* or *goodness*; and this has given rise to other interpretations of the latter clause; as if it meant that *mercy* was as a *sin-offering* for any people, where it prevailed: and the margin of the old translation renders it, “but the mercy of the people is the sacrifice for sin.”—Others think it relates to the gentiles, the word *people* being plural; and they render it, “The goodness of the nations is sin;” meaning that the religion and virtues of idolaters, instead of righteousness, are sinful in the sight of God.—This interpretation is, doubtless, more scriptural than the preceding: but as the word in question does in one place evidently mean *reproach*, or *atrocious wickedness*; “a wicked thing;” (*Lev. xx. 17; Heb.*) and as a verb from the same root has clearly a similar meaning even in this book; (*xxv. 10; Heb.*) so there

^a xvi. 12. 13. 35 The ^u king's favour is toward a
xx. 8. 26. xxii. 11. xxv. 5. xxix. 12. Ps. ci. 4—8 Matt xxiv. 45—51. Luke xii. 42—48.

appears no sufficient reason for altering our translation, and departing from the interpretation above given. The word indeed, (like some others in different languages, *Notes, Job* i. 5. ii. 9,) seems to mean what is uncommon, either of *goodness* or of *baseness*; but it is far more generally used in the former sense. (*Notes, Deut.* iv. 6—8. xxviii. xxix. 13—28. *Ps.* cvii. 33—43.)

V. 35. *Notes*, xvi. 12, 13. xx. 8. 26. xxii. 11. *Ps.* ci. 2—8. *Matt.* xxiv. 45—51. xxv. 14—30.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

The more the religion of the scripture is examined, the fuller must be the conviction of every impartial judge, that it is of divine original; because in all things it conduces, in proportion as it is received and practised, to the welfare of individuals, families, and nations. This appears conclusively, when we consider, that the character and conduct, which scriptural principles are suited to form, would be far more eligible in any near relation, than the opposite character, even to those who are prejudiced against the principles themselves. For who would not, on sober reflection, prefer as a wife, that prudent woman, who, making the word of God her rule, takes pleasure in the concerns of the household, the care of her children, and the credit and comfort of her husband; to one of those foolish women, whose negligence and extravagance are the ruin of so many families, and the calamity of all related to them? Who can doubt whether the former character be not incomparably more valuable as a parent also, and as a member of the community? Nay, posterity are greatly concerned in this remark: for prudent women are not only the stay of families, but a blessing to the rising generation, and the support of declining empires; while the foolish entail poverty, shame, and ignorance on their descendants; and bequeath as a legacy to the community, a vicious and worthless progeny.—Wherever the fear of God is the ruling principle, a man will walk in his integrity: but those who despise him and his servants, cannot reasonably be expected to be conscientious in their general behaviour. In the mouth of such men is “a rod of pride,” which renders them mischievous, and exposes them to immense vexation; from which “the lips of the wise pre-serve them.” In numerous instances, those who fear not God, declining the self-denial and fatigue of labour in any mean or common employment, and affecting gentility and delicacy, become the burdens and nuisances of society, which in one way or other is pillaged for their support. But humility, submission to the will of God, and the desire of living at a distance from temptation, and without injuring any one, render the pious man ready for any honest occupation, or work, and for such inconveniences as necessarily attach to it. These, therefore, form the most valuable and most comfortable part of the community: for indeed “where no oxen are the crib is clean; but much increase is by the strength of the ox:” and the publick is as much advantaged as the husbandman himself.—While the irreligious, to answer their wicked purposes, are induced to multiply lies and even perjuries; and while

wise servant: but his wrath is against
* him that causeth shame.

x x. 5. xvii. 2. xix. 26.

they excuse their crimes, and make a mock at sin; the pious man strictly adheres to truth and equity, and “excises himself to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man:” for the divine favour is his choice and object, which is with the righteous alone.—The way of peace and holiness lie open before him; because he seeks wisdom seriously and humbly from the scriptures, and with earnest prayer that he may glorify God and do good: but the pride, levity, and profaneness of the scorner, render him incapable of distinguishing truth from falsehood, right from wrong; and his very genius, or wit, or learning, only make him more extensively mischievous, by propagating infidelity, heresy, or impiety, in a specious and imposing manner. Here again, “the wisdom of the prudent, which is to understand his way,” appears valuable. He “who fears God and walks in his ways,” will go from the “presence of the foolish man, when he perceives not in him the lips of knowledge.” Wit, ingenuity, politeness, and eloquence, make no amends, in his judgment, for the want of seriousness, for erroneous and pernicious opinions, or scoffing and jesting at things sacred. Thus he will be kept from the fatal contagion of profane company; and from that worst deceit and folly even of fools, namely, excusing vice by principles subversive of all justice and truth, as well as of piety and religion.—As “there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death;” “the wise man feareth and departeth from evil:” he not only shuns the profane scoffer, but the soothing or ostentatious deceiver. While “the simple believeth every word,” he prudently “looks well to his goings;” for eternal happiness or misery are at stake. While “the fool rageth and is confident;” he fears lest he should be deceived, and humbly seeks to God, praying to be kept from every delusion. When he sees men, who once appeared to be religious, turn back into the ways of sin; he mourns over them, foreseeing the awful consequences; and becomes more jealous of himself and watchful over his own heart: and knowing that, in general, those who forsake God, do it, “loving this present world;” he becomes more and more afraid of covetousness, and often seems to hear the Saviour caution him, as he did the disciples of old, “Remember Lot’s wife!” and, Remember, that “the house of the wicked shall be overthrown; but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish.”—It is indeed of the greatest importance to possess a source of consolation, independent of all outward things: and this is the peculiar advantage of the pious man, and the means of preserving him from temptation.—External appearances are very inadequate evidences of a man’s happiness or misery. Even in the midst of prosperity and laughter, sinners are conscious that they are not happy. They often strive to repress their sighs, to silence their consciences, and to quiet their fears: but they will find their jovial and sensual mirth at length end in “weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.” And as none but themselves know the bitterness of their hearts in their hours of solitude; so none, but the true believer, can understand the nature of that serious joy which is possessed in communion with God, and in the hope and first-

CHAP. XV.

Maxims about bridling the passions ; improving the

fruits of heaven. With this no stranger can intermeddle ; this no event can destroy, or long suspend ; and this causes the Christian to cease from envying the prosperous sinner : it mars his relish for worldly pleasure, and turns the balance of happiness immensely in his favour, even amidst the trials of life. Let then the sons of vanity and sensuality possess their inheritance of folly, unenvied but not unpitied ; and let every believer rejoice with gratitude, and say, "The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage."

V. 17—35.

These verses only give us another view of the advantages, which true religion confers on the possessor, and on others by his means.—While the passionate man "exalteth folly," and rashly plunges himself into discord and mischief, by which he becomes wretched and contemptible ; while the malicious is hated for sullen devices of revenge ; and while the envious torments himself because of the successes of his competitors ; the Christian is instructed to exercise meekness and forgiveness, to be contented and benevolent, and to take pleasure in witnessing and aiding the success and comfort of all around him. He shews his superiority of understanding by being "slow to anger : " and increasing knowledge crowns him with true honour. For wisdom resides in the heart to direct a man's judgment, and moderate his desires ; and thus without ostentation it appears in his life and actions : while fools continually expose themselves by their vain boastings, as well as by their ill behaviour. But in all cases, a sound heart and well governed passions, are life and comfort ; while every domineering sinful temper is as "rotteness in the bones."—Again, view that part of ungodly men, who seek affluence as their chief good, and expect happiness in worshipping Mammon. How do these men oppress the poor by merciless exactions, by defrauding them of their wages, and by numberless methods of injustice and cruelty ! But, while they thus reproach and despise the common Creator of rich and poor, and of the whole human race, and glory, as it were, in their ingratitude to their Benefactor ; do they not also become most worthless and pernicious members of society ? and are they not by corroding suspicions, harassing fears, and turbulent passions, wretched amidst their immense possessions, and multiplied indulgences ? "The wicked is like the troubled sea, whose waters cast forth mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, for the wicked."—Now contemplate the opposite character. He who honours God has mercy on the poor : he dares not, nay, he is not inclined to despise the mean appearance, or uncouth behaviour, of his neighbour, in whatever clime he was born, or of whatever complexion ; but, as he would be happy himself, so he would endeavour to promote the happiness of others ; and he finds it an accession to his own comfort to relieve their distresses. He feels his need of the mercy and truth of God, in order to the salvation of his soul : and he copies them in devising to do good to the afflicted who expect it from him. Thus he best consults his own good ; "for do they not err, who devise evil ?"

gift of speech ; receiving reproof ; the omniscience of God ; his dealings with the righteous and the wicked ; the advantages of piety and peace ; and the evil of sloth, rashness, and avarice, 1—33.

since in the "fear of the LORD is strong confidence," and none but his children can have a refuge in the approaching hour of death, and day of judgment. Let us then now seek to this Fountain of life, that we may escape the snares of death, and be safe and confident, when the wicked are sinking in consternation and despair.—It is no less evident, that righteousness is the grand support of nations ; and that sin cuts the sinews and undermines the foundations of every community, in which it prevails. And though the long-suffering of God has hitherto spared this nation, for the sake of a small remnant, which he has reserved to himself : yet as sin is become the reproach, so it will be the ruin of our favoured land, except a general reformation take place ; for it will at length be found to be universally true, that "the evil bow before the good, and the wicked at the gates of the righteous." The wise and pious are therefore the best patriots : by their examples, prayers, labours, and influence, they endeavour to stem the torrent of infidelity, profaneness, profligacy, and iniquity, and to promote that righteousness which alone establishes prosperity. Wisdom and piety form also the grand qualifications of good princes. Such will not waste the lives, or drain off the riches of their subjects, by needless wars, to gratify their own ambition, rapacity, or revenge : they will not destroy or drive away the people, by oppression, persecution, or bloody executions, or exorbitant taxes : nay, they will study to preserve peace, plenty, and good order, and the impartial, prompt, and cheap administration of justice, and to encourage industry and ingenuity. This will induce strangers to come and settle in the land, and "in the multitude of the people is the king's honour ; but "in the want of people is the destruction of the prince." At the same time they will, by their example and influence, and every scriptural means, endeavour to promote the spread of vital godliness. As "their favour will be shewn to the wise and righteous, and their wrath will be against those that cause shame ;" they will be rid of corrupt ministers, as soon as they detect them ; and will employ those who heartily concur in their wise, equitable, and pious measures : and happy will that people be, who are in such a case.—But as genuine religion is in every thing most excellent ; so we are required to be peculiarly upon our guard against counterfeits : for prejudice, ignorance, and fashion even canonize false schemes of religion. Here then we should learn to distinguish between the "faithful witness who will not lie," and who "delivereth souls ;" and those deceitful witnesses who speak lies, either through ignorance or hypocrisy, for filthy lucre's sake, and to the destruction of their hearers. If we carefully compare their lives and doctrine with the word of God, we shall soon learn to know one from the other. And this distinction is far more important, with respect to those witnesses who speak from the pulpit, than those who bear their testimony in courts of justice ; and the false witnesses are, alas ! in the former case, far more numerous in proportion.—The importance of this remark, will appear most evident, when the wicked is driven by death, from all his possessions and enjoyments, under the wrath of God and the power of his

A ^a SOFT answer turneth away wrath; but ^b grievous words stir up anger.

2 The ^c tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright; but the mouth of fools ^d poureth out foolishness.

3 The ^e eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

4 A ^f wholesome tongue is ^g a tree of life; but perverseness therein is ^h a breach in the spirit.

life; but perverseness therein is ^f a breach in the spirit.

5 A ⁱ fool despiseth his father's instruction; ^j but he that regardeth reproof is prudent.

6 In ^k the house of the righteous is much treasure; but ^l in the revenues of the wicked is trouble.

7 The ^m lips of the wise disperse knowledge; but the mouth of the foolish is open, and his lips are full of vanity.

lusts, into the eternal world; and when the righteous shall rejoice in hope of a blessed immortality, without sin or sorrow in the presence of his Lord, which will reconcile him to the separating stroke, and smooth the countenance of the king of terrors.—Let us also endeavour to be always well employed: “for in all labour there is profit;” but in every thing the mere “talk of the lips tendeth only to “penury:” and let those, to whom the Lord has given riches, endeavour to shew their wisdom by making a good use of them: for thus they will be a crown to them; otherwise they will only enable them to be more conspicuously and perniciously foolish. ’Tis true, that at present many will profess to esteem and respect them, merely because they are rich: and the poor, however wise and pious, will be despised and hated, because he is poor. But ere long, Lazarus will be honoured, as well as comforted, and the rich man despised, as well as tormented. For “the favour “of our King will” uniformly “be towards the wise servant; but his wrath will be against him that causeth “shame.”

NOTES.

CHAP. XV. V. 1. ‘We should not think it enough, ‘not to begin strife and contention; but if others begin ‘it, we should not continue it by rough answers; but endeavour to make an end of it presently by mollifying the ‘matter, and yield much for the common tranquillity’s ‘sake.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—‘Contentions arise out of pride, ‘ambition, morosity of nature, emulation, wrath, superstition; which move men either to give ill words, or to ‘return worse to those that are given them; endeavouring to overcome by sharpness and bitterness, not by ‘lenity and moderation.’ *Ibid.* (Notes, 17, 18. xxv. 15. *Judg.* viii. 1—3. xii. 1—6. 2 *Sam.* xix. 40—43. xx. 1, 2.)

V. 2. Wise men know how to communicate knowledge, as circumstances require, in the most acceptable and useful manner: but even the learning and right notions, which wicked men obtain, as well as their errors and follies, are poured out so indiscriminately, that they do more harm than good. (Notes, xii. 13. 23. xvi. 21—23. *Ec.* x. 11—15.)—It is indeed evident, that many have good capacities and considerable knowledge, who totally want judgment and discretion for improving them.

V. 3. *Marg. Ref.*—Note, v. 20—23, v. 21.

V. 4. “The healing of the tongue is a tree of life.” *Marg.* When a man is able and willing to speak, for the instruction of the ignorant, the encouragement of the

troubled conscience or afflicted heart, the calming of the spirits of those who are enraged, and the healing of differences among neighbours, his tongue is as “a tree of “life;” it will, as it were, create a paradise around him, and exceedingly promote the comfort, peace, and salvation of mankind. But proud, passionate, scurrilous, and exasperating language, makes breaches upon a man’s spirit; it throws him off his guard, distresses his mind, misleads his judgment, excites his anger, and brings guilt on his conscience. (Notes, iii. 18. xii. 18, 19. xviii. 8. 14. *Mal.* iv. 2, 3, v. 2.)—The same word signifies both *spirit* and *wind*. ‘Perverseness,’ in the tongue, ‘is like a blustering ‘wind among the boughs of the trees; rending and tearing the life and spirit of a man’s self and others.’ *Bp. Hall*.

V. 5. (Notes, x. 1. xiii. 1. *Deut.* xxi. 18—21. 1 *Sam.* ii. 23—25.) He that profits by instruction and correction when a child, is likely to become a prudent man.

V. 6. A moderate provision, a contented mind, and confidence in God, are an inestimable treasure “in the “house of the righteous,” both for the good of them, and of their children after them. (Notes, x. 22. xiii. 22. xvi. 8. xxi. 20. *Ps.* xxxvii. 16, 17, v. 16.) But the large revenues of wicked men increase their fears and suspicions, add strength to their passions, augment their pride and impatience of contradiction, expose them to envy and enmity, engage them in discords, tempt them to inordinate and injurious indulgence, bring guilt upon their consciences, and render the fears of death and judgment doubly distressing. (Notes, *Job* xx. 10—29, vv. 19—23. *Ps.* lxxiii. 18—22. *Ec.* v. 13—17.)

V. 7. Knowledge, like wealth, is valuable in proportion as it is communicated with prudence and propriety. To acquire useful knowledge, therefore, is a great object to a wise man, who would glorify God and do good: but to find out and embrace opportunities of communicating it, in the most extensive measure, and in such ways as render the imparted instruction permanent in its effects, is the grand improvement of the talent when acquired, and of the influence that it gives. Thus the apostles scattered the knowledge of Christ, by preaching and writing, through the nations; and the fruit remains to this day. (*Marg. Ref.* 1.—Note, *John* xv. 12—16, v. 16.)—But men of knowledge, who do not impart instruction, are *misers* among the learned, in the world and in the church: and ignorant men have nothing worth communicating; so that they are beggarly, lazy spendthrifts. (Notes, 2. x. 20, 21. *Ps.* xxxvii. 29—31. *Matt.* xii. 33—37.)

knowledge; but ^m the heart of the foolish *doeth* not so.

8 The ⁿ sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD; but ^o the prayer of the upright is his delight.

9 The ^p way of the wicked is ^a an abomination unto the LORD; but ^r he loveth him that followeth after righteousness.

10 ^{*} Correction is ^{*} grievous unto him that forsaketh the way; ^{*} and he that hateth reproof shall die.

11 ^u Hell and destruction are before the LORD: how much more then

^{*} the hearts of the children of men?

12 A ^v scorner loveth not one that reproveth him; ^{*} neither will he go unto the wise.

13 A ^a merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance; but ^b by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.

14 The ^c heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge; but ^c the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness.

15 ^e All the days of the afflicted are evil; ^f but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast.

x 2 Chr. vi. 80.
Ps. vii. 9. xlv.
21. Jer. xvii. 10.
John ii. 24, 25.
xxi. 17. Acts i.
24. Heb. iv. 13.
Rev. ii. 23.
y 10 ix. 7, 8. Am.
v. 10. John iii.
18—21. vii. 7.
2 Tim. iv. 3.
z 2 Chr. xviii. 7.
a 15. xvii. 22.
2 Cor. i. 12.
b xxi. 25. xviii. 14.
Neh. ii. 2. John
xiv. 1. 2 Cor. ii.
7. vii. 10.
c i. 5. ix. 9.
1 Kings iii. 6—
12. Ps. cxix. 97.
100. Acts xvii.
11. 2 Pet. iii.
18.
d xii. 23. Is. xxx.
10. xlv. 20.
Hos. xii. 1.
e Gen. xxxvii. 35.
xlvii. 9. Ps.
2 Cor. i. 5. 12. vi.

xc. 7—9. f xvi. 22. Acts xvi. 25. Rom. v. 2, 3. 11. xii. 12. 2 Cor. i. 5. 12. vi.
10. 1 Pet. i. 6—8. iv. 13.

V. 8, 9. The most costly sacrifices of the wicked, even under the Mosaick law, were an abomination to the Lord; because the whole way of those who offered them was abominable to him, and because of their corrupt motives: and the case is precisely the same, with all external acts of worship, nay, with the largest oblations and most liberal alms, of the impenitent and unbelieving, under the Christian dispensation. For they either mean nothing determinate by them, or they intend to cover their sins, to bribe their Judge, to make compensation for past crimes, or to purchase indulgences for future transgressions; they put their services in the stead either of Christ's atonement, or of holy obedience; they present them with hypocritical hearts; and they grossly affront the holy God, by supposing that he can be imposed on by forms or gifts, or pleased by them while they are enemies to his justice, his authority, and his grace. (Notes, xxviii. 9. Is. i. 10—15. lxvi. 3, 4. Jer. vi. 18—20. vii. 21—23. Am. v. 21—24.)—But, will the greatest of sinners, if he desires to repent or seek salvation, be rejected? By no means: when this desire brings even the poor murderer, or thief, to cry for mercy in the Redeemer's name, he begins to offer "the prayer of the upright, in which God delighteth:" (Notes, 1 Chr. xxix. 10—19, v. 17. Ps. l. 7—15, vv. 14, 15. Cant. ii. 14:) and he may be sure of acceptance, in proportion as he is ashamed on account of former crimes and present unworthiness; and as in brokenness of heart, he dares not lift up his eyes unto heaven, but at a humble distance, smites upon his breast, crying "God be merciful to me a sinner."—Such intimations, under the old Testament, were a kind of prophecy, that another and more spiritual dispensation was at hand.

V. 10. 'He that swerveth from the word of God can not abide to be admonished.' Sharp and grievous rebukes must be inflicted on him who refuseth instruction: and if he set himself against these, he will finally perish, as incorrigible. (Notes, xiii. 1. xxiii. 34, 35.—See on 5.)

V. 11. (Notes, xxvii. 20. Job xxvi. 5—13, v. 6. Ps. cxxxix. 7, 8.) Abaddon, the word here rendered *destruction*, sometimes means *the devil, the destroyer*; (Note, Rev. ix. 11;) and the verse may denote, that the deepest machinations of the prince of hell, and of all his legions of fallen angels, are open to the Lord's inspection, and must end in their disappointment and deeper torment: how then

can man, who is so inferior in sagacity and subtlety, expect to hide his counsels from God, or to prosper in rebellion against him? (Marg. Ref.) 'There is nothing so deep or secret, that can be hid from the eyes of God, much less men's thoughts.' See on 3.

V. 12. (Notes, ix. 7—9. 1 Kings xxii. 8.) "Every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd: but he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." John iii. 20, 21.—"Behold a greater than Solomon is here."

V. 13. A peaceful conscience, a joyful hope, and a contented mind give habitual and substantial cheerfulness, conduce to health, and tend greatly to a man's success in every useful undertaking. But a gloomy, unthankful, envious, impatient spirit, arising from pride, resentment, an evil conscience, and attachment to worldly objects, and disappointments about them, breaks the spring and vigour of the mind, and renders a man uneasy to himself and others; as well as inactive and unfit for service. (Notes, 15. xii. 25. xvii. 22. xviii. 14. John xiv. 1.)

V. 14. Notes, i. 5. xviii. 1, 2. 1 Kings iii. 9—14. Ps. cxix. 97—100.—Feedeth, &c.] Empty curious speculations, or the imposture of the day, are the very food of profane and sensual minds; who credit any absurdity, if it do not disquiet their consciences, affront their pride, or militate against their lusts. Such foolish persons are found in every age, of every rank, and among the learned as well as the unlearned.—As those who are ignorant of the scriptures, even when learned, can feed upon transubstantiation, purgatory and indulgences, or the wildest absurdities of enthusiasm; so ingenious and scientifick men can relish the more refined, but not less absurd, speculations of scepticks and infidels; till "professing themselves wise, they become fools," doubt of every thing, or even deny the existence of the God that made them. Alas! how do the mouths of numbers in this land, and in the present day, not only pour out such foolishness, but greedily devour it, as if it were the most delicious and wholesome food of the soul! (Notes, Is. xlv. 19, 20. Hos. xii. 1, 2.)

V. 15. Affliction or poverty, without a cheerful spirit, and attended with anxiety and impatience, renders a man's life wretched; but with these much habitual satisfaction

g xvi. 8. xxviii. 6. Ps. xxxviii. 16. 1 Tim. vi. 6. h x. 22. Ec. ii. 10. 11. 18—23. v. 10—12. i xvii. 1. xxi. 19. Ps. cxxxiii. Phil. ii. 1. 1 John iv. 16. k x. 12. xxvi. 21. xxviii. 25. 2 Sam. xix. 43. xx. 1. Jam. iii. 14—16. l. xxv. 15. Gen. xiii. 8. 9. Judg. viii. 1—3. 1 Sam. xxv. 24. &c. Ec. x. 4. Matt. v. 9. Acts vi. 1—5. Jam. i. 19, 20. m xxii. 5. 13. xxvi. 13. Num. xiv. 1—3. 7—9. n iii. 6. viii. 9. Ps. v. 8. xxv. 8, 9. 12. xxvii. 11. Is. xxx. 21. xxxv. 8. xxiii. 15, 16. xxix. 3. 1 Kings i. 48. ii. 9. v. 7. Phil. ii. 22.

16 Better is ^g little with the fear of the LORD, than ^h great treasure and trouble therewith.

17 Better is ⁱ a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.

18 A ^k wrathful man stirreth up strife; but ^l he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.

19 The ^m way of the slothful man is as an hedge of thorns; but ⁿ the way of the righteous is ^o made plain.

20 A ^o wise son maketh a glad father;

* Heb. raised up as a causey. Is. lvii. 14. o x. 1.

but a foolish man ^p despiseth his mother.

21 Folly is ^q joy to him that is ^r destitute of wisdom; but ^s a man of understanding walketh uprightly.

22 ^t Without counsel purposes are disappointed; but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.

23 A man hath ^u joy by the answer of his mouth; and a word *spoken* ^v in due season, ^w how good is it!

24 The ^x way of life is ^y above to the wise, ^z that he may depart from hell beneath.

John xiv. 6. xxiii. 14. y Phil. iii. 20. Col. iii. 1, 2. z ii. 18. v. 5. vii. 27. ix. 18.

may be enjoyed, even in very unfavourable circumstances. 'A mind conscious of good intentions, though success be wanting, affords truer and purer joy ... than all that the world can furnish a man withal.' Lord Bacon, quoted by Bp. Patrick.—The original is *good of heart*, and seems to denote that inward peace, which springs from the testimony of conscience, and submissive confidence in God. (Notes, 13. Acts xvi. 25—28. 2 Cor. ii. 12—14. Eph. v. 15—20, vv. 18—20. Phil. iv. 5—7. 10—13.)—Some render the clause, "The good of heart are a continual feast:" their company is peculiarly pleasant and desirable.

V. 16. Notes, 6. xvi. 8. Ps. xxxvii. 16, 17. Ec. ii. 18—23. 1 Tim. vi. 6—10, vv. 6—8.

V. 17, 18. 'The meanest fare with the love of him who invites, and with agreement among the guests, is much better than the most sumptuous entertainments of him that hates us, or among those that quarrel. ... A man prone to wrath will easily disturb the most peaceable company, being apt to quarrel for very trifles: but a meek and patient person is so far from raising strife, that he will endeavour to compose it, when he finds it is begun by others.' Bp. Patrick. Thus some connexion has been supposed between these two maxims: but each of them is capable of a much more extensive application; in respect of the true enjoyment of life, and the peace of families, neighbourhoods, churches, and nations. "If there be any comfort of love." "Blessed are the peace-makers." "For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." (Notes, i. 16. x. 12. xvii. 1. Ps. cxxxiii. Matt. v. 9. Phil. ii. 1—4. Jam. iii. 13—18. 1 John iv. 7, 8.)

V. 19. Whatever a sluggard has to do seems full of intolerable difficulties; like a man's forcing his way repeatedly through a hedge of thorns: and indeed his delays tend to increase his perplexities, and expose him to many sufferings, which a prudent and upright attention to every duty in its proper season would have prevented: but "the way of the righteous is cast up," or paved; so that he proceeds with ease and safety. (Notes, xxii. 5, 13. xxvi. 13—16. Is. xxx. 20, 21. xxxv. 8—10. lvii. 14.) 'The same observation may be made concerning the government of a family; wherein, if there be due care and providence used, all goes on cheerfully; and as it were of its own accord without noise or tumult: but if those be wanting, when some greater occasion falls out, all mat-

ters throng in to be dispatched at once; the servants are in an uproar, the whole house rings, and there is nothing well done in that confusion.' Lord Bacon, quoted by Bp. Patrick.

V. 20. (Note, x. 1.) It is very common for a heedless young man, to consider his disregard to the prudent and pious admonitions of an aged mother, as a proof of wit, spirit, or superior understanding; and even to turn them into ridicule among his gay companions: but this maxim may shew such youths what their true character is in the sight of God, and in that of all wise men. (Notes, xxiii. 15, 16. 20—25. Ex. xx. 12. Lev. xix. 3.)

V. 21. Notes, x. 23. xiv. 9. 16. xxvi. 18, 19. Job xxviii. 28.

V. 22. (Note, xi. 14.) Where no secret consultation is held on the means of accomplishing important purposes, or, where *secrecy* is not observed by those concerned, disappointment may be expected: but among a number of faithful counsellors, the best measures for establishing the design, and for securing success, will be suggested. (Note, xx. 18. Ec. viii. 6, 7.)—Counsel.] סוד, a secret.

V. 23. When a wise and pious man is enabled to speak to the purpose, and to time his observations well, so that they prove evidently "words in season," and produce the desired effect: immense good may be done, which many will see and acknowledge; and this will be to him a source of satisfaction, and a cause of gratitude. (Notes, xii. 14. xxiv. 26. xxv. 11, 12. Ec. iii. 1—11. Is. l. 4. Eph. iv. 29.)—Some connect this with the preceding verse. When prudent and seasonable advice is given by any one among a multitude of counsellors, which the rest had not thought of, so that the success of the measure was owing to it; such a man shall "have joy by the answer of his mouth." No words can express how useful one pertinent and seasonable remark may prove. (Note, 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33.) 'If we will that our talk be comfortable, we must wait for time and season.'

V. 24. The way of life is above the reach and conception of the sensual, and of all who "love the world and the things that are in the world;" yea, of all those who despise divine instruction: it is also above the revolutions of this unstable world. Being of heavenly origin, it raises the heart to the love of those things which are above. And the treasure, and the heart, being in heaven, wise men depart farther and farther from the ways, which lead to

25 The LORD will ^adestroy the house of the proud; ^bbut he will establish the border of the widow.

26 The ^cthoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD; ^dbut the words of the pure are ^epleasant words.

27 He ^fthat is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; ^gbut he that hateth gifts shall live.

28 The ^hheart of the righteous studieth to answer; but ⁱthe mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

29 The LORD is ^jfar from the wicked; but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

ed; but ^khe heareth the prayer of the righteous.

30 The ^llight of the eyes rejoiceth the heart; and ^ma good report maketh ⁿthe bones fat.

31 The ^oear that heareth the reproof of life ^pabideth among the wise.

32 He that ^qrefuseth ^rinstruction despiseth his own soul; but he that ^sheareth reproof ^tgetteth understanding.

33 The ^ufear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; ^vand before honour is humility.

34 The LORD is ^wfar from the wicked; but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

hell beneath. (Notes, ii. 18. vi. 23. Matt. vi. 19—23. vii. 13, 14. Phil. iii. 20, 21. Col. iii. 1—4.) ‘He that is truly wise, hath his conversation and affections above: and in the holy way of obedience walketh on unto eternal life.’ Bp. Hall.—If life, in this verse, means any thing more than continuance in this world, hell beneath cannot mean the grave, but the place of future misery: otherwise, where is the contrast?

V. 25. The proud and insolent often trample on the poor, while they despise God, and scorn submission. But though they build grand houses, and get large estates by oppression and wrong, and leave flourishing families; in a little while those will be crushed, and justice done to the orphans and widows whom they have despoiled. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xii. 7. xiv. 11. xxii. 22, 23. Job xl. 9—14. Ps. lxxviii. 5, 6. Dan. iv. 34—37. v. 18—24.)

V. 26. Wicked designs and contrivances, though not accomplished, are abominable to God, and will accordingly be punished. (Notes, xxiv. 8, 9. Gen. vi. 5. Jer. iv. 14. Matt. xv. 15—20. Acts viii. 18—24:) but the pious and benevolent discourse of those, who “have purified their souls, in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love,” are acceptable to him; even when little more is in their power, or when their endeavours to do good fail of success. (Notes, 23. Ps. xix. 12—14. xxxvii. 29—31. xlv. 1. Matt. xii. 34—37.)

V. 27. The covetous man will let none of his family have any rest or enjoyment. Greediness of gain likewise often tempts men to embark in projects, which entail ruin on their families; to commit perjuries, or to take bribes, which cause perhaps their estates to be confiscated; or to use such iniquitous methods of growing rich, as bring the curse of God on all their possessions, which descend to their heirs with that dreadful encumbrance. But he who hates bribes, and every dishonest or unseemly gain, shall live in credit and comfort. (Notes, i. 17—19. xi. 29. xxviii. 15, 16. Josh. vii. 21—26. 2 Kings v. 26, 27. Is. xxxiii. 15, 16. Hab. ii. 9—11. Zech. v. 1—4.)

V. 28. Notes, 2. 23. xiii. 16. xxix. 20.

V. 29. Marg. Ref.—See on 8, 9.

V. 30. The works of creation, and the various objects that we behold, give great pleasure to the mind, and endear to us the light of the sun, and the organs of sight:

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and good tidings cheer the heart, and conduce to health. How delightful then must it be to the humble sinner, to hear the good report of salvation, and to have the eyes enlightened to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ!—Many understand the good report, or hearing, of the pleasure arising from a good character. ‘Nothing ... makes a man so cheerful in well doing, as to hear a fair report of his own honest actions; or to receive the good news of the well-doing of other virtuous men.’ Bp. Patrick. But any other really good news may have a similar effect. (Notes, xxv. 13. 25. Ps. iv. 6—8. lxxxix. 15—18. Ec. xi. 7, 8. Is. lviii. 8—12. Luke ii. 8—14. Rev. xxi. 22—27. xxii. 2—5.)

V. 31, 32. (Notes, i. 5, 6. ix. 7—9.) A humble, teachable temper, attended with patient and obedient endurance of reproof, is one of the “things which accompany salvation.” This man “possesseth an heart.” (Note, xvii. 16.) ‘He is to be numbered among the wise, and shall at last be able to give good instructions to others.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, i. 24—31. v. 3—14. xiii. 20. xix. 20. Matt. vii. 24—27.)

V. 33. The grand instruction of heavenly wisdom, is this:—‘Fear God, submit to him, and obey him:’ (Notes, i. 7. Job xxviii. 28. Ps. cxi. 9, 10. Ec. xii. 11—14:) and humility is the fore-runner and preparation for genuine honour. ‘God exalteth none, but them that are truly humbled.’ (Marg. Ref. s.—Notes, xviii. 12. Luke xiv. 7—11. Phil. ii. 5—11. Jam. iv. 4—10. 1 Pet. v. 5—7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—18.

What inexhaustible mines of wisdom are contained in the sacred Scriptures! Every chapter that we consider forms a rich vein of this invaluable ore; and our researches serve only to convince us, that we are as yet working merely on the surface. May the Lord give us a heart to value, and to labour for, these treasures, that they may become our own, that we may be of “good understanding in the way of godliness!”—As “the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy;” (Note, Jam. iii. 17, 18;) it always dic-

CHAP. XVI.

Maxims of wisdom, relating to the providence of

God; the power and duty of kings; the evil of pride, calumny, discord, and violence; and the excellency of prudence, meekness, and integrity, 1—33.

tates those "soft answers which turn away wrath," and bridles the tongue from uttering the "grievous words that stir up anger;" even when the sarcastical wit and ingenuity of them would be suited to gain the applause of the ill-judging multitude.—He that is humble and meek shuns all dispute, whenever he can do it with a clear conscience: he appeases anger, and disarms resentment, by every reasonable concession: he uses his influence to calm the passions of others; to terminate or prevent litigations and controversies; and to promote peace among his neighbours, and among his fellow Christians, as far as truth and holiness will admit of it. Thus he leads a comparatively happy life, and is a blessing to others: for "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace:" but "where envy and strife are, there is confusion and every evil work."—Yet alas! those wrathful men that stir up the fire of strife, provided they have wit or eloquence, are most admired, not only in the world, but even in the church; and are the great favourites of the several sects and parties, into which it is unhappily divided.—In this view, however, how important is the use or abuse of the tongue! For "a healing tongue is indeed a tree of life; but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit." Nor can the mischief be conceived, which is continually done, while "the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness," impiety, and profligacy, and every pernicious principle; and while others, no wiser than they, but not such proficients in the school of profaneness, relish and feed on their foolishness. Yet this unruly member, which is full of deadly poison, yea, "a fire, a world of iniquity;" which "setteth on fire the whole course of nature, and is set on fire of hell;" is also one main instrument, which God employs in displaying his own glory, and promoting the cause of truth and righteousness on earth! For "a good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things." He has understanding, and he seeks knowledge: "the word of Christ dwells in him richly, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;" (Note, Col. iii. 15, 16;) and thus he learns to "use knowledge aright." For it is not enough to speak things that are true and good: but much wisdom is required to adapt our discourse to the occasions which present themselves; that, by a due respect to the character, circumstances, and wants of the persons addressed, we may speak to the case decisively, and so as to obviate objections and evasions; whether our object be to silence gainsayers, to rectify mistakes, to preserve those who are in danger of being deceived, to encourage the desponding, to conciliate those that are entering into contention, or to convince the prejudiced. In this way "the lips of the wise disperse knowledge:" they learn the instructions of life from each other, and then communicate them in their circles, whether as ministers or private Christians, and thus render "many wise unto salvation," who at length become able to teach others also. Those who would be qualified for such useful services, and employed in them, must begin by welcoming instruction and even reproof; and by learning to profit by their own mistakes: for he, who proudly or carelessly refuses instruction, despises his

own life and the interests of his immortal soul; but he, who with docility, seriousness, and humility, can bear to be reproved for his faults and convinced of his errors, will always be getting understanding. In like manner, when any one thankfully and patiently hearkens to the admonitions of the scriptures, and takes pleasure in faithful instruction, though he finds himself continually condemned, for one part or other of his conduct; and when he loves those who reprove him, and prefers the company of wise and pious men, from whom he may learn some salutary lessons; we may confidently expect that he will become a wise and useful man. But when a person, who is evidently in the path of ruin, is offended with those that would set him right; when he imbibes a strong prejudice against every one who rebukes him, and despises even a father's admonition; when he shuns the company or ministry of those, who point out to him his guilt and danger; there is too great reason to fear, that he is a scorner, who hates to be reformed, and is bent on his own destruction: for "correction is grievous to him that forsaketh the way, and he that hateth reproof shall die."—Forgetfulness of God is the great source of all the other sins and follies, into which men are hurried by their passions: for, did they well consider, that "the eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good;" and that "hell and destruction are before him, much more the hearts of the children of men;" they must be restrained in their evil courses by dread of his almighty indignation. But "God is not in all their thoughts;" and therefore their ways are an abomination unto him. Would we then be found among those who "follow after righteousness," and "whom the LORD loveth;" let these thoughts be habitually in our minds: "Thou God seest me;" thou seest my most secret desires and motives; "thou requirest truth in the inward parts:" "the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to thee, but the prayer of the upright is thy delight." For these considerations are peculiarly suited to arm our minds against temptation; and to animate our hope of his mercy and favour.—It is of great importance to have right principles early imprinted in the minds of young persons. Alas! how few parents continually endeavour, by instruction, conversation, and example, to convince their children, that "better is a little with the fear of the LORD, than great treasure, and trouble therewith!" How few seem to believe it themselves! yet it is the "sure testimony" of God; and is confirmed by universal experience and observation. For indeed, "godliness with contentment is great gain;" and those who possess it "have all and abound," even when the carnal eye sees very little: they have treasure in heaven, and treasures in the heart, and in the house: their present wants are supplied, and the Lord is with them as their Portion, and their Treasurer to supply their temporal wants; without the cares, troubles, and temptations, which accompany the revenues of the wicked.—Brotherly love and harmony, likewise, spring from love to God, and from men's experience and scriptural persuasion of his love to them: and this renders a dinner of herbs more relishing than the most

^a Ps. x. 17. cxix. ^a **THE** *preparations of the heart in
 36. Jer. x. 23.
 xxxii. 39, 40. Ez. xxxvi. 26, 27. Phil. ii. 13. Jam. i. 16—18. * Or, disposings.
 xxi. 1. 2 Chr. xviii. 31. Ezra vii. 27. Neh. i. 11. 2 Cor. viii. 16.

luxurious feasts of those, who “are living in malice and “envy, hateful, and hating one another.” And as riches too commonly increase pride, and furnish abundant causes of litigation; the rich are seldom exempt from wrath, envy, and strife, which mar all their enjoyment.—By faith and prayer, those who “fear the LORD and hope in his “mercy,” derive from him inward consolations: the discoveries which they make of the glory of God, and the excellency of heavenly things, rejoice their hearts; and the glad tidings and precious promises of the gospel, comfort and nourish their souls. “A merry heart,” thus obtained, “maketh a cheerful countenance,” and is “a continual feast;” but all other mirth is madness: while “the “sorrow of the world worketh death.” Cares, fears, disappointments, loss of friends, and other trials, when there is no hope in God or submission to him, induce sullen despondency, break the spirit, render life miserable, shorten a man’s days, or even tempt him to suicide. But the grace of God teaches patience, and thankfulness for remaining unmerited mercies, and inspires hope; and thus enables a man to be joyful in tribulations. Even godly sorrow has its peculiar sweetness and supports; it brings the heart into a penitent, submissive frame, and makes way for joy in the Lord. And if pious persons are dejected, this arises either from some misapprehension, from the weakness of faith, and want of prevailing hope, or of a more single and devoted frame of mind. We should therefore cultivate cheerfulness; lest we bring an evil report on our profession, and cause the unexperienced to conclude that we serve a hard Master, and that wisdom’s ways are not pleasantness and peace.

V. 19—33.

A considerable part of the miseries of life, and even of the disconsolation of professed Christians, arises from sloth and procrastination, which also very generally occasion the ruin of men’s immortal souls. For the way of the sluggard is, in every thing, like pressing through a thorn-hedge: a thousand hindrances and difficulties obstruct his path, which he has not vigour to break through. Thus many are all their life uneasy, because indolent; they live in continual war with their own consciences, and in doubt about their state, because in continual neglect of some part of their known duty: but the path of the wise and consistent Christian, who is diligent in his proper work, and “exercises himself to have a conscience void of offence,” becomes plain and pleasant. In like manner, many form very good designs, which come to nothing for want of due deliberation, and advising with prudent counsellors: and thus disappointment enhances their uneasiness; while a man’s purposes being established gives him inward satisfaction. That greediness of gain also, which springs from ignorance or neglect of a better inheritance, whether a man be rapacious in order to hoard, or to squander; instead of producing an accession to his happiness, proves a perpetual source of uneasiness to himself and to his family: whereas the disdain of filthy lucre conduces more to comfort, than the largest gains of ungodliness possibly could.

man, ^b and the answer of the tongue, ^b Ex. iv. 1, 12.
 is from the LORD. 15. Jer. i. 7—9.
 Matt. x. 19, 20.
 Luke xii. 11, 12.
 xxi. 14, 15.

But this “way of life is above to the wise;” and fools never raise their hearts or thoughts high enough to desire, or even conceive of, such pleasures, honours, and treasures, as are found in it; but cleaving to the dust, or grovelling in the mire of sinful pursuits, they fall into hell beneath. For, refusing instruction, delighting in folly and mischief, and not so much as regarding, whether an aged father or a tender mother rejoice or mourn over them; numbers reduce to practice the abominable thoughts of their hearts, till shame and conscience make little resistance; and till their crimes, by necessary consequence, plunge them into ruin without remedy.—But the pure in heart speak such things as are pleasing to God and useful to man, and such as will give them satisfaction when afterwards recollected, especially at the day of judgment. They “study to answer,” and often are enabled to speak a word in season, unspeakably more valuable than gold or precious stones: and they will eventually find, that the Lord heard and answered, in the best manner, all their prayers; for he gives wisdom, strength, victory, and joy. Let then the hearts of those rejoice who seek his face: let the fatherless and widow trust in him; and let the haughty oppressor tremble before him: “for he will destroy the house of the proud, but he will “establish the border of the widow.” And let us all remember, that “the fear of the LORD is the instruction of “wisdom;” and that before durable honour is humility: for he causes every man to feel his own vileness and poverty, before he confers on him wisdom, righteousness, honour, and immortality; or employs him in any very honourable and useful service.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVI. V. 1. The grace of God alone prepares the heart for every good work; and the wisdom, which he gives, dictates every prudent and pious answer and observation, which we make. ‘From him all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed.’ (Notes, xxi. 1. Ps. x. 17, 18, v. 17. Ezra vii. 27, 28. Jer. x. 23—25, v. 23.)—This is a scriptural and obvious exposition of the verse, as it stands in our translation; but the original does not seem to admit of it. Literally it is, “To man “the disposings (*marg.*) of the heart; and from JEHOVAH, “the answer of the tongue.” Man may form his plans, according to the desires of his heart, and he may purpose what to speak, on any important occasion: but at the last God will so order it, that nothing shall be said but what serves to accomplish his purposes. Thus Balaam could only speak that which God put into his mouth; though his love for “the wages of unrighteousness” made him very desirous of cursing Israel. (Notes, 9. 33. xix. 21. Ex. iv. 11, 12. 15. Num. xxii. 34, 35. Luke xxi. 12—19, v. 15.) —‘Man revolves innumerable thoughts in his mind, but ‘he cannot even lisp them, or move his tongue, without ‘God. ... He derideth the presumption of man, who ‘dareth to attribute to himself any thing, as to prepare his ‘heart, or such like; seeing he is not able to speak a ‘word, except God give it him.’

c 25. xxi. 2. xxx. 12. 1 Sam. xv. 13, 14. Ps. xxxvi. 2. Jer. ii. 22, 23. Luke xviii. 9—11. Rom. vii. 7—9. d v. 21. xxiv. 12. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Is. xxvi. 7. Jer. xvii. 10. Dan. v. 27. Luke xvi. 15. Rev. ii. 18, 23. e Heb. Roll. Job v. 8. Ps. xxxvii. 4, 5. iv. 22. Matt. vi. 25, &c. Luke xii. 22. Phil. iv. 6. 1 Pet. v. 7. f Job xxii. 28. Is. vii. 5—7. g Is. xliii. 7. 21. Rom. xi. 36. k Rev. iv. 11. h Job xxi. 30. Rom. ix. 22. i Pet. ii. 8. 2 Pet. ii. 3. 9. i vi. 16, 17. viii. 13. Job xl. 12. Jam. iv. 6. k xi. 21. † Heb. held innocent. Ex. xx. 7. Is. iii. 11. Rom. ii. 8, 9.

2 All ^c the ways of a man *are* clean in his own eyes; ^d but the LORD weigheth the spirits.

3 * Commit ^e thy works unto the LORD, and ^f thy thoughts shall be established.

4 The ^g LORD hath made all *things* for himself; ^h yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

5 Every one ⁱ *that is* proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: ^k though hand join in hand he shall not be [†] unpunished.

6 By ^l mercy and truth iniquity is purged; and ^m by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.

7 When a man's ways ⁿ please the LORD, ^o he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

8 Better ^p is a little with righteousness, than ^q great revenues without right.

9 A man's ^r heart deviseth his way; but the LORD directeth his steps.

10 ^s A ^t divine sentence is in the lips ^u of the king; ^v as he sitteth upon the throne, he judgeth.

V. 2. Ignorance, heedlessness, pride, and self-flattery render men very partial judges in their own cause: so that in general, they vindicate or palliate the most evident iniquity or profligacy, *in their own case*, and still more their neglect of God and religion. But the Lord judges with perfect impartiality, and with complete knowledge of the motives of every heart; and he decides upon every action and character, according to the immutable standard of his holy law: no wonder then that his decisions are so widely different from those, which men form of themselves. (Notes, v. 20—23, v. 21. xiv. 12. xxi. 2. xxiv. 11, 12. xxx. 11—14, v. 12. 1 Sam. xv. 13, 14. xvi. 6, 7. Jer. xvii. 9, 10. Dan. v. 25—28, v. 27. Luke xii. 13, 14.)

V. 3. Whatever a man undertakes according to the will of God, either in his personal concerns, or in those of a more publick nature, he ought to put it into his hands, to be disposed of and prospered by him as he pleases. Then he will avoid anxiety, and cheerfully use the proper means; and his purposes will be established and accomplished, as far as it is for his true interest. (Notes, Job xxii. 21—30, v. 28. Ps. xxxvii. 5—8. Ec. ix. 1—3, v. 1. Phil. iv. 5—7. 1 Pet. v. 5—7, v. 7.)

V. 4. The Lord orders and governs all things, with a view to the display of his own perfections, that they may be known and adored by his rational creatures: he is his own great End in all his works: and though some of his creatures have apostatized and rebelled against him, even they, though undesignedly, concur in displaying his glory. He is not the Author of their wickedness; but he foresaw it, and formed his plan with a view to it. Contrary to their intentions, he uses their agency to accomplish many of his wise and holy purposes: he makes use of the malevolence of some wicked men to execute righteous vengeance on others; and he will at last be glorified by their final destruction, in the day of wrath and revelation of his righteous judgment. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. ix. 13—16. 2 Kings x. 29—31. Job xxi. 27—30. Ps. lxxvi. 10. Is. x. 5—14. xlv. 7. Rom. ix. 15—18. 22, 23. xi. 33—36. 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8. Rev. iv. 9—11.)

V. 5. Marg. Ref.—Notes, vi. 16—19. viii. 13. xi. 21. Is. ii. 10—18.

V. 6. Mercy and truth are constantly united in scripture, when the forgiveness and salvation of sinners are spoken of: "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ:" (Note John i. 17:) but nothing can be more contrary to

the general tenour of the sacred oracles, than to suppose that the kindness, compassion, or faithfulness of one man to another, can *expiate* (for so the original means,) the guilt of his sins before God. The verse therefore seems to mean, that by the mercy and truth of God, through the promised Saviour, an expiation has been devised and revealed for taking away the sins of the world, and pardons actually granted to believers: and that when sinners are brought to fear God, they repent, and do works meet for repentance, and walk in newness of life. Some indeed explain it of the happy effects arising from the exercise of mercy and truth, in averting national judgments; and their remarks are worthy of attention: but yet the term *covered*, or *expiated*, does not well admit of this construction. These things may be a "lengthening of tranquillity," but they cannot be a "propitiation for sin." (Notes, viii. 13. xx. 28. Ps. lxxxv. 10—13. Dan. iv. 27. Mic. vii. 18—20. Luke xi. 41.)

V. 7. 'The best way to have our enemies reconciled to us, is for us first to be reconciled to God.' Bp. Patrick.—When any man, in the general purpose and tenour of his conduct, endeavours to please the Lord; he, who has all hearts in his hands, will dispose even those who were his foes, to become his friends. (Marg. Ref. o.—Notes, Gen. xxxii. 6—12. 27, 28. xxxiii. 4. Ps. cvi. 46. Dan. i. 8—16, v. 9. Acts ix. 1—22.)

V. 8. 'A small estate, honestly gotten and charitably enjoyed, is much to be preferred before vast incomes, heaped up by oppression, and kept without hospitality.' Bp. Patrick.—So indeed is the scanty maintenance, earned by hard but honest labour. (Notes, xv. 16—18. Ps. xxxvii. 16, 17.)

V. 9. Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1. xx. 24. xxi. 30. Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24.

V. 10. (Marg.) As the future is sometimes used for the imperative, in the original scriptures, this verse may mean, "A divine sentence is in the lips of the king; let not his mouth transgress in judgment." In the same way several of the ten commandments are given. (Notes, Ex. xx. 3—7.) Undoubtedly this is the implied maxim. It shews how wise and good kings do act, and how all kings ought to act. Their edicts and decisions should, without exception, be the result of heavenly wisdom and justice; and they ought to be the more careful to avoid errors or partial decrees, as there is no appeal on earth

of the king: his mouth 'transgresseth not in judgment.

11 A "just weight and balance are the LORD's: all the *weights of the bag are his work.

12 It is *an abomination to kings to commit wickedness; 'for the throne is established by righteousness.

13 *Righteous lips are the delight of kings; and they love him that speaketh right.

14 The ^wrath of a king is as messengers of death; ^ but a wise man will pacify it.

15 In ^the light of the king's countenance is life; and ^ his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.

16 How much 'better is it to get

^ Hos. x. 4. Am. v. 7. vi. 12. xi. 1. xx. 10. 13. Lev. xix. 35. 36. Deut. xxv. 13-15. Ez. xlv. 10. Hos. xii. 7. Am. viii. 5. Mic. vi. 1. Heb. stones. xxviii. 2. Deut. xxv. 16. Luke xii. 48. xx. 18. xxv. 5. xxix. 14. Ps. xcix. 4. Rev. xix. 11. xiv. 35. xxii. 11. Ps. ci. 5-7. xx. 2. Dan. iii. 13. &c. Luke xii. 4, 5. xvii. 11. 2 Kings vi. 31-33. Mark vi. 27. Ec. x. 4. Acts xii. 20. 2 Cor. v. 20. xix. 12. Job xxix. 23, 24. Ps. iv. 6. xxi. 6. Acts ii. 28. Ps. xxx. 5. lxxii. 6. Hos. vi. 3. Zech. x. 1. iii. 15-18. iv. 7. viii. 10, 11. 19. Job xxviii. 13. &c. Ps. cxix. 127. Ec. vii. 12. Matt. xvi. 26. Luke xii. 21.

wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!

17 The ^highway of the upright is to depart from evil: ^ he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.

18 ^Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

19 Better it is ^to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, ^ than to divide the spoil with the proud.

20 He that ^ handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and ^ whoso trusteth in the LORD, happy is he.

21 The ^wise in heart shall be called prudent; and ^ the sweetness of the lips increaseth learning.

g iv. 24-27. Is. xxxv. 8. Acts x. 35. xxiv. 16. Tit. ii. 10-14. h xix. 16. Matt. xxiv. 13. Heb. x. 39. Jude 21. 24. Rev. iii. 10. i xi. 2. xviii. 12. xxix. 23. Esth. iii. 5. vii. 10. Is. ii. 11, 12. xxxvii. 10-13. 38. Dan. iv. 30-37. v. 22-24. Ob. 3, 4. Matt. xxvi. 33-35. 74. Rom. xi. 20. 1 Tim. iii. 6. k Ps. xxxiv. 18. cxxxviii. 6. Is. lvii. 15. Matt. v. 3. Luke i. 51-53. xviii. 13, 14. l Ex. xv. 9. Is. ix. 3. x. 6. 13-15. liii. 12. + Or, understandeth a matter. viii. 35. xiii. 15. xvii. 2. xix. 8. xxiv. 3-5. Gen. xli. 38-40. Dan. i. 19-21. Matt. x. 16. m xxii. 19, 20. 1 Chr. v. 20. Ps. i. 12. xxxiv. 8. cxxxv. 1. cxlvi. 5. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. Dan. iii. 28. vi. 23. Eph. i. 12, 13. n 23. x. 8. xxiii. 15. 1 Kings iii. 12. Rom. xvi. 19. Jam. iii. 17. o 24. xv. 7. xxvii. 9. Ps. xlv. 2. Ec. xii. 10. Is. l. 4. Luke iv. 22. John vii. 46.

from their tribunal. (Notes, 11-15. Deut. xvii. 18-20. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4. Ps. lxxii. 1-7. Is. xxxii. 1, 2. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.)—Who would have expected to find in this proverb a proof of the Pope's infallibility? yet it has actually been brought forward as one! 'If kings are infallible, 'much more popes.' Arguments must be extremely scarce, when such are alledged.

V. 11. 'If they be true and just, they are God's work, 'and he delighteth therein: but otherwise, if they be false, 'they are the work of the devil, and to their condemnation that use them.'—Kings should not only do justice themselves; but see that their subjects do justice to each other, not thinking the inspection of weights and measures, and such other matters as may prevent fraud and oppression, beneath their notice; as the Lord himself peculiarly notices them, and accounts a just weight and balance his own work, his own appointment and delight. (Marg. Ref.—See on Note xi. 1.)

V. 12, 13. These verses are in some versions rendered imperatively:—"Let it be an abomination to kings," &c. As wickedness is more pernicious and abominable in kings, than in other men, seeing they are the delegates of heaven for the punishment of evil-doers; so they ought to abominate it more than other men, and consider righteousness as the basis and support of their thrones. They should therefore discourage all flatterers, calumniators, officious informers, and lying teachers; and delight in those alone, who speak the words of truth and righteousness. (Notes, 10. xxii. 11. xxv. 4, 5. xxix. 12. 14. Ps. ci. 5-7. Is. xxxiii. 5, 6.)—Those who adhere to our translation, feel the necessity of supplying the epithet good to the kings of whom they speak: and with the addition, the affirmative sense may be supported: (Note, xviii. 22:) the instruction being precisely the same.

V. 14, 15. The monarchs of the East in general had the power of life and death, without any check or controul: and often sent messengers to inflict vengeance at once on such as had offended them. (Notes, Esth. v. 14. vi. 4, 5. vii. 8-10. Dan. ii. 10-13. iii. 19-23. vi. 24.)—A wise man would therefore be very careful not to pro-

voke one so powerful; or, if he had inadvertently given offence, he would make every allowable submission in order to pacify him: and many would be candidates for the favour of a sovereign, who could so much promote their prosperity. (Marg. Ref.) This ought to have been an additional reason to these princes, why their frowns and favours should be directed entirely, according to the good or bad behaviour of those around them. (Notes, 10. 12, 13. xvii. 11. xix. 12. Ps. xxx. 5. xc. 11, 12. Acts xii. 20. 23, v. 20. 2 Cor. v. 18-21.)—The word rendered pacify, is the same as that before translated purge iniquity; (Note, 6;) but here man, not God, is spoken of. We may compensate to our fellow-creatures for our offences against them, but not to God for our sins against him.

V. 16. Wisdom is however eminently preferable to all the wealth or preferment, which the favour of the mightiest princes can bestow. (See on Notes, iii. 13-18.)

V. 17. He that is upright before God, goes further and further from evil; as a man travels on a high road, without diverting from it. And in keeping his way, he preserveth his soul. (Notes, iv. 24-27. Is. xxxv. 8-10. Rom. ii. 7-11.)

V. 18. Marg. Ref. i.—See on Notes, xi. 2. xv. 25.

V. 19. He that is unambitious, meek, and contented in a low condition, and associates with the humble and peaceable, better consults his own happiness, than they do, who have the greatest success in pursuing the honours and riches of the world, and in contesting with other haughty and rapacious rivals for the same idolized objects. (Notes, Ps. cxxxviii. 6, 7. Is. x. 5-15. lvii. 15, 16. Matt. v. 3. Luke i. 46-55.)

V. 20. 'He, that understands his business thoroughly, 'and manages it prudently and discreetly, is likely to have 'good success: but none so happy, ...as he that confides 'more in the LORD than in his own skill and industry.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 1. xiii. 15. xxiv. 3-6. 1 Chr. v. 18-22, v. 20. Ps. xxxiv. 8. lxxxiv. 11, 12. cxlvi. 5, 6.)

V. 21. The man, whose wisdom regulates his temper and affections, and directs his conduct, will at length be more honoured for prudence, than many who possess the

^p x. 11. xiii. 14. ^{xiv.} 27. xviii. 4. ^{John v.} 24. vi. 63. 68. ^q xv. 2. 23. Matt. xv. 14. xxiii. 16. —26. Luke vi. 39, 40. ^r xv. 28. xxii. 17. 18. Ps. xxxvii. 30, 31. xlv. 1. Matt. xii. 34. 35. Col. iii. 16. ^s Heb. maketh wise. ^t xii. 18. xv. 23. 26. xxiii. 16. xxv. 11, 12. xxvii. 9. Deut. xxxii. 2. Cant. iv. 11. John xx. 19—21. ^u xxiv. 13, 14. Ps. xix. 10. cxix. 103. Jer. xv. 16. ^v iii. 8. iv. 22. ^x xiv. 12. Is. xxviii. 15—19. John vii. 47—49. ix. 40. Acts xxvi. 9. 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

22 Understanding is ^p a well-spring of life unto him that hath it; but ^q the instruction of fools is folly.

23 The ^r heart of the wise ^s teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

24 ^t Pleasant words are as ^u an honey-comb, sweet to the soul, and ^v health to the bones.

25 There is ^x a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

26 ^y He that laboureth, ^z laboureth for himself; for his mouth ^a craveth it of him.

27 ^b An ungodly man ^c diggeth up evil; and ^d in his lips there is as a burning fire.

28 A ^e froward man ^f soweth strife: and ^g a whisperer separateth chief friends.

29 A ^h violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way that is not good.

^c xvii. 9. Gen. iii. 1, &c. 1 Sam. xxiv. 9. Rom. i. 29. 2 Cor. xii. 20. ^d i. 10—14. ii. 12—15. iii. 31. 1 Sam. xix. 11. 17. xxii. 7—9. xxiii. 19—21. Neh. vi. 13. 2 Pet. iii. 17.

most shining talents: and if he have the gift of conversing or teaching in a convincing and persuasive manner, he has a very great advantage for communicating the knowledge of divine truth to others. (Notes, 23, 24. x. 8. xv. 7. xxvii. 9. Ps. xlv. 2. Ec. xii. 8—10. Is. i. 4. Luke iv. 20—22.)—‘Profoundness of wisdom may help men to fame and admiration; but it is eloquence which prevails in business, and active life.’ Lord Bacon.—This is ingenious; but it can hardly be thought the meaning of the proverb: for the scriptures by no means recommend that eloquence, which often gives bad men, and a bad cause, the ascendancy in the most important transactions; and bears down wisdom, truth, and justice, by its fascinating delusions.

V. 22. Understanding is to the possessor a fountain of life, whence salutary streams flow all around him, communicating the instructions of life to others also: (Note, John vii. 37—39:) but, on the contrary, fools pour forth foolishness, like poisonous streams; and by their baneful instructions widely propagate vice, impiety, and pernicious delusions of every kind. (See on Note, xv. 2.) Some understand the last clause to mean, ‘It is folly to instruct fools.’ It is labour lost. (Note, ix. 7—9.)—‘If fools undertake to instruct others, they only make them like themselves.’ Bp. Patrick. (Note, Luke vi. 39, 40.)

V. 23. The wise man’s self-knowledge and acquaintance with his own heart, in the various circumstances of life, joined with his careful observation of men, will always suggest something proper to be spoken to others, according to their characters and situations: as the accurate knowledge of anatomy directs the experienced and sagacious physician, in respect of the causes of diseases, and the methods of cure. Thus he is enabled to communicate knowledge, pertinently, judiciously, and successfully. (Notes, xxii. 18. xxiii. 15, 16. xxv. 11, 12. Ps. xxxvii. 29—31. Matt. xii. 34—37.)

V. 24. ‘The sweet words of consolation, which come forth of a godly heart.’ (Notes, xii. 18, 19. xv. 23. 26. xxiv. 13, 14. xxv. 11, 12. xxvii. 9. Ps. xix. 7—11, v. 10. cxix. 103. Cant. iv. 11.)

V. 25. See on Note, xiv. 12.

V. 26. Men must needs labour, for their appetites continually crave supply, and eventually they enjoy the benefit of their labour. Thus we must either “labour for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life,” or perish. (Notes, xiv. 23. Ec. vi. 7, 8. John vi. 22—27, v. 27.) The verse, however, may be translated very differ-

ently. “The soul of him that is troublesome shall suffer trouble, for his mouth will be turned upon him.”—‘He cannot speak so much as an evil word, but it will return upon him, and fly in his own face.’ Bp. Patrick.—The original word, rendered labour, signifies either to take pains, or to molest others.

V. 27. An ungodly man, or “a man of Belial,” (marg.) frequently bestows more pains to do mischief, than would be needful in order to do good. Men of this character dig for evil, as if delving in the mine for precious metals: they make diligent search to find out some occasion of discord or calumny; their lips are set on fire of hell, and kindle the flame of contention in families and communities, or the flames of lust in the hearts of others. ‘His tongue is a burning firebrand, to set all the world in combustion.’ Bp. Hall. (Notes, Jam. iii. 3—12.)—The Septuagint thus translate this proverb, ‘The perverse man carrieth perdition on his own mouth. The foolish man diggeth up evil to himself; he treasureth up fire on his own lips.’ (Notes, Ps. vii. 14—16. x. 2—11. Hab. ii. 12—14.)—Hear now the observation of a popish interpreter, and, it is said, one of the most learned and judicious among them, on this passage: ‘This is apparent by the example of the Spanish Inquisition, whereby he that speaks any thing rashly against the faith, is deservedly delivered to the fire, which I wish were done every where.’ Maldonate, quoted by Bp. Patrick. ‘Thus, in the most literal sense, this Jesuit’s lips are as a burning fire, in which he would have us not only singed but devoured.’ Bp. Patrick. Let it not be forgotten that this inquisition still is in existence and active, and the order of the Jesuits restored to their former power and influence.

V. 28. In various ways, perverse men sow the seeds of strife and mischief. The whisperer for instance, by hints, surmises, misrepresentations, and slanders, not only sets the nearest friends and relations at variance; but excites jealousies among nobles and princes, whence spring seditions, and destructive wars between nations, and even between the inhabitants of the same nation. Being a child of the devil, he is tormented at seeing others happy, and can only find relief in doing mischief, and rendering mankind miserable. What a hateful, yet what a common character! (Notes, xvii. 9. xviii. 8. xxvi. 20—22. 1 Tim. v. 13—15, v. 13.)

V. 29, 30. (Notes, i. 10—19. ii. 12—15. vi. 12—15. x. 10. Mic. vii. 1—4, v. 3.) ‘Another sort’ (of the men of

^e vi. 12—14 x. 10. **30** He ^eshutteth his eyes to devise froward things: ^f moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass.

^f 27. Mic. vii. 3. **31** The ^ghoary head is a crown of glory, ^hif it be found in the way of righteousness.

^g xx. 29. Lev. xix. 32. Job xxxii. 6, 7. ^h Gen. xlvii. 7—10. 1 Sam. xii. 2—5. 1 Chr. xxix. 10, &c. Ec. iv. 13. Luke i. 6. ii. 29, &c. 37, 38. Philemon 9.

32 He ⁱthat is slow to anger is better than the mighty; ^k and he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.

33 The ^llot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD.

ⁱ xiv. 29. xv. 18. xix. 11. Ps. ciii. 8. Eph. v. 1. Jam. i. 19. ^k 19. xxv. 28. Rom. xii. 21. Rev. iii. 21.

^l Num. xxvi. 55, &c. Josh. vii. 14. xviii. 5. 10. 1 Sam. xiv. 41, 42. Neh. xi. 1. Acts i. 26.

Belial,) 'live by rapine and open violence; who ... persuade others to enter into their society. ... With profound study they contrive the ruin of others; and the sign being given, they furiously execute the mischief they have designed.' *Bp. Patrick*. 'This man' (described in these verses,) 'is a furnace of mischief.' *Sept*.

V. 31. 'That is, when it is joined with virtue: or else the elder that the wicked are, the more they are to be abhorred.' (*Notes*, xx. 29. *Gen*. xlvii. 7—9. 1 *Chr*. xxix. 10—28. 2 *Chr*. xxiv. 15, 16. *Luke* ii. 25—38. *Philem*. 8—11. 2 *Pet*. i. 12—15.)

V. 32. The noblest courage is shewn in withstanding and conquering a man's own passions, and in overcoming enemies by kindness; and the most desirable authority is self-government. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xix. 11. xxv. 28.)

V. 33. 'So that there is nothing that ought to be attributed to fortune: for all things are determined in the counsel of God which shall come to pass.'—'Though men cast the lots into the lap of a garment, or into a hollow vessel, and thence draw them out again; yet it is the LORD who directs entirely in what order they shall come forth, and so determines the matter in doubt, according to his pleasure.' *Bp. Patrick*.—What is *chance* to man is the *appointment* of God. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Josh*. vii. 13—18. 1 *Sam*. xiv. 36—44. *Ps*. xxii. 16—18. *Jon*. i. 7. *Acts* i. 23—26.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

True wisdom greatly consists in a practical conviction of our dependence on God, in every respect. He will assuredly be glorified in or by all his creatures. He has formed, and he orders, every thing "for himself," and for the display of his own glorious perfections; so that the rebels against his authority cannot finally defeat any of his purposes: for a season they dishonour his name by their sins, and refuse him their tribute of adoration and obedience; but when they have filled up their part in his vast, his universal plan, he will make known his justice, holiness, truth, and power, by executing deserved vengeance on them. Thus while men of every character, according to their prevailing passions, and with all their sagacity, devise their own ways; the Lord, with secret but invincible energy, directs their steps in that manner which coincides with his grand designs. It is not for us to comprehend the manner of his operation, or to solve the difficulties which appear in it to our narrow minds, and with our scanty measure of information: rather let us beseech him to direct our hearts into the fear and love of his holy name, and our feet in the paths of truth and holiness; that we may willingly glorify him on earth, and that he may be glorified in our eternal salvation. For when we habi-

tually depend on him, to prepare our hearts, guide our tongues, and direct our steps; our words and works will be such, as we may with comfort commit unto him and his disposal, assured of all desirable success.—Humility, which is inseparable from true wisdom, renders a man distrustful of his own understanding and heart, and afraid of the delusions of self-flattery, where eternity is at stake; nay, in the general tenour of his conduct, the humble man is jealous of himself, lest he should allow of any thing sinful, and not be aware of it: but his only security consists in fervent prayer to him that "weigheth the spirits," after David's example: "Search me, O LORD, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlasting." (*Note*, *Ps*. cxxxix. 23, 24.) How different is this from the conduct of those, who, fearless of being deceived, are offended by the most friendly caution, and count for an enemy every faithful reprover! Let such however recollect, that "every one that is proud of heart is an abomination to the LORD:" and should this vain confidence become fashionable, and vast multitudes concur in it; let it still be remembered, that "though hand join in hand they shall not be unpunished."—How evident is it, and yet how seldom considered, that "a little with righteousness is better than great revenues without right!" For, however it may be with the princes of the earth, "a divine sentence is in the mouth of" our almighty King; his mouth transgresseth not in judgment. "Wickedness is an abomination unto him;" "for his throne is established in righteousness." His wrath is infinitely more dreadful than any messengers of death; for man can only "kill the body, but he is able to destroy both body and soul in hell;" (*Note*, *Matt*. x. 27, 28;) while his favour and the light of his countenance are better than life itself, and far more refreshing to the soul, than fertilizing showers to the parched fields. This is then our grand concern. Man's true wisdom consists in avoiding the wrath and securing the favour of almighty God: and who can estimate how much "better it is to get wisdom than gold, and to get understanding, rather to be chosen than silver?" Yet who can help observing how much more men in general labour to get riches, than to get wisdom? or how much more pains they take, to pacify the indignation, or obtain the patronage, of an earthly prince or minister of state, than to flee from the wrath of God, and secure his invaluable favour? But the true believer is taught another lesson. He is conscious that he has in innumerable instances offended the Lord; and that unless his iniquities be purged away, he must be for ever miserable: he depends for this pardon on the mercy and truth of God in Christ; but in order to obtain an interest in that redemption, he would make every submission, and use every means of grace; and the fear of God induces him to depart

CHAP. XVII.

Cautions against many vices ; a quiet, friendly, and

cheerful spirit inculcated ; and several wise and pious observations concerning the conduct and events of life, 1—28.

from evil, and to copy that mercy and truth on which he relies, and in all things to act with the strictest equity and integrity. And should he in this course meet with enemies and injuries ; he dares not attempt to pacify the wrath, or court the favour of man, by sinful compliances : but he perseveres in endeavouring to please God, who has all hearts in his hands, and who in this way generally influences a man's "enemies to be at peace with him ;" of which experienced believers can often recollect many affecting instances.

V. 17—33.

Nothing is more observable in scripture, than the repeated warnings against every kind and degree of pride. This hateful vice often shews itself by self-confidence, and a reliance on men's own wisdom, industry, or ability for success in their selfish designs ; forgetting not only that they are sinners, but that they are weak and dependent creatures. Whatever men may imagine, it is certain that this "pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall : " it generally ends in confusion and disgrace in this world ; and, unless abased in true repentance, it will certainly terminate in everlasting misery and contempt. Better then is it to live humbly in some obscure corner, surrounded with penury and contempt ; than to share all the riches and distinctions of the sons of ambition and violence. This is the highway of holiness, in which the upright walk with God, and endeavour to depart to a still greater distance from every evil work : and in keeping this way, without deviating on either side, or turning back again into sin or the world, they preserve their souls from the destruction of the wicked. But wisdom also teaches a man to be afraid of deception in so important a concern : for the prudent Christian knows, "that there is a way, which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."—We cannot please the Lord, if we act with rashness or acrimony : it is our happiness to trust him, but it is also our duty to seek wisdom from him, that we may not intermeddle with matters out of our sphere, or beyond our capacities, and may manage well those affairs which we do undertake : that we may prudently avoid giving needless offence, obviate the ill effects of such as has been given, and do our own business conscientiously, yet quietly and in an affectionate spirit. Thus we shall find good to ourselves, and do good to others. Indeed "understanding is a well-spring of life unto him that hath it," and supplies inexhaustible resources of salutary cautions, for the conduct of life : whereas all the instruction, which an ungodly man can give, or will receive, is mere folly.—When the Giver of all good is pleased to bestow, not only an enlightened understanding, a sound judgment, and a loving spirit, but the faculty of speaking with energy, and propriety, and winning persuasion ; the possessor may hope to be very useful in diffusing heavenly knowledge and wisdom. A reputation for prudence gives additional efficacy to a man's admonitions and counsels : and the experience of his heart "teaches his mouth, and adds learning to his lips." Such seasonable and useful words, meeting with a teachable disposition in those that hear them, are

pleasant as "the honeycomb ; being sweet to the soul, and health to the bones ;" giving encouragement to the heart, and directing to the paths of truth and holiness. And surely we ought to be as strenuous in doing good, as wicked men are in doing mischief ! But with what perverse diligence do many seek out occasions for slanders and strife ! How do they sow the seeds of discord, and kindle the flames of hatred and revenge, by their calumnies, whisperings, and lies ! How do many study to commit violence, entice others to sin, and employ the whole extent of their ingenuity, to accomplish iniquity, and propagate vice, and impiety, and infidelity ! Such men live to do mischief, and to "treasure up wrath ;" and pre-eminence in rank, or in abilities, renders them more like Satan, and exposes them to a deeper share in his condemnation : nay, the hoary head of a veteran infidel, debauchee, oppressor, or slanderer, is a tenfold stigma of reproach. But the hoary head of him, who has spent his life in doing good, and is found walking without weariness in the way of righteousness, is indeed a crown of glory. This man, though poor, and no way eminent in other respects, is more entitled to respect, veneration, and affection, than the most learned, affluent, or noble of the workers of iniquity. But, when wisdom and righteousness belong to him, who fills a throne or an exalted station ; when a king has the just ambition of copying the example of the sovereign Lord of all, by promoting the peace and happiness of mankind, and by all scriptural means supporting the interests of true religion ; when he abhors iniquity, provides for the impartial administration of justice, and takes all care and pains to promote integrity and equity among his subjects, by his example, and influence, and authority ; when the favours shewn to upright counsellors, statesmen, magistrates, and ministers of religion, give countenance to piety and virtue ; when his wrath is to be dreaded by none but the workers of iniquity ; and when a long life has been spent in this manner, and a king is grown hoary in the way of righteousness, a father to his people, a blessing to the church, and a common friend to mankind : then the summit of earthly honour is attained, and only the crown of glory that fadeth not away, can add any thing to it. Behold a greater than Alexander or Cæsar is here ! Incomparably, inconceivably greater. For if being slow to anger render a mean man more honourable and excellent than the mighty ; and if the victory over a man's spirit be a more arduous and important achievement, than the taking of a fortified city ; how honourable is it for one, surrounded with every incentive and opportunity of gratifying his passions, to rule over them with steady authority, and to spend his life in glorifying God and doing good to men ! It is true, that none can in these things command success : disappointment or tardy progress must be expected by those who would do good : but this is a labour which will redound to their own advantage, and be satisfying to their souls, though not successful to the extent of their wishes. And having used proper means, they may leave it with comfort : the lot is then cast ; and "the whole disposal thereof is of the LORD."

BETTER is ^a a dry morsel, and quietness therewith, than ^b an house full of sacrifices ^c *with* strife.

2 A ^d wise servant shall have rule over a son ^e that causeth shame, and shall have part of the inheritance among the brethren.

3 The ^f fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold; but the LORD trieth the hearts.

4 A ^g wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; *and* a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue.

5 Whoso ^h mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker: ⁱ *and* he that is glad at calamities shall not be ^j unpunished.

6 ^k Children's children are ^l the crown of old men; ^m *and* the glory of children are their fathers.

7 ⁿ Excellent speech becometh not a fool: ^o much less do ^p lying lips a prince.

8 A ^q gift is as a ^r precious stone

^a xv 17. Ps. xxxvii. 16.
^b vii. 14.
^c Or, good cheer.
^d xxi. 9. 19.
^e xi. 29. xiv. 35.
^f Gen. xxiv. 4, &c.
^g Ec. iv. 13.
^h x. 5. xix. 26.
ⁱ xxix. 15.
^j xxvii. 21. Ps. xxvi. 2. lxxvi. 10. Is. xlviii. 10. Jer. xvii. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 2, 3. 1 Pet. i. 7. Rev. ii. 23.
^k xxviii. 4. 1 Sam. xxii. 7—11. 1 Kings xxii. 6, &c. Is. xxx. 10. Jer. v. 31. 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. 1 John iv. 5. Rev. xiii. 3—8.

^h xiv. 21. 31. Ps. lxxix. 9. 1 John iii. 17.
ⁱ xxiv. 17, 18. Job xxxi. 29. Jer. xvii. 16. Ob. 12. 13. Rom. xii. 15.
^j Heb. held innocent. xvi. 5.
^k marg.
^l Gen. i. 23. Job xli. 16, 17. Ps. cxxvii. 3—5. cxxviii. 3—6.
^m Ex. iii. 14, 15. 1 Kings xi. 12. xv. 4.
ⁿ Heb. A lip of excellency.
^o xxvi. 7. Ps. i. 16, 17. Matt. p 23. xviii. 16. xix. 6. xxi. 14. xxix. 4. Ex. xxiii. 8. Deut. xvi. 19.
^p Heb. a lip of lying. xii. 19.
^q Heb. stone of grace.

NOTES.

CHAP. XVII. V. 1. (Notes, xv. 17, 18. xix. 13. xxi. 9.) 'Where were many sacrifices, there were many portions given to the people, wherewith they feasted.'—The original is "sacrifices of strife:" sacrifices offered, to furnish an occasion for strife and debate. (2 Sam. xv. 10—12. 1 Kings i. 9.)

V. 2. Wisdom uniformly tends to advance men, and folly to depress them; and this causes a constant fluctuation in human affairs. Indeed the prudent and faithful servant is more valuable, and will often be more respected, than a profligate son, the scandal of the family: and his services may very properly be recompensed with some portion of the inheritance; or he may be employed as guardian to children, with special authority over "the son that causeth shame." In some way or other, however, he will acquire the ascendancy, and be considered more as one of the family, than the degenerate branch of it can be. (Notes, xi. 29. xix. 26. Gen. xv. 2, 3. xxiv. 1—9.)

V. 3. Men both *prove* and *refine* the precious metals, by the fining-pot and furnace. Thus the Lord, by his providential dispensations, makes an experimental trial of the hearts of rational creatures: he searches out and brings to light what was before concealed; and by manifold experiments he has proved that there is no dependence to be placed on any creature, left to himself. In like manner, he has shewn what desperate wickedness the human heart contains, and of what enormities it is capable when exposed to suitable temptations; and has detected the hypocrisy of many who were before unsuspected. By similar means he discovers the remaining evil concealed in the heart of true believers: he evidences the reality and the power of his grace in his servants: he makes them sensible that they need constant watchfulness and dependence, and have great reason to be humble and thankful: and thus he purifies them from pride and sin, forms them to himself a peculiar people to shew forth his praise, and prepares them for eternal glory. By these manifold trials of the heart, the Lord also discovers, and will discover to all the world, the justice and holiness, mercy, truth, and wisdom, of his final dealings with all his creatures. (Notes, xxvii. 21. Deut. viii. 2. Ps. xxvi. 2. lxxvi. 8—10. Is. xlviii. 9—11. Jer. xvii. 9, 10. Zech. xiii. 8, 9. Mal. iii. 1—4. 1 Pet. i. 6, 7.)

V. 4. Flatterers, calumniators, and liars of various de-

scriptions, especially false and smooth teachers, are welcome visitants or counsellors to those who are living in iniquity or hypocrisy: not only because they love their own image in them; but because they soothe their consciences, buoy up their hopes, keep them in countenance, and help them to cover their crimes, and believe their own delusions. (Notes, xxviii. 4. 1 Sam. xxii. 7—10. 1 Kings xxii. 6—8. Is. xxx. 8—11. Jer. v. 30, 31. 2 Thes. ii. 8—12. 2 Tim. iv. 3—5, vv. 3, 4. 1 John iv. 4—6.)

V. 5. (Notes, xiv. 21. 31.) Not only "he that oppresseth," but "he that mocketh," a poor man, or derides him for his poverty, "reproacheth" God: he treats his providence and his precepts with contempt, and seems to blame his distinguishing care of the poor. (Notes, John vii. 40—53, v. 49. Jam. ii. 1—7. 1 John iii. 16, 17.) And every one, who rejoices when others fall into calamities, will be condemned, as guilty of detestable envy, malice, selfishness, and presumption. (Notes, xxiv. 17, 18. Job xxxi. 29—32. Lam. iv. 21, 22. Ob. 10—16. Rom. xii. 14—16. 1 Cor. xiii. 5—7, v. 6.)

V. 6. A man's descendants ought to be his honour and comfort in old age. His children should be educated in such a manner, as may warrant a confidence that their pious and prudent conduct will render them such; and that they will train up their families in like manner: and it is the duty of children, and children's children, to consult the credit of their progenitors, as far as it can be made consistent with superior obligations. Parents also should act in such a manner, that their children and posterity may be respected for their sakes, and have cause to rejoice in their relation to persons of such piety and wisdom. And thus it will be, in proportion as men attend to the dictates of heavenly wisdom. (Notes, xii. 4. Gen. xii. 1—3. Ex. iii. 15. 1 Kings xi. 12, 13. xv. 4, 5. Job xlii. 10—17. Ps. lxxviii. 3—8. cxxvii. 3—5. cxxviii. 3, 4.)

V. 7. The wisest maxims, and the most pious remarks, when spoken by a man notorious for his vice and folly lose all their energy and grace, and are received with neglect or disdain. (Notes, xxvi. 7. 9. Ps. i. 16—21. Matt. vii. 3—5.) But it is still more inconsistent, when princes, or priests, or other eminent persons, who ought to be the guardians of truth and justice, are so base as to impose upon mankind with lying pretences, and to deceive those that rely upon their veracity. (Notes, xvi. 10—13. Job xxxiv. 16—19. Ps. ci. 1—4.)

V. 8. 'A gift is so tempting, that it can no more be

in the eyes of him that hath it :
 q whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.

9 He ^r that covereth a transgression ^a seeketh love ; ^s but he that repeateth a matter separateth *very* friends.

10 ^t A reproof entereth more into a wise man, than an hundred stripes into a fool.

11 An ^u evil man seeketh only rebellion : therefore a cruel messenger shall be sent against him.

12 Let ^v a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, ^x rather than a fool in his folly.

‘ refused than a lovely jewel, by him to whom it is presented : and such is its power, it commonly prevails over all men, dispatches all business, carries all causes, and, in a word, effects whatsoever a man desires.’ *Bp. Patrick.* What a description of the mercenary selfishness of mankind ! (Notes, 23. xviii. 16. xix. 6. xxi. 14. Gen. xxxii. 16—20. xliii. 11, 12. 2 Sam. xvi. 1—4. Mic. vii. 1—4.)

V. 9. ‘ He that concealeth an offence done to him by his friend, takes the course to preserve love : ... but he that will be calling every little unkindness into question, and expostulates on every occasion, will be sure to lose his friends.’ *Bp. Hall.* (Notes, x. 12. xvi. 28.)—Repeating grievances, and complaining of men’s conduct to us among others, seem especially meant. (Notes, Matt. xviii. 15—17.) The word (חֵן) translated *very friends*, signifies a *prince* ; and some give the last clause a very different turn. ‘ He that admonisheth the prince of his fault, maketh him his enemy.’

V. 10. ‘ One reproof penetrates deeper into the mind of an ingenuous man, and works a greater alteration there, than an hundred stripes will do for the amendment of an obstinate fool.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (Marg.—Notes, ix. 7—9. xiii. 1. xxvi. 3. xxvii. 22.)

V. 11. A man of a turbulent, untractable spirit, (the fool of the preceding verse,) is ever seeking to disturb the peace of the community, and to engage in rebellion, or abet insurrections : but such persons generally come to an untimely end, by the hand of the executioner ; and indeed they must be treated with severity. (Notes, 2 Sam. xv. 12. xvi. 5—14. xviii. 14—18. xx. 1, 2. 20—22. 1 Kings ii. 23—25. 28—31. 40—46.) The proverb is equally applicable to the wicked, who rebel against God, and bring upon themselves his awful vengeance.

V. 12. ‘ He meaneth the wicked in his rage, who hath no fear of God.’—It is less dangerous to meet a fierce she-bear when enraged by having her young ones taken from her ; (Notes, 1 Sam. xvii. 34—37. 2 Sam. xvii. 7—14, v. 8. 2 Kings ii. 23, 24. Hos. xiii. 5—8, v. 8 ;) than to encounter a profligate and unprincipled man, when impetuously urged on by his head-strong passions, and provoked to anger by meeting with resistance or disappointment. (Notes, xxvii. 3. xxviii. 15, 16.)

V. 13. (Marg. Ref.) ‘ It is so unnatural for a man to

13 Whoso ^y rewardeth evil for good, ^y evil shall not depart from his house.

14 The ^z beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water : therefore ^a leave off contention, before it be meddled with.

15 He ^b that ^c justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both *are* ^d abomination to the LORD.

16 Wherefore *is there* ^e a price in the hand of a fool to get wisdom, ^f seeing *he hath* no heart to it ?

v. 39—41. Acts vi. 1—5. xv. 2, &c. Rom. xii. 18. 2 Tim ii. 23, 24. b xxiv. 23, 24. Ex. xxiii. 7. 1 Kings xxi. 13. Is. v. 23. Ez. xxii. 27—29. Am. v. 7. 12. vi. 12. Luke xxiii. 18—25. Jam. v. 6. c Is. lv. 8, 9. Rom. iv. 5. d vi. 16. xi. 1. xv. 8. e i. 22, 23. viii. 4, 5. ix. 4—6. Is. lv. 1—3. Acts xiii. 46. 2 Cor. vi. 1. f i. 7. 25. xiv. 6. xviii. 15. Deut. v. 29. Ps. lxxxi. 11—13. Hos. iv. 11. John iii. 20. Acts xxviii. 26, 27.

‘ return evil to him, from whom he hath received nothing but good ; that the punishment of his ingratitude shall not rest in his own person, but descend upon his posterity, to all generations.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (Notes, Ps. xxxv. 11, 12. xxxviii. 19, 20. cix. 6—20. Matt. xxvii. 3—5. 24, 25.) This is a fair exposition of the proverb ; a solemn warning against this hateful sin : but it admits of an exception, in the case of those who carefully avoid the crimes of their wicked parents or ancestors. (Notes, Ez. xviii. 2—20.)

V. 14. When the bank or dam, that confines a large body of water, is cut, or even a small opening made, the current soon forces a wider passage, and a terrible inundation of the adjacent country follows from a small beginning. Thus, when any affront is given, and anger begins to rise in the heart ; if the least vent be given to it, one passionate and provoking word will bring on another ; every retort will widen the breach and increase the violence of resentment ; and durable malice or bloody revenge will probably be the effect. It is therefore of the highest importance to stifle passion, and not to take notice of an offence. For this strengthens the bank, and keeps in the water, without giving it the least passage. “ Therefore, ere the contention be meddled with, leave off.” *Old Version.* (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 19. xiii. 10. xiv. 29. xvi. 32. xix. 11. xx. 3. xxv. 8—10. xxvi. 21. Gen. xiii. 8, 9. Judg. viii. 1—3. xii. 1—6. Ec. vii. 8, 9. Jam. i. 19—21.)

V. 15. For a judge, willingly or carelessly either to acquit, and treat as a righteous, the man who is guilty, and ought to be condemned ; or to condemn and punish the innocent and righteous, is in itself abominable ; and he, who does either the one or the other, “ is an abomination to the LORD.” And so are all they, in private life, who excuse and praise the wicked, and revile and calumniate the righteous ; and endeavour to confound the difference between good and evil among men. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxiv. 24, 25. Ex. xxiii. 1—9. 1 Kings xxi. 8—14. Is. v. 20—23. Am. v. 7—13. Luke xxiii. 13—25. Jam. v. 1—6.)

V. 16. The advantages, which Providence confers, are a *price* put into men’s hands, with which to acquire wisdom : such are a pious education, the instructions and counsels of wise and good men, the preaching of the gospel, and, above all, the written word of God. But of

17 A friend ^g loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.
18 A man ^h void of ^{*} understanding striketh hands, and becometh surety in the presence of his friend.
19 He ⁱ loveth transgression that loveth strife; and ^k he that exalteth his gate seeketh destruction.
20 [†] He that ^l hath a froward heart findeth no good; ^m and he that hath a perverse tongue falleth into mischief.
21 He ⁿ that begetteth a fool *doeth it* to his sorrow; and the father of a fool ^o hath no joy.
22 A ^p merry heart doeth good [†] like

a medicine; but ^q a broken spirit drieth the bones.
23 A wicked *man* ^r taketh a gift ^s out of the bosom, to pervert the ways of judgment.
24 Wisdom is ^t before him that hath understanding; but ^u the eyes of a fool are in the ends of the earth.
25 A ^x foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.
26 Also ^y to punish the just is not good, *nor* ^z to strike princes for equity.
27 He that hath knowledge ^a spareth his words; and a man of understanding is of ^b an excellent spirit.

^g Ps. xxii. 15. xxxii. 3, 4. cii. 3—5. 2 Cor. ii. 7. vii. 10.
^h 8. xviii. 16. Ex. xxiii. 8. Deut. xvi. 19. 1 Sam. viii. 3. xii. 3. Is. i. 23. Ez. xxii. 12. Mic. vii. 3. Mark xiv. 10, 11.
ⁱ xxi. 14.
^j xiv. 6. xv. 14. Ec. ii. 14. viii. 1. John vii. 17.
^k u xxiii. 5. Ps. cxix. 37. Ec. vi. 9. 1 John ii. 16.
^l x 21. x. 1. 2 Sam. xiii. 1, &c. Ec. ii. 18, 19.
^m y 15. xviii. 5. Gen. xviii. 25.
ⁿ z 2 Sam. iii. 23—25. 39. xvi. 7, 8. xix. 7. Job xxxiv. 18, 19. Mic. v. 1. John xviii. 22, 23.
^o a x. 19. xv. 28. Jam. i. 19. iii. 2.
^p b Or, a cool spirit. xvi. 32. Ec. ix. 17. Jam. iii. 18.

what use is this price to a fool, who has no heart to make use of it, who hates to be reformed, who will not read the Bible, or regard the preacher? He hates the light which condemns his wickedness; and will be condemned, because he would not profit by it. (Notes, i. 7. 21—31. xiv. 6. xviii. 1, 2. Is. lv. 1—3. John iii. 19—21.)—Many explain this of a rich foolish man. ‘Of what use are riches to a fool? He has no heart, by means of them to get wisdom.’

V. 17. ‘A true friend ... becomes a brother in adversity. He was a friend before; this makes him a brother, and so he is to be esteemed.’ Bp. Patrick.—These maxims shew men their duty. No change of outward circumstances should abate our affection for our friends or relatives; we should be constant and persevering in our endeavours to do them good; regard the time of their adversity, as an opportunity of shewing disinterested love; and consider ourselves as born into the world and preserved in life, on purpose to help them at those trying seasons, when the rest of the world forsakes them. (Notes, xviii. 24. xix. 7. 1 Sam. xviii. 3, 4. xx. 14—17. xxiii. 16. Esth. iv. 13, 14. John xv. 12—16.)

V. 18. Though it is a man’s duty to assist his friends, especially in distress; yet he should not rashly engage for them beyond his ability, to the injury of his creditors, and the ruin of himself and family. Indeed there is great reason to suspect the reality of the friendship of those, who would draw others into unreasonable engagements; especially when, being present, their own integrity and solvency are questioned. (Notes, vi. 1—5. xi. 15. xx. 16. xxii. 26, 27.)

V. 19. A man who affects magnificence in his house, buildings, and style of living, above his rank and income, goes the way to ruin himself, as certainly as if he intended it: even as a man, who takes delight in controversy and contention, acts as if in love with sin and punishment.—‘He that loves sin rejoices in fightings.’ Sept. (See on Note, 14.—Notes, xxiv. 27. 2 Sam. xv. 1—6. 1 Kings i. 5, 6. Jer. xxii. 13—19.)

V. 20. He, who acts with duplicity, dishonesty, or malignity, shall fail of the good which he seeks, and fall into the evil that he thus would shun: and he that speaks perverse, irritating, and mischievous words, shall ruin

himself. (Notes, vi. 12—15. viii. 13. x. 10. 14. 31. xviii. 6, 7. Ec. x. 11—15.)

V. 21. ‘Great is the care which ought to be taken in the contract of marriage, and in the education of children; for if a son prove vicious and lewd, it will be such an inexpressible grief to his father, that he will take no comfort at all in any thing he enjoys.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 25. x. 1. xv. 20. xxiii. 15, 16.)

V. 22. (Notes, xii. 25. xv. 13. 15. Ps. xxxii. 3—5.) ‘A joyful heart causeth good health; but a sorrowful mind drieth the bones.’ Old Version.

V. 23. ‘No man would willingly be known to be so wicked as to be bribed to do injustice: but there are too many, that will suffer themselves to be secretly corrupted by presents, to give counsel or judgment contrary to the course of law and equity.’ Bp. Patrick. (See on Note, 8.)

V. 24. The prudent man keeps the maxims of wisdom, and the oracles of God, continually in view, as if placed before his eyes to be the rule and measure of his conduct; and thus his attention is fixed upon his path, and what relates to it. But the foolish man regards every thing more than his own duty and safety: his thoughts are roving about every vanity, even to the ends of the earth: and he acts as a man would do, who, in a narrow way, full of pits and traps, and bordering on tremendous precipices, should be gazing at distant objects, but entirely heedless how he walked, or where he set his feet. (Notes, xv. 14. Ps. cxix. 37. Ec. ii. 12—17, v. 14. vi. 9. 1 John ii. 15—17.)

V. 25. Solomon ‘might speak the oftener on this subject, having an example before his eyes of the great weakness of his own son, who, it is not unlikely, was a perpetual grief to him.’ Bp. Patrick. (See on Notes, 21. x. 1.)

V. 26. It is very criminal for magistrates to punish those who have not offended, and to oppress and persecute their peaceable subjects: but it is also very wrong for subjects to revile their rulers, or to excite insurrections against them, when administering justice impartially, merely because their decrees may bear hard upon individuals. (Notes, 2 Sam. xvi. 5—14. xix. 1—8, vv. 6, 7. Job xxxiv. 16—19. Mic. v. 1. John xviii. 17—23.)

V. 27, 28. A wise man will spare his words, if he cannot speak with a prospect of doing good: he will no more

^b xv. 2. Job xiii.
^c Ec. v. 3. x. 3.
^d 4

28 Even ^b a fool when he holdeth
 his peace, is counted wise; *and* he that

shutteth his lips *is esteemed* a man of
 understanding.

be a prodigal, than a miser, in the use of this good treasure. Especially he will be slow to speak, when he is offended, or to intermeddle in matters not belonging to him, being "of a cool spirit," as the words may be rendered. (*Marg.*) This command of the tongue and temper are of so good repute, that even an ignorant man may be accounted wise, at the small expense of holding his tongue, as if he were reflecting and learning, instead of speaking to expose his own folly. (*Notes*, x. 19—21. xv. 2. 7. *Ec.* x. 2, 3 11—15. *Jam.* i. 19—21. 26. iii. 1, 2.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—15.

The depravity of human nature is peculiarly discovered, by the very general perversion of divine ordinances into occasions of increasing iniquity. It might have been thought that a house full of peace-offerings and thank-offerings, would have been replete with harmony and love; and yet it was frequently full of strife and animosity. The gospel itself has been preached out of envy and malice; divine truth has been the watchword of acrimony, reviling, and slander; the cause of God has been pleaded with cruelty and persecution; long prayers have been made the cloke of the basest injustice; and the Lord's table approached from gross ambition and avarice, to secure emoluments, to be used in luxury, and the pride of life; or to obtain power for the purposes of faction and rebellion. But as it would be far happier to feed upon a dry morsel with quietness, than upon the richest dainties with hatred and contention; so communion with God in secret is preferable, even to publick solemnities and the professed communion of the saints, when these prove an occasion of strife.—If we would keep a clear conscience and a quiet mind, we must shun all incitements to anger: we must suppress the rising emotions of resentment; and reject those hasty suggestions, which to the disordered mind appear pertinent and proper to be spoken, but which prove like the cutting of a bank, and the letting out of water, and make way for domestick broils, implacable resentments, confusion, and every evil work. These we cannot avoid without much forbearance and prudence: we must learn to give as little offence as we consistently can in our own conduct: we must suppress our passions, when offended; and conceal, or make every candid and honest apology for, the faults of our friends towards each other. Thus "he that covereth a transgression seeketh love:" for he who repeats all which he sees and hears, separates nearest friends and relations, and does immense mischief, in private and publick life, in the world, and even in the church. The Christian has nothing to do with the slanders of the day; or the parties, which pride, selfishness, or resentment form in the world, or in the church. He should also avoid those false teachers, who "privily being in damnable heresies," and who may be known by their fruits; and especially in that they are approved and applauded by ungodly men, and by such professors of religion as are of dubious character. He should not regard the good things, which they mix up with these poisonous ingredients, to render them more palatable; for "excellent speech be-

"cometh not a fool," and must be used by him for some foolish or wicked purpose; and lying lips are not more detestable in a prince, than in a minister of religion: for as the magistrate, who "justifieth the wicked, or condemneth the just, is an abomination to the LORD;" so is that teacher, who encourages a wicked man in impenitence, or discourages the heart of the humble believer, by false doctrine. (*Note*, Ez. xiii. 17—23, v. 22.)—The love of money has often warped the minds of judges to favour those who brought them large bribes: and wicked men, who can afford it, are ever ready to part with their beloved treasures, to purchase impunity for their crimes: thus, many called ministers, "teach things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake;" the rich are often willing to pay well for a quietus to their conscience, and an encouragement to their presumption; and "so they wrap it up," till the day of judgment unfold and discover the infamous business. For to the scandal of human nature, it is a general rule, (though it admits of many exceptions,) that valuable gifts blind men to their interest and duty; and whithersoever they turn they prosper. The good Lord deliver us from "the love of money, which is the root of all evil," (*Note*, 1 Tim. vi. 6—10;) and teach us to lay up our treasure in heaven, and to set our affections on things above; for otherwise we can never be stedfast in any part of our duty. When these alluring baits are presented to us, we should remember, that the Lord our God makes trial of our hearts, whether we will keep his commandments or not. And by various temptations, as well as afflictions, he distinguishes the hypocrite from the true Christian. May "the trial of our faith then prove to praise, and honour, and glory at the coming of Jesus Christ."—If ingratitude to our fellow creatures be so base, as to bring a curse on a man and his posterity; how abominable must ingratitude be to our Maker, yea, our Redeemer, the Friend of sinners! (*P. O.* Luke xvii. 11—19.) How great is his forbearance towards us; and what cause have we to be humble and thankful!—It is of great importance, that we receive instruction and take reproof, especially those of the sacred oracles, in good part. This is a test of our wisdom, and tends to exempt us from numberless sorrows and sufferings. For "a reproof entereth more into a wise man, than an hundred stripes into a fool." This is every one's own concern; for foolish and wicked men are indeed the shame and grief of their parents and relations, and the nuisance of society, being alway stirring up strife or rebellion: but they prepare stripes for themselves, if not the rigorous messengers of justice, to arrest them and lead them to ignominious death; and afterwards they have nothing to expect, but the wrath and vengeance of an offended God. But, a bear bereaved of her young is a faint emblem of the brutal ferocity of exasperated transgressors.—We cannot disdain a poor man, or the meanest slave, without reproaching the Lord who "hath chosen the poor of this world:" nay, the Lord of glory for our sakes became a poor man, and had not where to lay his head. Indeed wisdom and integrity are far more honourable, than riches or noble descent, which only shame their worthless possessors, and render them the scandal of illustrious families: while wis-

CHAP. XVIII.

Maxims about seeking wisdom ; avoiding contention ; governing the tongue ; the mischiefs of pride and sloth ; the strong tower of the righteous man, and of the rich man ; and the trials or comforts arising from relations and friends, 1—24.

dom ennobles and advances the meanest servant, and entitles him to respect and consideration. We should also be very watchful over our own spirits, that we do not fall into the common fault of secretly rejoicing, or openly exulting, over the calamities of other men ; lest we should incur the indignation of the Lord.—In fine, we should, in every circumstance and relation of life, endeavour to act in that manner, which may be most creditable and useful to all with whom we are connected ; and so to educate our children as may be most likely to render them blessed and blessings ; and this will most effectually tend to our own comfort and joy in them.

V. 16—28.

It can never be unseasonable to turn our meditations to Him, who is, in the highest and most important sense, a " Friend who loveth at all times, and a Brother who was " born for adversity." His love to us lost sinners induced him to assume our nature, that he might become our Brother, our Friend, and our Surety. This was the grandest manifestation of the divine justice, holiness, and abhorrence of iniquity, which any creature ever did or ever can behold. Nay, his becoming Surety for us *insolvent debtors*, when he knew how dear the engagement must cost him, was perfectly consistent with these, and a most glorious display of them. For the Lord's ways and thoughts are above ours, even as the heavens are above the earth. (*Note, Is. lv. 8, 9.*) Whenever the distressed sinner applies for salvation to the once crucified but now glorified Redeemer, he communicates to him mercy, and grace, and peace : and he is the constant and condescending Friend and Brother of every believer, in the lowest scenes of adversity, in the hottest fire of persecution, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment. It is his will also, that we should be grateful to our earthly benefactors, and forgiving to our enemies ; and that we should copy his example of love in our conduct to afflicted friends and relatives, according as they need our help, and we are able to relieve or comfort them, consistently with other duties ; but to avoid all rash and perilous engagements. Thus the sacred scripture in every thing points out to us the path of safety, prudence, and duty : it is an invaluable " price put into our hands, to get " wisdom," and learn the way of happiness, both in this world and the next. Yet alas ! what numbers have no heart to this wisdom, and are thus proved more egregiously and inexcusably foolish ! Indeed we might all have been much wiser than we are, if we had duly valued and improved the advantages afforded us. May the Lord give us an understanding heart, that we may lay this heavenly wisdom ever before us, for the direction of our whole conduct : and may he " turn away our eyes from beholding vanity," and our imaginations and desires from roving to the ends of the earth, that we may consider and look well to our goings.—If we have trials from the misconduct of our chil-

THROUGH desire a man, having separated himself, ^a seeketh and ^b intermeddleth with all wisdom.

2 A ^c fool hath no delight in under-
vii. 3. Rom. i. 1. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Jude 19. a ii. 1—6. Matt. xiii. 11, 12, 44. Mark iv. 11. Eph. v. 15—17. b xiv. 10. xvii. 14. xx. 3. 19. xxiv. 21. xxvi. 17. Is. xxvi. 8, 9. Jer. xv. 17. Mark i. 35. c i. 7. 22. xvii. 16. Ps. i. 1, 2. Matt. viii. 34. 1 Cor. viii. 1.

Or, He that separateth himself seeketh, according to his desire, and intermeddleth in every business. Ex. xxxiii. 16. Zech.

dren, we should remember, not only that they derived their evil nature *from us*, but perhaps also imbibed some of their prejudices, and were encouraged in giving loose to their passions, through our examples and neglect ; and in that case, we ourselves are in some sense the causes of our own sorrow. We should, however, bear this and every other affliction, with humble patience ; and watch against repining and desponding grief, which can only add to our misery, break our spirits, and dry up our bones : and we should cultivate a cheerful frame of mind, which does good as a medicine, to both soul and body. We should also study accurately our duty to all ranks of men ; what becomes every order in society, and in what true excellency consists.—We cannot leave our proper rank in the community, by emulating our superiors, in equipage, buildings, furniture, or apparel, without great folly, sin, and mischief : yet on this fatal rock thousands are continually shipwrecked.—As the Lord will call the greatest monarch to account, if he oppress his meanest subject ; so will he not hold those guiltless, that " speak evil of dignities," and magnify the errors of their superiors, or invent calumnies against them. (*Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 10, 11. Jude 5—10.*) A man of wisdom and piety will be sparing of his words, and not waste them to such unworthy purposes : he is of a more excellent, because of a more peaceable spirit. Indeed it is an invariable observation that " he loveth transgression " that loveth strife." And even ignorant and ungodly men may justly be counted *so far* wise, if they hold their peace, and do not meddle with things not belonging to them, and of which they are incompetent judges : but in general they are most noisy and busy, who have the least capacity to say or do any thing to the purpose ; or " who are wise to " do evil, but to do good have no understanding."

NOTES.

CHAP. XVIII. V. 1, 2. Some thus render the first verse : " A hare-brained man seeks to satisfy his fancy, and ' intermixeth himself with all things.' *Lord Bacon*, quoted by *Bp. Patrick*. And it is explained of the mischief arising from a self-conceited, innovating, intermeddling spirit in publick and private life ; and in affairs both civil and religious. But I find no instance, in which the word (נַפְרָר), rendered *separated*, has this meaning : and the contrast between the characters described in the two verses seems to require a different interpretation. The verse may be thus translated :—" According to desire, he that is separated " seeketh : and he engages in all concerns." Whatever a man earnestly desires, he seeks after, and secludes himself from avocations, that he may not be interrupted in the diligent pursuit of it. Thus it is in all kinds of business or learning ; none excel, but those who desire to excel, and who separate themselves, that they may have leisure to pursue their favourite object, whether more or less valuable : and even mischievous designs are formed, matured,

d Num. xxiv. 15, 16. Acts viii. 9. 19. 1 Cor. xiv. 12. Phil. i. 15. e 2 Pet. ii. 15—19. xi. 2. xxii. 10. xxix. 16. 1 Sam. xx. 30. Neh. iv. 4. Ps. lxxix. 9. 20. cxxiii. 3, 4. Matt. xxvii. 39—44. 1 Pet. iv. 4. 14.

standing, ^d but that his heart may discover itself.

3 When ^e the wicked cometh, *then* cometh also contempt, and with ignominy reproach.

4 The ^f words of a man's mouth *are* as deep waters, *and* the well-spring of wisdom *as* a flowing brook.

5 *It is* ^g not good to accept the person of the wicked, ^h to overthrow the righteous in judgment.

6 A ⁱ fool's lips enter into contention, *and* ^k his mouth calleth for strokes.

11. xiii. 14. xvi. 22. xx. 5. Matt. xii. 34. John iv. 14. vii. 38, 39. Col. iii. 16. iv. 6. xxiv. 23. xxviii. 21. Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 16, 17. xvi. 19. Job xiii. 7, 8. xxxiv. 19. Matt. xxii. 16. h 1 Kings xxi. 9—14. Is. v. 23. lix. 14. Mic. vii. 3. k xiv. 3. xix. 19. xxii. 24, 25. xxv. 24. xxix. 9.

7 A fool's mouth *is* ^l his destruction, ^m and his lips *are* the snare of his soul.

8 The ⁿ words of a ^o tale-bearer *are* ^p as wounds, and they go down into the ^q innermost parts of the belly.

9 He also ^r that is slothful in his work, ^s is brother to him that is a great waster.

10 The ^t name of the LORD *is* ^u a strong tower: ^v the righteous runneth into it, and *is* ^w safe.

q Gen. xviii. 1. Ex. iii. 13—15. vi. 3. xxxiv. 5—7. Is. ix. 6. lvii. 15. Jer. xxiii. 6. Matt. i. 23. Rev. i. 8. r 2 Sam. xxii. 3. 51. Ps. xviii. 2. xxvii. 1. lxi. 3, 4. xci. 2. cxliv. 2. Is. xxvi. 4. s Gen. xxxii. 11. 28, 29. 1 Sam. xxii. 45—47. xxx. 6. Ps. lvi. 3, 4. t Heb. set aloft. Ps. xci. 14. Hab. iii. 19.

and rendered successful in the same manner. The word (חָכְמָה) translated *wisdom*, in our version, in some places seems to have that meaning. (Note, ii. 7.) In one place it is translated *the thing as it is*; (Job xxvi. 3;) and there it signifies knowledge of the subject in debate. And as knowledge is spoken of in the subsequent maxim, it seems to be here intended: and the meaning conveyed by our translation is preferable.—‘He that loveth wisdom, will separate himself from all impediments, and give himself wholly to seek it.’—A man has a strong desire to be wise, and this induces him to avoid vain company, diversions, trifling studies, and needless engagements, that he may have leisure and retirement to examine things to the bottom. But trifling and vain men have no delight in knowledge, except to make ostentation of it among such as are more ignorant and empty than themselves: a superficial smattering suffices for this purpose; and the way, in which they seek and use their scanty stock, discovers the vanity of their hearts, as well as the poverty of their minds, while they shew away, to make every body admire them as wits or oracles. (Notes, i. 7. ii. 1—6. xvii. 16. Ps. i. 1—3. Jer. xv. 15—18. Matt. xiii. 10—12. Acts viii. 18—24. 26—31. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18, v. 17. 2 Pet. ii. 15—19.)

V. 3. When profane and wicked men find admission into places of publick trust, societies, seminaries of learning, or company; they soon betray their contempt of every thing good, and treat others with ignominious reproaches: and often by their ill behaviour and rash measures, expose themselves, and those connected with them, to scorn or reproach. (Notes, xi. 2. xxii. 10. xxix. 16.)

V. 4. The fountain of wisdom in the heart of a pious, well-informed, and experienced man, is like deep waters, ‘which can never be drawn empty, but ever bring profit.’ This supplies him with inexhaustible resources, for useful conversation, prudent counsels, and good instructions. These flow from him, with ease, and as it were spontaneously, (like the deep and gentle stream,) and do abundance of good; and are totally unlike the shallow current, whose scanty waters, and noisy, rapid stream, is the known emblem of the unmeaning, vociferous loquacity of a fool. (Notes, x. 11. xiii. 14. xvi. 22. xx. 5. Matt. xii. 33—37, v. 35. John iv. 10—15. vii. 37—39.)

V. 5. To favour the wicked is always wrong; but worst of all, when magistrates, from respect of persons, and contrary to justice, decide for the wicked and against the right-

eous. (See on Note xvii. 15.—Notes, xxiv. 23—25. xxviii. 21. Deut. i. 12—18. xvi. 18, 19. 2 Chr. xix. 5—11. Job xxxiv. 16—19. Is. v. 22, 23. Matt. xxii. 15—22, v. 16.)

V. 6, 7. The proud, the passionate, and the drunken, with those who give defiance and send challenges, and many others, enter into contention, as volunteers; as do all who intermeddle in disputes which belong not to them. Men of this description foolishly call on others to chastise their insolence; and they commonly meet with such as answer that call. Many are thus drawn into frays and duels, which end in wounds, bruises, or death; many incur lawsuits and prosecutions; and still more bring destruction upon their souls. (Notes, xii. 16. xiv. 3. xvi. 27, 28. xvii. 14. xx. 3. xxvi. 17. Ec. x. 11—15.)

V. 8. The word (מְחַלְשֵׁי) is used only in this place, and in another exactly the same: (xxvi. 22:) and the meaning is doubtful; but the old version seems preferable.—‘The words of the tale-bearer are as flatterings, and they go down into the bowels of the belly.’ *Old Version.* (Note, xx. 19.) ‘A whisperer of false stories makes a great shew of harmlessness, if not of love and kindness, when he backbites others; nay, seems perhaps to do it very unwillingly, with great grief of heart, and not without excuses for the persons from whom he detracts; but his words give them the most deadly wound, and sink deep into the minds of those that hear them.’ *Bp. Patrick.* They incurably wound the very vitals. They infuse suspicion into those to whom he speaks, which embitter their minds against those whom they ought to love, and give rise to contentions which ruin their peace and comfort: and they wound the reputations of those of whom he speaks; they bereave them of their friends, and lead them into innumerable troubles and temptations. (Notes, xi. 13. xvi. 28. xxvi. 20, 21. Lev. xix. 16.)

V. 9. The slothful in business, and the profuse in expenditure are nearly related; the two vices commonly accompany each other; but either of them is sufficient to bring any man to ruin. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, x. 4. xii. 24. xxiii. 20—22. Job xxx. 1—14. Luke xv. 13—16. xvi. 1—8, vv. 1. 3.)

V. 10, 11. ‘The Name of JEHOVAH’ denotes his perfections, as revealed in the sacred scripture, and as harmoniously displayed through the great Redeemer.—He, who under a consciousness of guilt, and dread of misery or enemies, believing the testimony, and embracing the

11 The ^arich man's wealth is his strong city, and as an high wall in his own conceit.

12 Before ^bdestruction the heart of man is haughty; ^cand before honour is humility.

13 He ^dthat ^eanswereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.

14 The ^fspirit of a man will sustain

t x. 15. xi. 4. Deut. xxxii. 31. Job xxxi. 24, 25. Ps. xlix. 6-9. lii. 5-7. lxii. 10. 11. Ec. vii. 12. Luke xii. 19-21.

u xi. 2. xvi. 18. xxix. 23. Ez. xvi. 49, 50. xxxviii. 2, 9. Dan. v. 23, 24. Acts xii. 21-23.

x xv. 33. Job xlii. 6, &c. Is. vi. 5, &c. Dan. ix. 20. 23. 1 Pet. v. 5.

y Deut. xiii. 14. 2 Sam. xvi. 4. xix. 24-30. Esth. iii. 10, &c. viii. 5, &c. Job xxix. 16. Dan. vi. 9. 14. John vii. 51. * Heb. z Job i. 20, 21. ii. 7-10. Rom. v. 3-5. viii. 35-37. 2 Cor. i. 12. xii. 9, 10. Jam. i. 2. 1 Pet. i. 6.

his infirmity; ^abut a wounded spirit who can bear?

15 The ^bheart of the prudent getteth knowledge; and the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge.

16 A man's ^cgift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.

17 He ^dthat is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.

a xvii. 22. Job vi. 4. vii. 14, 15. x. 15-17. Ps. xxx. 9, 10. xxxii. 8, 4. xxxviii. 2-4. xlii. 10, 11. lv. 3. 5. lxxvii. 2, 3. lxxxviii. 14-16. cix. 22. Mark xiv. 33, 34. 2 Cor. ii. 7.

b i. 5. iv. 5. 7. ix. 9. x. 14. xv. 14. xxiii. 23. 1 Kings iii. 9. Ps. cxix. 97-104. Luke viii. 8-10. x. 39. 2 Tim. iii. 15-17. Jam. i. 5.

c xvii. 8. xix. 6. xxi. 14. Gen. xxxii. 20. xxxiii. 10. xliii. 11.

d 13. 2 Sam. xvi. 1-3. xix. 24-27. Acts xxiv. 5, 6. 12, 13.

promises of God, flees to take refuge under the shadow of his wings, by living faith, is "a righteous man:" for "the just by faith shall live," and from that time, whenever guilt, or trouble, or danger, of whatever kind, oppresses him, he immediately runs to the same secure abode; and not only is preserved, but exalted. (*Marg.*) The unchangeable mercy, power, wisdom, righteousness, and faithfulness of God, are his security. His refuge is ever near, and will prove impregnable, through life, 'in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment:' and the righteous are "kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation." (*Notes, Gen. xxxii. 27-30. Ex. iii. 13-15. xxiii. 21-23. xxxiv. 5-7. 2 Sam. xxii. 2, 3. Is. vii. 14. ix. 6, 7. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. Matt. i. 20-23. 1 Pet. i. 3-5.*)—But rich men are prone to confide in their wealth, and to deem that their "strong city" and their "high wall," to defend them from dangers and calamities. But it is so only "in their own conceit:" for trouble will find entrance into their castle; death will storm and take it; and judgment will sweep it and them into final perdition, unless they have previously ceased to trust in it for preservation. (*See on Note, x. 15.*)

V. 12. *Marg. Ref.*—See on *Notes, xv. 33. xvi. 18.*

V. 13. Eagerness of spirit, united with self-conceit, and the affectation of appearing more penetrating than others, often betrays men into the practice of interrupting those who are speaking, and answering them before they have finished their discourse; by which they sometimes presume to confute arguments, and contradict conclusions, which they have not heard. This is peculiarly the case with vehement controversialists. But it is egregious folly, and will expose the man to deserved shame; and will at least, be a very great abatement from his character, as a man of wisdom, humility, and meekness.—'But if it be a shame to a private person in ordinary discourse, to "answer a matter before he heareth it;" much more will it be to a magistrate, if, in matters of justice and judgment, he come to a resolution, before he hath taken full cognizance of them.' *Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Deut. xiii. 12-18, v. 14. 2 Sam. xvi. 1-4. xix. 24-30. Esth. iii. 8-11. Job xx. 1-3. xxi. 1-6. xxix. 12-17. John vii. 40-53, vv. 51, 52.)*

V. 14. Even natural courage and resolution will support a man under manifold pains and calamities, if his mind and conscience be composed: and the inward consolations of the Holy Spirit will enable the believer to endure any tedious affliction or persecution, without fainting. But when the conscience is tortured with remorse and terror; when the

heart is racked with furious and disappointed passions; when He, who made the soul, causes his sword to approach unto it, or even permits Satan to pour in his horrid temptations; no human fortitude can sustain the misery: even the believer, like Job, will be almost driven to madness and the borders of desperation. Nay, the incarnate Son of God, in circumstances as nearly of this kind as in his case were possible, cried out, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death." In circumstances not wholly dissimilar, unbelievers are often driven into despair, blasphemy, and suicide, or die from mere vexation of spirit. (*Notes, Job i. 20-22. ii. 7-10. vi. 1-4. vii. 13-16. xvi. 6-16. Ps. xxxii. 3-5. lxxxviii. 14. 16, 17. Matt. xxvi. 36-39. Rom. v. 3-5. 2 Cor. i. 8-14. xii. 7-12.*)

V. 15. (*See on Note, 1, 2.*) The prudent man, fearing the misery described in the preceding verse, will seek that wisdom and knowledge, which alone is sufficient to preserve him from it.

V. 16. A man's gift 'getteth him liberty to speak, 'and favour of them that are most in estimation.'—'It will produce his enlargement, if he be in prison; and... 'bring him into favour with great men.' *Bp. Patrick.*—In some cases, it may be allowable to conciliate with presents, when applying for any favour; and perhaps may here be recommended as a prudential measure: (*Note, xxi. 14:*) but too generally, the present is given to blind the eyes and pervert the judgment. (*Marg. Ref.*—See on *Note, xvii. 8.*)

V. 17. Self love imperceptibly leads men to make the best of their own character and conduct. Without design almost, they adduce and place in a clear light what makes for them, and keep back or throw a shade over what makes against them; and they state inaccurately some circumstances, apparently trivial, yet of consequence: and thus the cause seems just, when one side of it has been pleaded. But when the other party, actuated by the same propensities, comes to search out the matter, and states it in his way, it will appear very different. This is sometimes done without intentional misrepresentation on either side: but when that is taken into the account, as in most cases it ought to be, it appears evident, that no judgment can be formed, or opinion passed, upon any transaction, till the matter has been heard impartially from both parties.—This maxim is peculiarly important to judges and juries; to caution them against making up their minds, or in any degree prejudging the cause, till they have heard the whole evidence on both sides: otherwise he who comes last, will be put to a great disadvantage, even if truth and justice be on his side. (*Notes, 13. Acts xxiv. 1-21.*)

18 The ^e lot causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty.

19 A ^f brother offended *is harder to be won* ^g than a strong city; and *their contentions are* like the bars of a castle.

20 A ^h man's belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; *and* with the increase of his lips shall he be filled.

21 ⁱ Death and life *are* in the power

of the tongue; ^k and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

22 *Whoso* ^l findeth a wife findeth a good thing; ^m and obtaineth favour of the LORD.

23 The ⁿ poor useth intreaties; but ^o the rich answereth roughly.

24 A man ^p that hath friends must shew himself friendly; and ^q there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

2 Sam. ix. 1, &c. xvi. 17. xvii. 27—29. xix. 30—39. xxi. 7. 1 Chr. xii. 38—40. Matt. xxv. 49, 50. q xxvii. 10. 2 Sam. i. 26. John xv. 14, 15.

k x. 19. Ec. x. 12—14.
l v. 15, &c. xii. 4. xix. 14. xxxi. 10, &c. Gen. xxiv. 67. xxix. 20, 21. 28. Ec. ix. 9. Hos. xii. 12. 1 Cor. vii. 2. m iii. 4. viii. 35. n Ruth ii. 7. 1 Sam. ii. 36. 2 Kings iv. 1. 2. Is. lxi. 2. Matt. v. 3. Jam. i. 9—11. o Gen. xlii. 7. 30. Ex. v. 2. 1 Sam. xxv. 10, 11. Jam. ii. 3. p xvii. 17. xxvii. 9. 1 Sam. xix. 4. 5. xxx. 26, &c. q xxvii. 10. 2 Sam. i. 26. John xv. 14, 15.

V. 18. 'If a controversy cannot otherwise be decided, 'it is best to cast lots, to know whose the thing shall be.'—When causes could not satisfactorily be determined by the judges; when the parties could not be induced to refer themselves to arbiters; or when they were too powerful to be dealt with, it was customary to refer the matter to God, by casting lots attended with solemn prayer. Would not this be, even under the gospel, far preferable to the perpetuating of discords and law-suits between Christians, or to the embroiling of nations in bloody wars? (Note, xvi. 33.) The apostle uses similar language concerning a solemn oath; (Note, Heb. vi. 16—20, v. 16;) which shews, that the oath, and casting lots, are both appeals to God, not dissimilar in their nature; and that neither the one nor the other ought to be profaned by being employed in worldly or frivolous matters, as in different ways they generally are. (Notes, Ex. xx. 7. 17.)

V. 19. It is evident by facts, that when bitter contentions are excited among brethren or near relations, their resentment becomes more implacable, and the consequences more terrible, than in quarrels among strangers. It is more difficult to conciliate their differences, than to take a fortified city; and their stubborn minds resist all endeavours to bend them to a cordial reconciliation, like the iron bars of a castle. The same melancholy observation holds equally true, in the case of civil wars, religious controversies and persecutions, and dissensions in societies. (Notes, xvi. 32. Gen. iv. 3—8. xxvii. 41, 42. xxxii. 6—8. xxxvii. 19, 20. 2 Sam. xiii. 22—29. Ex. xxxv. Ob. 10—14.)

V. 20, 21. As a man should be careful what seed he sows, or what fruit-trees he plants, because such will his increase be; so should men be much more careful what words they speak, as they will at length be inwardly filled with the fruit and increase of their habitual conversation. For "death and life are in the power of the tongue," and the consequences, good or bad, of men's words upon the interests, or peace, or souls of others, individually, or on nations, will be recompensed to themselves. Those who love to speak good things shall eat good fruit; those, who love to speak lies, impiety, or iniquity, shall gather fruit accordingly; and they who delight in hearing themselves speak, will have cause to repent their loquacity. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 4—8. x. 19—21. 31. xii. 13, 14. xiii. 2, 3. xxv. 11, 12. Ec. x. 11—15. Matt. xii. 33—37. Eph. iv. 29. Jam. iii. 3—12.)

V. 22. A good wife must exclusively be meant, as especially deserving that honourable title.—'He that is

'joined with a virtuous woman in marriage, is blessed of 'the Lord.' (Notes, xix. 13, 14. xxxi. 10—31.)—'He that 'hath married a wife, who is truly a help meet for him, 'hath met with an excellent blessing; and ought thank-fully to acknowledge the singular favour of God, in 'guiding his mind to make so happy a choice.' Bp. Patrick.—He that has found a prudent and suitable companion is peculiarly favoured. And his success in this most important concern, which is so nearly connected with a man's eternal interests, and with those of posterity, should not be ascribed to his own discernment or to chance, but to the kind providence of God. And he, who desires so valuable an acquisition, should observe the directions of scripture, and earnestly pray unto God to bestow it on him. (Notes, v. 15—19. Gen. xxiv. 2—9, vv. 3—7. 11—14. Ec. ix. 7—9. Heb. xiii. 3.)

V. 23. The poor are generally led, notwithstanding the pride of the human heart, to use the language of humble intreaty, in addressing the rich, even when they meet with repeated refusals: but the rich are apt to shew arrogance and harshness, and to answer the humble petitioner with contempt and severity. (Notes, Gen. xlii. 7—13. 17. Ex. v. 2, 3. 15—23. 1 Sam. xxv. 3—11.) This observation respecting the effect of men's circumstances on their spirit and conduct, serves to illustrate the nature and value of "poverty of spirit:" it leads a man to use earnest intreaties with God; and "he, who is rich in mercy," will not continue to answer the humble supplicant roughly (Notes, Is. lxi. 1, 2. Matt. v. 3. xv. 21—28.)

V. 24. He who would obtain and preserve valuable friends, must cultivate a friendly disposition, and act in a faithful, generous, and beneficent manner: and the friends whom God raises up to a man, and who are attached to him for his piety and integrity, will cleave closer to him in afflictions, than his nearest relations who are not thus united. Nay, this friendship shall not be dissolved in death, but shall endure for ever. (Notes, xvii. 17. xxvii. 10. 1 Chr. xii. 16—18. Matt. xxv. 34—40. John xv. 12—16. 1 Pet. i. 22—25.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—13.

The most important difference in respect of true wisdom, originates rather from the heart than from inequality in the powers of the mind. Ungodly men, however ingenious, have no delight in the knowledge of heavenly things; and therefore, they can only seek them as much, as may serve the purposes of ambition or interest, and

CHAP. XIX.

Commendations of wisdom, integrity, kindness, meekness: the fatal effects of rashness, impatience,

consist with the quiet enjoyment of their sins: and they are too fully occupied in other pleasures and pursuits, to "separate themselves;" and to "cry after knowledge, and lift up the voice for understanding; to seek for her as silver, and search for her as for hid treasures." (*Notes and P. O.* ii. 1—9.) But when the heart loves wisdom, in some measure according to its worth, other objects will be disregarded or subordinated: and did we value it in a degree adequate to its inestimable worth, we should all disentangle ourselves more than we do from various employments, studies, and diversions; and redeem time, for reading the scriptures, meditation, and prayer: nor should we suffer trifles and triflers to deprive us of our precious hours, while we are so much upon our guard against those that would rob us of our money. When the heart thus becomes a well-spring of wisdom, it soon appears in the conversation: like the flowing brook, which, with a copious and gentle current, fructifies the adjacent country. And while comfort and advantage accrue to others, from a man's wise counsels, pious discourse, or conciliating proposals, his own heart will be refreshed and satisfied. How different this man's discourse, from that of those, who foolishly suffer their "lips to enter into contention; and their mouths" to form a rod for their own correction, or a snare for the destruction of their lives and souls! But we should not only watch against the contemptuous and reproachful language of the wicked, and the cruel words of detestable tale-bearers; but even against the unseemly manner of such as, for want of a due command of themselves, attempt to answer a matter before they have had patience to hear it, and thus expose themselves to shame for their impertinence. Most of these errors and iniquities spring from pride and self-preference. Aware therefore of the odious nature and dreadful effects of this vice, which God abhors above all others, we should repress its first emotions, and mortify it by every possible means: for we are repeatedly reminded that "before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility."—Satan frequently gains advantage against good designs, through the indiscretion or partiality, by which wicked men obtain admission into societies formed for pious purposes, and authority in conducting their affairs; "for when the wicked cometh, then cometh shame, and with ignominy reproach." And as "it is not good" for magistrates "to accept the person of the wicked, and to overthrow the righteous in judgment;" so it is equally abominable and subversive of all good, when partiality intrudes into the concerns of religion. Yet, alas! how often is this done, through the fascinating influence of wealth, which not only seems to the vain conceit of the possessor as an impregnable fortress; but even to others, as a most important recommendation!—But let us remember that "the Name of the LORD is" in reality, the Christian's "strong Tower," which will never fail him that betakes himself to it: while publick or private calamities, perhaps death, and judgment certainly, will expose the folly of "trusting in uncertain riches, and not in the living God."—In the common affairs of life, sloth insures indigence,

wrath, sloth: the punishments awaiting false witnesses, disobedient children, scorers; with pious and prudential maxims and remarks of a more general nature, 1—29.

nearly as much as prodigality: and let us never forget, that neglect of Christ, of the means of grace, and of the duties of a man's station, will as certainly plunge him into destruction, as open impiety and vice.

V. 14—24.

A peaceful conscience and a joyful hope enable the true Christian to bear trials and infirmities, and even to meet death, with fortitude and comfort: but "a wounded spirit who can bear?" And it is remarkable, that more in proportion of superior persons, than of the poor, become their own murderers. But if inward anguish here be so intolerable, what will be "the worm that never dieth," "the unquenchable fire," "the blackness of darkness for ever!"—May the Lord give us "the heart of the prudent," that we may seek and find the knowledge of salvation, and wisely hearken to the instructions and imitations of the gracious Redeemer. He is "indeed a friend that sticketh closer than a brother," he will never, never forsake those, who trust and love him: and blessed be his name for those Christian friends whom he has given us, and whose constant and faithful love, *for his sake*, is our chief comfort, next to communion with him, in this unkind world, where brethren are often most strange to us in our distresses. May we be such friends to others, for his sake, and may we shew our love to him by keeping his commandments, and promoting his cause; and not only by gratitude to our benefactors, but by kindness and compassion to the poorest of his people, nay, to the worst of our own enemies.—How different from this kind and gentle spirit, is that rough and disdainful language, which rich and eminent men frequently use towards their inferiors and dependents! If they were "poor in spirit," and humble supplicants to the Lord for his mercy and grace, they would soon learn more gentleness and kindness to their indigent fellow sinners, who use intreaties to them; and without poverty of spirit, they must perish everlastingly. From the same proud and selfish disposition, originate contentions among the mighty, which often cannot be decided, but by the blood of ten thousands of better men than themselves: and hence also arise the implacable contentions in families and among brethren, which cannot be terminated by any mediation. How careful then should every one be, to shun all occasions of quarrels; and to do every thing, that may cement union and cordiality among brethren! How base are they who sow contention in families! And what fatal effects may be expected from the smallest beginnings of domestick jealousy! All this equally, nay, more emphatically, applies to the occasions and first beginnings of intestine commotions in states. Such sparks of dissension should be watched and quenched, by all who love peace, as if fire had fallen close to a heap of gunpowder. But it is most melancholy to observe, that controversies among professed Christians have commonly been conducted with the most indecent acrimony; and that frequently proportioned to the degree in which they approach to coincidence in opinion: so that, while they who are agreed in all the great fundamentals of religion, dis-

^a **BETTER** *is* the poor that walketh
in his integrity, than *he that is* ^b per-
verse in his lips, and is a fool.

25. Is. lix. 3.
Matt. xii. 31—
34.
c x. 21. Ec. xii.
9. Is. xxvii. 11.
Hos. iv. 6. John

2 Also, ^c *that* the soul *be* without knowledge, *it is* not good; ^d and he that hasteth with *his* feet sinneth.

3 The ^e foolishness of a man per-
verteth his way; and his heart ^f fret-
teth against the LORD.

e Gen. iii. 6—12. iv. 5—14. Num. xvi. 19—41. xvii. 12, 13. 1 Sam. xiii. 13. xv. 23. xxii. 13, &c. 1 Kings xx. 42, 43. 2 Kings iii. 9, 10. vi. 33. 2 Chr. xvi. 9, 10. Acts xiii. 45, 46.
f Ps. xxxvii. 1. 7. Is. viii. 21, 22. Rev. xvi. 9—11.

4 Wealth ^g maketh many friends; g 6, 7. xiv. 20.
Luke xv. 13—
but ^h the poor is separated from his 15.
h x. 15. Job vi. 17.
—23. xix. 13—
17.
neighbour.

5 A ¹false witness shall not be *un-
punished, and *he that* speaketh lies
shall not escape.

6 Many ^k will intreat the favour of
the prince; ^l and every man is a friend
to [†] him that giveth gifts.

xxix. 24, 25. Ps. xlv. 12. Matt. ii. 11. l xvii. 8. xviii. 16. xxi. 14. Gen. xxxii. 20. xlii. 15. Rom. vi. 23. † Heb. *a man of gifts*.

pute with virulence about some abstruse sentiment, or external ceremony; infidels, and those whose doctrines subvert Christianity, are often disregarded. And when the members of the same religious fraternity are betrayed into dispute, it commonly proves irreconcilable, and terminates in another and another division, almost without end! In all these facts, not only the pride and folly of man, but the subtlety of Satan may be discerned: for love and union are the strength, the ornament, and the very criterion of Christianity; and disunion gives its enemies their most plausible arguments against it.—As a gift makes room for a man into the presence of the great, and into high offices, which, having bought, he often thinks himself authorized to sell, or to render subservient to his own ends: so, regard to a man's wealth often makes room for him into the confidence or company of Christians and ministers, who would not judge very favourably of him if he were a poor man. Thus temporal advantages are caught at; and an influence is admitted, which secretly undermines credit and peace, and tends to disunion and scandalous contentions.—Indeed the self-flattery of the human heart cannot be traced into all its effects. None of us are entirely free from its influences: we can scarcely ever state facts, in which our own interest or reputation is concerned, without partiality; nor can we know where truth and justice lie, in contested matters, without great candour and impartiality, and patient investigation, which are peculiarly requisite for magistrates, umpires, and peace-makers. It is on this account profitable to hear what our enemies say of us, that by balancing matters between their prejudice and our own partiality, we may form a better judgment of ourselves. By reference to the Lord, however, even without casting lots, we may generally avoid quarrels, or speedily extricate ourselves out of them. He “causeth contentions to cease, and parteth between the mighty:” and he can take the fortress, or bend the iron bars, of an offended brother's resentment. (*Notes and P. O. Gen.* xxxii. xxxiii.)—We can never too much attend to the repeated admonitions concerning the government of the tongue, and the improvement of that important talent, the gift of speech. Life and death, in every sense, both to ourselves and others, are in the power of the tongue: the beneficial or fatal effects of the tongue are incalculable.—Indeed we should regard the will of God, and “acknowledge him in all our ways.” As he has sanctified marriage, and pronounced it honourable; the believer, who deems it not good to be alone, should seek to him for direction and blessing, that he may make such a choice as may best conduce to his present comfort and his eternal

salvation ; he should receive the wife whom he has taken, as the gift of God, and love her for his sake ; and if a man have obtained a pious and prudent companion, he has exceedingly great cause for gratitude ; especially if he be conscious, that he did not seek her in the *prescribed* manner. The same maxim shews us, with what view young females ought to be educated, and what ought to be their ambition and aim : namely, to be such prudent and pious wives, that their husbands may know by experience, they have “ found a good thing, and have obtained “ favour of the LORD.”

NOTES.

CHAP. XIX. V. 1. A poor man, who fears God and behaves with integrity towards all men, is, in reality, more honourable, valuable, and happy, than one destitute of wisdom and grace, who gives a loose to his tongue to speak mischievous things, however high he may be in rank or affluence. (*Notes*, 22. xxviii. 6. *Matt.* xvi. 24—28, v. 26. *Luke* xvi. 22, 23.)

V. 2. 'Ignorance and inconsideration are equally mischievous: for a mind that knows not what it ought to choose, and what to avoid, can never do well: and if a man hastily and unadvisedly pursue an end, (which he reasonably propounds to himself,) and will not take time to deliberate; he must needs commit many errors.' *Bp. Patrick*.—This maxim is peculiarly important in religious concerns; ignorance can be the parent only of superstition and enthusiasm, not of true piety: and rash, inconsiderate attempts to propagate the true gospel of Christ, generally prejudice the bulk of mankind the more against it. (*Notes*, xxi. 5. xxv. 8—10. *Ec.* vii. 9. *Hos.* iv. 6. *John* xvi. 1—3. *Acts* xvii. 22—25.)

V. 3. Men frequently run themselves into difficulties and troubles, by their own folly and wickedness : and then they murmur against the appointments of God, and break out into impatient, or even impious complaints. Whereas, if they had kept the plain way of duty, and not perversely turned aside into crooked paths, they would have escaped these trials. Thus sinners, instead of seeking salvation by the gospel, complain of the rigour of the law, and make excuses for their crimes and impenitence, which, implicitly at least, throw the blame of their guilt and ruin upon God. ‘ The folly of a man maketh his ways sorrowful ; and in his heart he blameth God.’ *Sept. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. iii. 6. 10—12. iv. 3—15. 2 Kings iii. 10. vi. 31—33.)*

V. 4. *Notes*, 6, 7. xiv. 20. *Job* vi. 15—23.

V. 5. *Marg. Ref.*—Notes, 9. xiv. 25. *Dan.* vi. 24.

V. 6. 'A prince never wants suitors for his favour: ...

7 All ^m the brethren of the poor do hate him: how much more do his friends go far from him! ^a he pursueth *them with words*, ^o yet they are wanting to him.

8 He that getteth ^{*} wisdom ^p loveth his own soul: ^q he that keepeth understanding shall find good.

9 A ^r false witness shall not be unpunished, ^s and he that speaketh lies shall perish.

10 ^t Delight is not seemly for a

fool: ^u much less for a servant to have rule over princes.

11 The ^v discretion of a man ^x deferreth his anger; ^y and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.

12 The ^z king's wrath is as the roaring of a lion; but ^a his favour is as dew upon the grass.

13 A ^b foolish son is the calamity of his father: and ^c the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping.

14 House and riches are ^d the inher-

and every one loves, or pretends to love him, whose liberality is ...well known.' *Bp. Patrick.* (Notes, xvi. 15. xvii. 8. xviii. 16. xxi. 14.)

V. 7. 'All the kindred of a poor man ...hate his company as a disgrace or a trouble to them; and therefore no wonder if his companions ...grow strange to him. He urges them with their former protestations or promises of kindness, but finds they signified nothing: and if he earnestly implore their pity, it is to no purpose.' *Bp. Patrick.* (Notes, 4. xiv. 20. xxi. 13. Ec. ix. 13—18. Jam. ii. 5—7. 14—18.)

V. 8. He that makes the study of heavenly wisdom his grand object, desiring and praying to have "a heart" for it, best consults his own true good; and is the only man, who can be said to love his own soul, in a rational and prudent manner: and persevering in this pursuit, he shall certainly find happiness. (Notes, ii. 1—9. viii. 34—36. xvii. 16. xviii. 1, 2. Ps. xix. 7—11.)

V. 9. 'He that testifies to a lie, to the perverting of justice; if the judge do not find him out, shall be punished by God: and he who privately whispers slanders ...and kindles strife ...shall perish by those wicked practices.' *Bp. Patrick.* (See on Note, 4.—Marg. Ref.—Notes, Is. ix. 13—17. Jer. xxiii. 25—32. xxviii. 15—17. xxix. 21—23.)

V. 10. Prosperity and abundance do not become foolish and wicked men: they behave themselves unseemly in circumstances which increase their insolence and presumption: thus, what is their delight enables them to be more extensively mischievous, and in the event render them still more contemptible and miserable. Much less is it fit for men of low extraction and base spirits, to have influence over princes, or to domineer over those to whom eminent places properly belong. This is not uncommonly the folly of a weak prince, who makes some worthless minion his favourite, merely for his external embellishments, flattery, or willing subserviency to his pleasures. And thus he gives himself up to be ruled by his own servant, who engrosses all authority, and serves his own selfish purposes, at the expense of both king and people; and treats with insolence the most eminent and respectable persons, till jealousies are excited, parties formed, conspiracies and insurrections resolved on, and the state is thrown into convulsions. (Notes, xxx. 21—23. 1 Sam. xxv. 36—38. 2 Sam. ii. 24—26. 28, 29. Esth. iii. 10—15. Ec. x. 5—7.)

V. 11. "The understanding of a man renders him slow

to anger, &c."—Wisdom induces a man to suppress resentment; and to keep a strict guard on himself under provocations. A prudent man, even when it is necessary to reprove, or expostulate with the offending party, will defer it till he can do it with temper and decency: indeed it is most honourable to pass over a transgression unnoticed; and he attains the highest degree of true glory, who overlooks or forgives the most numerous and gross affronts, and persists the most steadily in endeavouring to overcome evil with good. This establishes a far different point of honour, than that adopted in modern times.—Let it not be overlooked, that these proverbs exactly coincide with our Lord's instructions and those of his apostles; though men in general think, that such precepts are peculiar to the New Testament. (Notes, xii. 16. xiv. 29. xvi. 32. xvii. 14. xx. 3. xxv. 21, 22. Matt. v. 38—42. xviii. 21, 22. Rom. xii. 17—21. Col. iii. 12—15.)

V. 12. (Marg. Ref.—Note, xvi. 14, 15.) 'The more power any man hath, the harder it is for him to govern his passions. ...None find it more difficult than a king, especially in the heat of his youth, to bridle his wrath.' *Bp. Patrick.* (Notes, xx. 2. xxviii. 15, 16. 2 Sam. xxiii. 4, 5. Ps. lxxii. 4—7. Hos. xiv. 4—8.)

V. 13. 'Two things make a man exceeding unhappy; a dissolute son and a scolding wife. For the former breaks the heart of his father, to see him like to prove the utter destruction of his family: the other drives a man to undo his family himself; when he is no more able to live at home with her, than to dwell in a rotten and ruinous house, through the roof of which the rain drops perpetually.' *Bp. Patrick.* A wise man would take prudent measures to prevent such calamities: but he would not ruin himself and family, either because of the contentions of his wife, or the uncomfortableness of his house; but rather beg of God to give him meekness and patience to bear what he could not remedy. (Notes, 14. x. 1. xv. 20. xvii. 21—25. xxi. 9. xxvii. 15, 16.)

V. 14. (Notes, xii. 4. xviii. 22. xxxi. 10—31.) Splendid houses and large inheritances sometimes descend to men from their parents, without their own care or prudence; and they are often given in Providence to very worthless characters. But a prudent wife is the Lord's more immediate and valuable gift to such as he favours; and contributes more to his passing through life comfortably, and at a distance from temptation, than the largest riches with a contentious or wicked woman.—'A prudent and virtuous

ritance of fathers: * and a prudent wife is from the LORD.

15 Slothfulness ^f casteth into a deep sleep; ^s and an idle soul shall suffer hunger.

16 He that ^h keepeth the commandment ⁱ keepeth his own soul; *but* ^k he that despiseth his ways shall die.

17 He ^l that hath pity upon the poor ^m lendeth unto the LORD; and ^{*} that which he hath given will he pay him again.

18 ⁿ Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare [†] for his crying.

19 A ^o man of great wrath shall suffer punishment; for if thou deliver him, yet thou must [†] do it again.

* wife is a special blessing of God's immediate choosing; and must therefore be obtained by our prayers, at the hand of the Giver.' *Bp. Hall.*

V. 15. Habits of indolence induce insensibility, as to the consequences, as a deep sleep would do: or if, to shun the immediate effect, the slothful employ fraud or violence; it renders them alike stupid and thoughtless, as to the punishment which is about to follow. (*Notes*, 24. vi. 6—11. x. 4, 5. xv. 19.)

V. 16. Without obedience to God, and to men in authority, no prudent care can be taken either of the immortal soul, or of temporal life: and the careless or obstinate transgressor must suffer the penalty of the law. (*Notes*, xiii. 13. xvi. 17. *Ec.* viii. 3—5. xii. 11—14. *Rev.* xxii. 14, 15.)

V. 17. Whatever kindness a man shews to the poor, whether by giving them money, or doing them any service, out of compassion to them, and in believing obedience and dependence on the Lord, will be considered as lent unto him; and he will take care that it shall be repaid with large interest, in one way or other, to him or his posterity. (*Notes*, xi. 24, 25. xiv. 21. xxii. 9. xxviii. 8. 27. *Deut.* xv. 4—15. *Ps.* xli. 1—3. *Ec.* xi. 1—6. *Is.* lviii. 5—12. *2 Cor.* ix. 8—11.)

V. 18. 'Chasten thy son, before he has contracted bad habits, and becomes apparently incorrigible: and do not refrain because of his cries,' Or, 'Do not concur in his mischiefs,' (by conniving at them,) 'or in his ruin.' (*Marg.*—*Notes*, xiii. 24. xxii. 15. xxiii. 13, 14. xxix. 15. 17. *Heb.* xii. 4—11.)

V. 19. (*Notes*, xv. 17, 18. xxv. 28. xxvi. 20, 21.) Some connect this verse with the preceding: if he, (that is, the child, who ought to have been corrected,) be of great wrath, he must suffer punishment: for if he be delivered at one time, it must be done again and again. Thus, if the parent spare the child when young, he may probably fall into the hands of the magistrate when grown up; perhaps come to an untimely end; or it may prove the ruin of his soul.—A very different meaning, however, has been given to the maxim. 'He whose wrath exceeds all bounds,

fer punishment; for if thou deliver him, yet thou must [†] do it again.

20 Hear counsel, and ^p receive instruction, that thou mayest ^q be wise in thy latter end.

21 *There are* ^r many devices in a man's heart; ^s nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

22 The ^t desire of a man is his kindness; ^u and a poor man is better than a liar.

23 The ^x fear of the LORD *tendeth* to life; and *he that hath it* ^y shall abide satisfied: ^z he shall not be visited with evil.

24 A slothful man ^a hideth his hand

2 Cor. viii. 2, 3. 12. u 1. Job vi. 15. xvii. 5. Ps. lxii. 9. Tit. i. 2. x x. 27. xiv. 26, 27. Ps. xix. 9. xxxiii. 18, 19. xxxiv. 9—11. lxxxv. 9. ciii. 17. cxlv. 18—20. Mal. iii. 16, 17. iv. 2. Acts ix. 31. y Ps. xc. 14. xci. 16. Is. lviii. 10, 11. Matt. v. 6. Phil. iv. 11, 12. 1 Tim. iv. 8. vi. 6—9. Heb. xiii. 5, 6. z xii. 21. Rom. viii. 28. 2 Tim. iv. 18. a 15. vi. 9, 10. xii. 27. xv. 19. xxiv. 30—34. xxvi. 13—16. Ps. lxxiv. 11.

* and makes him severe beyond measure, undoes his child.' *Bp. Patrick.* This is an important hint; whether it be the meaning of the verse, or not.

V. 20. *Notes*, i. 24—31. v. 3—14. viii. 30—34. *Num.* xxiii. 10. *Deut.* xxxii. 19, 20. *Ps.* xxxvii. 37, 38. *Jer.* xvii. 11. *Luke* xii. 15—21. xvi. 19—23. *Rom.* vi. 21—23.

V. 21. 'Man's device shall not have success, except God govern it, whose purpose is unchangeable.' (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xvi. 9. xx. 24. xxi. 1. *Gen.* xxxvii. 19, 20. xlv. 8. 1. 20. *Is.* xlvi. 10, 11. *Luke* xxii. 21—23, v. 22. *Acts* ii. 22—24. 1 *Pet.* ii. 7, 8.)

V. 22. If a man desire to serve us, *that* "desire is his kindness," and should be accepted as such, though he have it not in his power to do any thing effectual. Thus, the widow's two mites were honoured, as the expression of her love to the house of God: Mary was commended, when "she did what she could" to honour Christ: and "if there be a willing mind it is accepted according to what a man hath." (*Notes*, *Mark* xii. 41—44. xiv. 3—9, v. 7. 2 *Cor.* viii. 8—15, v. 12.) By the same equitable rule, the poor man, who makes no promises, is to be preferred to those rich and powerful persons, who amuse their dependents with assurances of doing great things for them, which they never intend, or take no care, to perform. This is a very common species of *lying*; but not the better for being fashionable in polite circles. (*Note*, *Ps.* lxii. 8—10, v. 9.)

V. 23. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xiv. 26, 27. *Ps.* xxxiv. 7—10. lxxxv. 9. ciii. 15—18. *Mal.* iii. 13—18. iv. 2, 3. *Acts* ix. 31.) Some render this maxim in a far different sense, "The fear of the LORD *tends* to life: but the full," (or self-sufficient prosperous man,) "shall lie down in it; he shall be visited with evil." 'He that is swollen with pride, and forgets God, when worldly goods flow in upon him, shall lie down at last in sorrow, and never want something or other to afflict him.' Quotation in *Bp. Patrick.*—The original is certainly somewhat obscure.

V. 24. Habits of indolence so grow upon people, that they have no heart to do the most needful things for themselves; as if a man were so slothful, that he would not

in his bosom, and will not so much as bring it to his mouth again.

25 ^b Smite a scorner, and the simple will ^a beware: and ^c reprove one that hath understanding, and he will understand knowledge.

26 He that ^d wasteth his father, and chaseth away his mother, is ^e a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach.

b xxi. 11. Deut. xiii. 11. xxi. 21.
c Heb. be can-
ning.
d ix. 9, 10. xv. 5.
xvii. 10. Rev. iii. 19.
e x. 1. xvii. 25.
xxiii. 22—25.
xxviii. 24. xxx. 11. 17. Deut. xxi. 18—21. Luke xv. 12—16. 30.
f x. 5. xvii. 2.
xxviii. 7.

27 ^f Cease, my son, to hear the in-struction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.

28 [†] An ungodly witness ^g scorneth judgment; and ^h the mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity.

29 ⁱ Judgments are prepared for scorners, ^k and stripes for the back of fools.

f xiv. 7. Deut. xiii. 1—4. 1 Kings xxii. 22—23. Matt. vii. 15. xvi. 6. 12. Mark iv. 24. vii. 6—14. John x. 5. 2 Cor. xi. 13—15. Eph. iv. 14. 1 Tim. iv. 7. vi. 3—5. 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2. 1 John iv. 1. 2 John 10. Rev. ii. 2.
† Heb. A witness of Beial. 1 Kings xxi. 10. 13. Acts vi. 11—13.
g Ps. x. 5. 11. Is. xxviii. 14—18. Luke xviii. 2—4. h xv. 14. Job xv. 16. xx. 12, 13. xxxiv. 7. i lii. 34. ix. 12. Is. xxviii. 22. Acts xiii. 40, 41. 2 Pet. iii. 3—7. k vii. 22. x. 13. xvii. 10. xxvi. 3. Heb. xii. 6.

take his hand out of his bosom to feed himself, and should prefer the gnawings of hunger to so trivial an exertion! (See on Note, 15.)

V. 25. ‘The simple and ignorant learn, when they see the wicked punished.’—‘Some are so bad, they must be handled with great sharpness, especially such profane men as ... deride admonitions and thereby grow more furious. But there are those who grow better, even by the example of severity against notorious offenders. ... Then there are a third sort, who, ... being admonished, are obedient to those that tell them of their faults; to such a reproof at most is sufficient.’ *Melancthon in Bp. Patrick.*—In many cases the sharp rebukes, disgraceful censures, or severe punishments, inflicted on the incorrigible, are very beneficial to such as were in danger of being deluded by their mischievous principles, or seduced to imitate their bad examples; and are the means of rendering numbers more circumspect and prudent. (Notes, ix. 7—9. xvii. 10. xxi. 11.)

V. 26. The profligate young man, who wastes his father’s substance by extravagance, or turns his aged mother destitute, that he may have the more to spend on his vices; or who drives her from home by his insolence and turbulence, is a scandal to his family, a nuisance to society, and will at length come to contempt and ignominy. Such monsters are there in human form, in every generation. (See on Notes, x. 1. xvii. 25.)

V. 27. (Notes, xiv. 7. Deut. xiii. 1—5. 1 Kings xxii. 19—23. Matt. vii. 15—20. Mark iv. 23—25, v. 24. 1 Cor. xv. 31—34. 2 Cor. vi. 14—18.) “Cease, my son, from hearkening to instruction, in order to wander from the words of knowledge.” This is the literal rendering, of which different interpretations have been given.—‘My son, hearken not to instruction, but with the desire and intention to grow better by it.’ But as a man cannot become wiser and better by hearkening to bad counsel, and imbibing corrupt principles, the obvious meaning of our translation is at least implied; and it is of so much importance, that it should not be lightly departed from. ‘In order to profit by good instructions, no longer regard such as are of a contrary nature and tendency.’ As numbers “turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables;” so they that would hearken to the truth must turn away their ears from lies, especially such as are most plausible and agreeable, and set off with the greatest shew of wit, genius, eloquence, and learning.—“Take heed what ye hear;” and “take heed how ye hear.” (Mark iv. 24. Luke viii. 18.) Insinuating infidels, scepticks, and ungodly men of various kinds, who endeavour to argue young persons out of their religious scruples, and excite

their contempt of their pious parents or teachers, under the pretence of enlarging their minds, and freeing them from the shackles of prejudice and superstition; with all those ministers of religion, however distinguished, whose instructions are antisciptural, or unscriptural; answer the description here given. They administer poison instead of medicine: and their books, sermons, sarcastical harangues, and corrupt conversation, should carefully be shunned more than a pestilence.—“To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” (Note, Is. viii. 20.)

V. 28. ‘A wicked witness, ... mocks if you tell him of law and justice, or of the judgment of God upon perjured persons.’ *Bp. Patrick.* “The mouth of the wicked devoureth iniquity,”—‘taketh pleasure therein’ (namely in iniquity) ‘as gluttons and drunkards in delicate meats and drinks.’ (Note, xv. 14.)

V. 29. This verse seems connected with the foregoing. ‘But they shall not mock always; for terrible punishments shall certainly be inflicted upon those that scoff at conscience and religion: nor shall other wicked men escape, who are such fools as to slight these good instructions.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (Notes, x. 13. xxvi. 3. xxvii. 22. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3. iii. 1—7.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.
V. 1—14.

The wisdom of this world generally contradicts that of the holy Scriptures: and we need not wonder at this, if we consider, who is the god and prince of this world, and by whose influence ungodly men are swayed. According to the maxims of the world, “wealth procureth many friends:” numbers of mercenary men pay court to the rich and prosperous, and intreat the favour of princes and nobles, whatever be their character; and are their obedient servants for what they can get. Nay, they flatter them, and write panegyricks on their endowments and excellences, and dedications full of high commendations of their patrons; when perhaps their folly and wickedness are conspicuous to all the world! This is especially the case, when liberality, exercised from any motive, or by any or no rule, forms a part of the character; for then it is hoped that flattery will be well rewarded: and there are but few exceptions to the general rule, that “every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts,” and has good preferences to bestow. Whereas poverty exposes even wise and good men to contempt. “All the brethren of the poor do hate him;” and his relations are pained and often very angry to see him enter their doors, or claim kindred to them. How much more then do they, who professed

CHAP. XX.

The evils of intemperance, dishonesty, and many other vices and imprudences. The power of kings, and the good use to be made of it. The benefit of de-

friendship to him in his prosperity, go far from him! Thus he is separated from his neighbour, and if he harass his faithless and unkind friends and relations, with intreaties and expostulations, it proves to no purpose; for they are still wanting to him; and he may sink under his calamity, or seek refuge in an alms-house or a work-house. But the maxims of divine wisdom declare, that "the poor man, that walketh in his integrity, is better than he who is perverse in his lips and is a fool;" yea, far better than those dissembling rich men, who despise and desert them. The Son of God has shewn poverty to be most honourable, by choosing it for his own condition: (*Note, 2 Cor. viii. 6—9, v. 9:*) and "God hath chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him." (*Note, Jam. ii. 5—7.*) Let us then take care neither to despise those whom God honours, nor to envy or flatter those whom he abhors. If Providence have allotted to us a low condition, let us learn to be contented: and by cheerfulness, honesty, industry, frugality, and a friendly behaviour to all around us; by shewing decent respect to superiors, without paying court to them; by avoiding every improper way of mending our circumstances; and by a universal conscientiousness, endeavour to shew poverty to be respectable. And it is far more becoming the poor, and more comfortable, to bring up their families by honest labour, and with mean fare; than to place confidence in rich relations, or to intreat the favour of princes, or the friendship of those who give gifts.—Again, while the proud and revengeful count it their glory to resent every affront; nay, would be disgraced among those of similar principles, if they would not, without regard to their most endeared connexions, risk their own lives and souls, with the murder of the offending party, in seeking satisfaction for the most trivial injury; the word of God teaches us, that it is a proof "of a man's discretion to defer his anger; and his glory to pass over a transgression." And who does not see how much more rational and beneficial this is? How much better does it suit the present state of mankind, and conduce to a man's own peace and happiness.—As the knowledge of God, and of his truth and will, are essential to our present and everlasting good; time and labour employed in searching the scriptures, and in meditation and prayer, is more conducive to our own advantage, than it would be if we could thus gain some most powerful earthly friend. This is the true wisdom, which "who-soever getteth, loveth his own soul, and he that keepeth shall find good." Thus, we may avert the wrath of our almighty King, and secure his favour: and then we need not doubt, that he will protect us and supply all our wants, as our all-sufficient Friend and Father.—But while men neglect both the salvation of God and their own evident duty, they run into distress; and instead of condemning themselves, they charge God foolishly, and quarrel with him, as if he were the Author of their sin and misery. They complain of being unfortunate, and of having bad *luck* and a hard *lot*; or they throw the blame on re-

liberation and good counsel. The deceitfulness of men, and the curse attending dishonest gain. The honour of young and old men. The advantage of correction; and man's obligation to trust in God, 1—30.

lations and friends; and thus in numberless ways, "their hearts fret against the LORD."—They who have inherited or acquired houses and riches, ought to take care, that they do not trust in them, or on the flattering and fallacious respect that is paid them. They should recollect from whom, and for what purposes, they received them; and consider how much good or harm they may do by their example and influence, and improvement or abuse of their many talents.—A man's greatest troubles often arise, from that quarter whence he expected the greatest comfort. For an ungodly, extravagant, and disobedient son, who brings scandal upon his family and ruin on himself; or an imprudent, unfaithful, or contentious wife, may render the most prosperous person extremely miserable. When the Lord gives one of his servants a prudent wife, she will add more to his comfort than riches could. But if, without his criminal preference of wealth or external accomplishments to piety, he should find himself mistaken in his choice; he may confidently expect wisdom to enable him to behave properly in such difficult circumstances, comfort adequate to the affliction, and grace to extract good to his soul from it. But, though the Lord will not forsake his offending servants; yet the consciousness of having brought upon themselves the calamity by sin, will add a poignancy to it. So that the way of duty is in all things the way of peace and safety. Indeed every crooked path, every instance of falsehood and dissimulation, nay, of rashness and harshness, will certainly be awfully punished hereafter, or sharply corrected in this present world. And the more wicked men here live sumptuously and luxuriously; the more they lord it over their inferiors, or equals, or even superiors; (for "*slaves* have often had rule over *princes*;") the more dreadful misery and disgrace await them in a future state.

V. 15—29.

No man can warrantably trust in the Lord, who is slothful in business. For "slothfulness casteth a man into a deep sleep," and he is not aware of the event, till he feels that hunger is the portion of the idle, both in respect of soul and body. Yet numbers shrink from labour and self-denial, hiding their hands in their bosoms, and not having resolution to bring them to their mouths, till they are reduced to the most extreme distress: and then they bitterly complain, not only of the unkindness of their friends, but of their hard lot, by which they reflect on the providence of God. But they ought to know, that man is not at all to be depended upon; and that God has not engaged to maintain the lazy and extravagant, even if they *seem to be religious*. For there is little evidence that a man is really religious, who will not work; or who refuses to submit to Providence, as to his condition in life. (*Notes, 2 Thes. iii. 6—12.*) How much better then for a man to "labour, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth!" For "he that giveth to the poor, lendeth unto the LORD, and that which he hath given will he pay him again."—But alas! how few have got real faith! And now little faith

WINE is ^a a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

2 The ^b fear of a king is as the roar-

xxiii. 29-35. xxxi. 4. Gen. ix. 21-23. xix. 41-36. 1 Sam. xxv. 36-38. 2 Sam. xi. 13. xiii. 28. 1 Kings xx. 16-21. Is. xxviii. 7. Hos. iv. 11. vii. 5. Hab. ii. 15, 16. 1 Cor. vi. 10. Gal. v. 21. Eph. v. 18. b xvi. 14, 15. xix. 12. Ec. x. 4. Hos. xi. 10. Am. iii. 8.

have the most of those few ¹ Men in general dare credit their neighbours with more pounds, than they dare trust the Lord with pence: else they would deduct more from what they spend or hoard, to put out on this unexceptionable security, and on this highest interest. Thus indeed "wealth would procure many friends," whose prayers would bring down blessings, and abound in every way to their good; and every good man would be a friend to him, who thus gave gifts. But even if we have very little in our power, we may buy into these funds, as fast as the richest can do: for "the desire of a man is his kindness;" and the widow's two mites, given from proper motives, will go as far as the large donations of the wealthy.—Indeed every advantage results from true wisdom. It teaches us to fear the LORD, which tendeth to life, to render a man inwardly satisfied, and secure that he shall not be "visited with evil;" and to trust in God and keep his commandments, and so to keep our own souls: whereas he, who "despiseth his way," and cares not by what rule he walks, shall die. Let us then leave it to those ungodly men, who scorn judgment and justice, and make a scoff of the vengeance of God, to devour in luxurious living the wages of iniquity, and to treasure up wrath to themselves: "for judgments are prepared for scorners, and stripes for "the back of fools:" and they are often here made examples of, that the simple may beware. Let us "hear counsel, and receive instruction, that we may be wise "at our latter end:" for we have all been "foolish and "disobedient." Let us be glad of reproof, that we may understand knowledge: and study with propriety, when occasion offers, to check the insolence of scorners, and prevent them from doing mischief; and to give seasonable and kind reproof to men of understanding, that they may be stirred up to do more good. Above all, let us cease to hear those instructions, whether from the pulpit, or the press, or on the stage, or in witty and admired publications, or in convivial meetings, which cause men "to err from "the words of knowledge." For such *false witnesses* are of all most dangerous: others may, by their lies and perjuries, rob us of our characters, property, or lives; but these aim at the ruin of our souls: other false witnesses perish alone; but when "the blind lead the blind, they "both fall into the ditch together." We need not envy their carnal mirth or jollity; seeing the wrath of God abideth upon them; and their insolence and licentiousness in prosperity must appear unseemly in the eyes of all sober men. Should they even be favourites of earthly princes, and lord it over better men than themselves, or persecute the children of God; they will only at length sink deeper in contempt and misery. But we should still recollect our dependence on God for every thing. "There are many "devices in a man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the "LORD that shall stand." If he then be for us, who can be against us? Whom then need we fear? Or what more can we desire, than that all our devices may be directed

ing of a lion: *whoso* provoketh him to anger, ^c sinneth *against* his own soul.

3 It is ^d an honour for a man to cease from strife; ^e but every fool will be meddling.

c viii. 36. 1 Kings ii. 23. d xiv. 29. xvi. 32. xvii. 14. xix. 11. xxv. 8-10. Eph. i. 6-8. iv. 32. v. 1. e xiv. 17. xviii. 6. xxi. 24. 2 Kings xiv. 9, 10. Jam. iii. 14-18. iv. 1.

to coincide with his holy will?—When we educate our children properly, and chasten them when young, and while there is hope of rendering the stubborn will submissive and patient of contradiction; and when in obedience to God, we repress our foolish tenderness, and do not spare for their crying; we do our best to render them a comfort to us, and happy in themselves, and to preserve them from manifold perils and miseries in future life.—It is peculiarly important to govern our passions: for if men yield to evil tempers and furious wrath, they may indeed be rescued once and again; but should they persist in their contentious conduct, at length it will bring on them destruction, temporal and eternal. In short, God commands nothing but what is good for us; and forbids nothing but what is injurious: and the instructions of wisdom are, in fact, so many infallible rules of happiness.

NOTES.

CHAP. XX. V. 1. Strong drink of every kind, when improperly used, throws down the fences of reflection. fear, and shame; excites men to profane mockery of things sacred, to revile the most respectable characters, to ridicule or reproach their best friends, to commit the greatest outrages, to embroil themselves in riots and quarrels, to gratify the basest lusts, or to commit the most rash and ruinous crimes: and the satisfaction expected from it mocks and deludes the drunkard.—'Drunkenness is an 'enemy to wisdom, even in common things; much more 'in those of everlasting consequence. ... Let him whose 'design it is to be wise and good, take heed of accustom- 'ing himself to excess of wine. It makes men either 'stupid sots, or profane scoffers at religion and sobriety.' *Bp. Patrick*.—The last clause may be rendered more literally: "He that errs therein, will not be wise." As habitual drunkenness is madness and folly; so occasional and repeated falls into that hateful vice indicate, that it is highly improbable a man should ever become wise or eminent. (*Notes*, xxiii. 29—35. xxxi. 4—7. *Gen.* ix. 20 —23. xix. 31—38. *1 Sam.* xxv. 36—38. *Hos.* vii. 5—7. *Eph.* v. 15—20, v. 18. *1 Pet.* iv. 3—5.)

V. 2. "The terror of a king is as the roaring of a young "lion; whosoever is angry with him sinneth against his "own life."—"The word (התקצר) properly signifies, not to 'provoke the king, ... but to be angry at him, which is a 'kind of madness; for thereby he is provoked to such fury, 'as is in young lions, who are fiercest of all others.' *Bp. Patrick*.—Thus nothing so highly provokes the King of heaven, as impiously and virulently disputing against his commandments, testimonies, decrees, and dispensations, and reviling or reproaching them. (*Notes*, xvi. 14, 15. xix. 12. *1 Kings* ii. 23—25. *Ec.* x. 4. *Am.* iii. 4—8.)

V. 3. "It is below a wise man, or one who is truly 'great, to scold and brawl: or if a quarrel be begun, it is 'no disparagement to him, but the noblest thing he can 'do, to withdraw himself from it, and let it rest: but all

f x. 4. xix. 24. xxvi. 13—16.
* Or, winter.
g vi. 10, 11. xix. 15. xxiv. 34. Matt. xxv. 3—10. 24—28. 2 Pet. i. 5—11.

4 The 'sloppard will not plow by reason of the * cold; ^g therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.

h xviii. 4. Ps. lxiv. 6. 1 Cor. ii. 11.
i xxv. 14. xxvii. 2. Matt. vi. 2. Luke xviii. 11. 28. xxii. 33. 2 Cor. xii. 11.

5 ^h Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.

2 Cor. xii. 11.
+ Or, bounty.
k Ps. xii. 1. Ec. vii. 28. Jer. v. 1. Mic. vii. 2. Luke xviii. 8. John i. 47.

6 Most men will ⁱ proclaim every one his own [†] goodness: ^k but a faithful man who can find?

l xiv. 2. xix. 1. Ps. xv. 2. xxvi. 1. 11. Is. xxxiii. 15. Luke i. 6. 2 Cor. i. 12. Tit. ii. 11, 12. 3 John 3, 4. Ps. xxxvii. 26. cxii. 2. Jer. xxxii. 39. Acts ii. 39.

7 The ^l just man walketh in his integrity; ^m his children are blessed after him.

m xiii. 22. Gen. xvii. 7.

n 26. xvi. 12. xxix. 14. 1 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4. Ps. lxxii. 4. xcii. 9. xcix. 4. ci. 6—8. 14. xxxii. 1. 1 Kings viii. 46. 2 Chr. vi. 36. Job xiv. 4. xv. 14. xxv. 4. Ps. li. 5. Ec. vii. 20. 1 Cor. iv. 4. Jam. iii. 2. 1 John i. 8—10.

9 Who ^o can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?

10 ^{*} Divers weights, and divers measures, ^p both of them are alike ^q abomination to the Lord.

11 Even ^r a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.

r xxi. 8. xxii. 15. Ps. li. 5. lviii. 3. Luke i. 15. 66. ii. 46, 47. 51, 52. v. 43, 44.

'fools and lewd persons love to thrust themselves into contention, and fancy when they are engaged in strife, they are bound in honour to maintain it.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, xvi. 32. xvii. 14. xviii. 6, 7. xix. 11. xxi. 24. Jam. iii. 14—18.)

V. 4. If a husbandman, from sloth and unmanly fear of the cold, should leave his land uncultivated; he could expect nothing but want, when his neighbours were reaping their harvest: and should he beg of them, they would not be disposed to pity and relieve him. Thus those, who through sloth, or impatience of difficulties, neglect favourable opportunities, either in their temporal or eternal concerns, must bear the consequences, perhaps without pity or redress; while the diligent are rejoicing in the fruit of their labour and self-denial. (Notes, vi. 6—11. x. 4. xix. 15. 24. xxvi. 13—16.)

V. 5. Designing and politick men endeavour to conceal their real purposes and intentions, that it may be as water in a deep well: yet men of sagacity, and insinuation, often find means to draw the secret from them, or in some way to find them out. Many likewise who are capable of giving wise counsel, are so reserved or diffident, that there requires much address to draw any thing from them. But it may be done; as waters may be raised from the deep well by skill and labour: and it will fully recompense those who can effect it. (Notes, xviii. 4. Ps. lxiv. 6. 1 Cor. ii. 10—13.)

V. 6. Men in general love to be thought very upright, conscientious, and generous; and they are ready to proclaim to others, how much they have done, or intend to do, for their relations, friends, or dependents: but a truly honest man, whose integrity, veracity, and fidelity may safely be depended on, is as rare as such boasters are numerous. (Notes, xxv. 14. xxvii. 2. Ps. xii. 1—4. Mic. vii. 1—7.)

V. 7. "He that walketh in his integrity is a righteous man: and blessed shall his children be after him." (Notes, xiii. 22. xiv. 2. xix. 1. Ps. xxxvii. 25, 26. cxii. 2, 3. Jer. xxxii. 38—41. Acts ii. 37—40, v. 39.)—"He that doeth righteousness is righteous:" he is a genuine son of Abraham, and inherits the blessing of Abraham. He is justified by faith, and shews his faith by his works. (Notes, Jam. ii. 14—24.)

V. 8. 'When righteous judgment is executed, there vice dares not appear.'—When wise and just kings take pains to look carefully into judicial transactions, and examine for themselves, how justice is administered to the

people in general; there fraud and oppression will be prevented, and grievances effectually redressed, as if by their very looks. (Notes, 26. xxix. 14. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4. Ps. lxxii. 1—7. ci. Is. xxxii. 1, 2.)

V. 9. Where is the man who has a right to boast, either that he was originally free from sin, or that he is entirely pure at present, or that he has made his own heart clean? If there be such a one, who and where is he, among the sons of fallen Adam? Men form antisciptural systems, and fall into self-flattering delusions; but the omniscience of God knows nothing of such a man among all the inhabitants of the earth. (Marg. Ref. o.—Notes, Job xv. 14—16. Ec. vii. 19, 20, v. 20. Jam. iii. 1, 2, v. 2. 1 John i. 8—10.)—"Who can say, and say truly, that he hath not the least evil affection remaining within him, no unruly passion stirring in his soul? or that he is so free from sin, that he needs no further purifying?" Bp. Patrick.

V. 10. "A stone and a stone: an ephah and an ephah." Marg. That is, one set of weights and measures to buy with, and another to sell with: some according to the standard, to produce to the officers appointed to inspect them, or to use when afraid of detection; and others, to be brought from their concealment, when the widow, the orphan, the destitute, and the dependent, who cannot, or dare not, seek redress, are to be cheated and oppressed (23). (See on Notes, xi. 1. xvi. 11.) "Even both are unclean before the Lord, and he also who makes them," or, "who doeth these things." Sept.

V. 11. By observing the first actions of a child, or the conduct, contrivances, pursuits, and even diversions, of a youth, a judgment may often be formed of what his character will be, when arrived at maturity: and indeed the propensities of human nature may be learned in the same manner. If children were generally observed to be submissive, sincere, docile, gentle, and loving to each other, averse to all ill, and propense to all good; the wickedness of the world might, with some plausibility, be exclusively ascribed to bad habits, examples, and tuition. Yet even then, it would remain a mystery, (which men adopting that system ought to explain,) how it comes to pass, that bad habits should be so universally contracted, bad examples set, and bad education given. But if children are observed to be very early susceptible of violent anger, of envy, and of pride, to be humoursome and deceitful, to quarrel and to tell lies, to learn bad words and evil things almost with-

Ex. iv. 11. Ps. xciv. 9. cxix. 18. Matt. xiii. 13—16. Acts xxvi. 18. Eph. i. 17, 18. 12 The 'hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.

vi. 9—11. x. 4, 5. xiii. 4. xix. 15. xxiv. 30—34. Rom. xii. 11. 2 Thes. iii. 10. u Jon. i. 6. Rom. xiii. 11. 1 Cor. xv. 34. Eph. v. 14. 13 'Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty; 'open thine eyes, and thou shalt be satisfied with bread.

Ec. i. 10. Hos. xii. 7, 8. 1 Thes. iv. 6. 14 *It is naught, 'it is naught*, saith the buyer; but when he is gone his way, then he boasteth.

y iii. 15. viii. 11. x. 20, 21. xv. 7. 23. xvi. 16, 21. 24. xxv. 12. Job xxviii. 12—19. Ec. xii. 9—11. Rom. x. 14, 15. Eph. iv. 29. 15 There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: 'but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.

out a teacher, and to be very backward to learn what is good, and prone to rebel with pertinacity against every exertion of authority; in this case we must conclude, that we are born in sin and "by nature the children of wrath." So that, those who would know what human nature is, previous to habits, examples, and tuition, should watch their children, and enquire, "whether their work be pure, "and whether it be right."—The verse may also mean, that God notices the conduct even of children, and will require an account of them, whether their work be right or not. (*Marg. Ref. r.—Notes, xxi. 8. xxii. 15. Ps. li. 5, 6. lviii. 3—5. Is. vii. 15.*)

V. 12. 'There are ears which hear not, and eyes that 'see not: but if a man have an hearing ear and a seeing eye; he is doubly bound to God, both for his sense and 'the improvement of it.' *Bp. Hall.*—'As the LORD is to 'be acknowledged the Fountain of all good, particularly 'of those excellent and useful senses, whereby the knowledge of all things is conveyed to us: so the towardly 'disposition, which we observe to be in any child, to listen 'to instruction, and a clear understanding to discern, and 'a sound judgment to resolve aright, are likewise, above 'all things, to be peculiarly ascribed to the divine grace.' *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, Ex. iv. 11, 12. Ps. cxix. 18. Matt. xiii. 13—17. Mark viii. 17—21. Acts xxvi. 16—18.*)

V. 13. *Marg. Ref.*—See on *Notes, 4. vi. 6—11.*

V. 14. While the seller often seeks to impose on the ignorance, credulity, or necessity of his customers, by fraudulently commending his goods, or concealing their faults, or by demanding an unfair price; the buyer seems to despise them as worthless, far beneath his own judgment of their value. Especially, if he knows that the owner must sell, he will run him down in the price, and pretend many faults in the commodity: and when by these tricks of trade he has got a good bargain, he will go and boast of it among his neighbours! But is not this to boast that he is an artful knave, who met with a man simple enough to be cheated? (*Notes, Hos. xii. 7—9. 1 Cor. vi. 7, 8. 1 Thes. iv. 6—8, v. 6.*)—'As fraud makes men 'dispraise that to which they have a mind; so in other 'cases, out of ignorance, or out of partiality, or faction, 'nay, sometimes from natural disposition, men both dispraise that which is praise-worthy, and commend that 'which is good for little.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 15. Gold and rubies, and other precious stones, were very common in the days of Solomon, who greatly enriched his people; and wisdom ought to have been

16 'Take his garment that is surety for a stranger; and take a pledge of him for 'a strange woman.

17 Bread of 'deceit 'is sweet to a man; but afterwards 'his mouth shall be filled with gravel.

18 Every 'purpose is established by counsel: 'and with good advice make war.

19 He 'that goeth about as a tale-bearer revealeth secrets: therefore 'meddle not with him that 'flattereth with his lips.

z xi. 15. xxii. 28, 27. xxvii. 16. Ex. xxii. 26, 27. a ii. 16. v. 3. vii. 5. 10. xxiii. 27. * Heb. lying, or falsehood. iv. 17. b ix. 17, 18. Gen. iii. 6, 7. Job xx. 12—20. Ec. xi. 9. Heb. xi. 25. c Lam. iii. 15, 16. d xv. 22. xxiv. 6. e xxv. 8. Judg. i. 1, 2. ix. 29. xx. 7. 18. 23. 26—28. 2 Sam. ii. 26, 27. 2 Chr. xxv. 17—23. Luke xiv. 31. f xi. 13. xviii. 8. xxvi. 20—22. Lev. xix. 16. g xxiv. 21. † Or, enticeth. xvi. 29. Rom. xvi. 18.

equally plentiful under so wise a prince: but an understanding heart, and lips fitted to disperse knowledge, remained still *precious*; not only for their *excellency* and *utility*, but also for their *scarceness*. (See on *Notes, iii. 14—17. x. 20, 21. xv. 7. 23.*)

V. 16. 'Lend that man nothing without good security, who is ready to be bound for the debts of any new acquaintance, whose company entertains him; or for bad women with whom he has formed connexions: for he will surely and speedily be ruined.' (See on *Note, vi. 1—5.*)—'Teach him wit, that he cast not himself rashly into 'danger.'

V. 17. (*Marg.*) Under the term, "Bread of deceit," all things obtained or enjoyed by sin may be comprised. Fraudulent gains, and licentious indulgences, may for the moment be pleasant; but they will soon become like gravel in the mouth, which cuts the gums, injures the teeth, and disgusts the palate. (*Notes, ix. 13—18. xxiii. 1—3. Gen. iii. 6, 7. Ec. xi. 9, 10. Rom. vi. 21—23, v. 21.*)

V. 18. Kings and rulers of every description, should be very careful that they do not rashly or needlessly engage in war; or any violent and threatening measures, which may render it unavoidable. They should advise whether the object in contest be of sufficient importance, to warrant so destructive a manner of decision; and whether the power to be opposed be not too great for them to cope with: if they must go to war, what armies they must raise, and whence; and with what funds they may pay them: what alliances they can form; by what plan they may conduct the operations of the war, &c. Till such points are settled, it is madness to involve a nation in difficulties, from which no human wisdom may be able to extricate it.—"Establish thy thoughts by counsel, and by counsel make "war." *Old Version.* (*Notes, xi. 14. xv. 22. xxiv. 3—6. 2 Sam. ii. 14—16. 26—29. 2 Kings xiv. 9—14. Luke xiv. 28—33.*)

V. 19. (See on *Notes, xi. 13. xviii. 8.*) The tale-bearer is commonly a flatterer. Thus he insinuates himself into the favour, and pries into the secrets, of one person or family: and then he goes and tells all he knows, with a malevolent comment, in another family; accompanying his slanders of the absent with flattery of those present, and in both addressing himself to the corruptions of the human heart. Whoever ridicules or reviles the absent, and flatters those present, may safely be deemed a tale-bearer; and in the next company he will act the same part: who then would have any thing to do with so ir-

30. Heb. iv. 12, 13. dle of the LORD, ' searching all the inward parts of the belly.

28 ^z Mercy and truth preserve the king; and ^a his throne is upholden by mercy.

29 The ^b glory of young men is

the lamp to burn clearly and to better purposes. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 30. *Job* xxxii. 6—14, v. 8. *Rom.* ii. 12—16. 1 *Cor.* ii. 10—13, v. 11. *Heb.* iv. 12, 13.)

V. 28. 'The best and strongest guards for the preservation of a prince's person, and for the security of his government, are bounty and clemency, joined with justice and faithfulness to his word.' *Bp. Patrick*.—Let kings imitate the King of kings, exercising justice, truth, and mercy, "in all wisdom and prudence;" especially let them delight in mercy: and this will establish their thrones, (in the affections of their people, and by the peculiar blessing of God,) more firmly, than either mercenary armies, or mercenary courtiers can do, and indeed than the wisest political measures. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xvi. 6, 12, 13. xxix. 14. *Ps.* lxi. 6, 7. ci. 1, 2. *Is.* xvi. 3—5, v. 5. xxxiii. 5, 6.)

V. 29. Young men are distinguished by vigour and courage, and are apt to glory in them, even when made a bad use of: and old men grow infirm and lose their comeliness; so that their grey hairs, an emblem of experience and discretion, are their chief ornament. But when the young spend their vigour to good purpose, it is really an honour to them: and when the old are wise, and devise and direct useful measures for the good of their families, the church, or the community; their grey hairs are really an ornament, and they have an amiableness which far exceeds all the fire and activity of youth. (See on *Note*, xvi. 31.—*Notes*, *Ps.* lxxi. 8, 9, 17, 18. *Is.* iii. 1—9, v. 5. *Jer.* ix. 23, 24. 1 *Tim.* v. 1—4.)

V. 30. "The livid colour of a wound is a purification for a wicked man: and stripes, for the inward parts of the belly."—"Though stripes chiefly affect the body; yet they have likewise an effect upon ... the inward recesses of the mind, restraining the offender by the fear of punishment. That this is the meaning of the words," (rendered "the inward parts of the belly")... appears from that elegant comparison of the conscience or spirit of a man (27) to a light within him, searching out and discovering his inmost thoughts.' *Grey*.—Sharp punishments, by which the offender is scourged, till livid tumours remain, are necessary in many cases, and sometimes effectual, where all other remedies fail. (*Notes*, xix. 25. xxii. 15. xxvi. 3.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

If it were not notoriously evident, it could scarcely be credited, that men of the most brilliant capacities and accomplishments, as well as the ignorant and rude multitude, should be capable of rendering themselves fools and madmen, merely for the sake of the pleasant flavour, or transient exhilaration, of wine and strong drink! But fallen man, having lost his original happiness in the fruition of God, and not finding the vacancy filled by a moderate use of the creatures, foolishly seeks for satisfaction in intem-

their strength; and 'the beauty of old men is the grey head.

30 The blueness of a wound * cleanseth away evil: so do ^d stripes the inward parts of the belly.

See on xvi. 31.—
Lev. xix. 32.

* Heb. is a purg-
ing medicine
against evil.
d xix. 25. xxii.
15. Is. xxvii. 9.
Heb. xii. 10.

perance, and proceeds to an excess in animal indulgences, to which none of the brutes can habitually be induced. Excess of wine, however, not only deludes the expectations of its votaries, and yields far more anguish than satisfaction; but it leads to scenes of impiety and iniquity; to outrageous passion, discord, and bloodshed; and to various most perilous and disastrous situations. It is not only a base, and worse than beastly vice; but it runs a man directly into the snare of the devil, to be for the season blinded and employed at his pleasure. Whosoever then is once deceived by this sin is, in that instance, a fool: what then are they, who for many years together experience its painful and ruinous effects, and yet run themselves continually into the same fatal snare? (*P. O.* xxiii. 19—35.) In every station of society this vice is pernicious: but it is most terrible in those possessed of authority. How tremendous is it, when a monarch, (who is the absolute arbiter of life and death to his subjects, and whose frown terrifies like the roaring of a lion,) inflames his passions and clouds his judgment by inebriation! In such a case, who can be safe? Whoever provokes him, sins against his own life: but who can be secure against provoking a tyrant, intoxicated with pride, with exaltation, and with excess? Yet to such abuses is power liable, as exercised by sinful men! We may then heartily pray, that JEHOVAH, whose infinite wisdom and holiness secure the perfectly beneficent use of his authority, may be the only absolute sovereign; and that all subordinate rulers may be restricted by prudent limitations: that they may have power to do good, but not evil; to be a terror to evil doers, to scatter and crush them, but not to terrify or oppress those who do well. Authority, directed by law, and exercised in wisdom, is honourable to them and beneficial to the community. Thus seated in the throne of judgment, and shewing a decided abhorrence of impiety and iniquity; they detect and frown upon the wicked, drive them from their presence, and exclude them from those important offices, which should be filled with such as, by their example, influence, and use of their authority, promote piety and righteousness.—No confidence can be placed in ungodly men: they are indeed ready enough each one "to proclaim his own goodness," and to make great professions of zeal, and readiness to venture or expend, in the cause of those whom they favour: but a faithful man, who can find? Numbers flatter the very persons, whom they ridicule and revile in the next company into which they go! Especially the divers weights and measures, and the false balances, which the Lord sees and abhors; and the innumerable falsehoods and cheating tricks in bargains, which are often even gloried in, shew how deceitful and faithless selfish man is. But the Lord our King beholds and is displeased; and "whoso provoketh him to anger, sinneth against his own soul." He will scatter and crush the wicked, and drive them from his presence into everlasting punishment. And, though none can say, "I have made my heart clean, I am pure from

CHAP. XXI.

All hearts are in the hands of the Lord, 1. The evil of pride, hypocrisy, injustice, sloth, voluptuous-

“my sin:” yet every believer is so far made pure by divine grace, that he walks in his integrity, rendering to God and to every man his due, to the best of his ability. And this conscientious adherence to equity proves the best method of rendering his children blessed after him.—Regard to the word of God keeps a man from various other sources of mischief. The pious man will count it his honour to cease from strife, and follow after peace: “but every fool will be meddling” to his ruin or vexation. The consistent Christian will labour and endure hardship in his seed-time for eternity, and likewise be diligent in proper measure about his secular business: he will watch against the love of sleep and indulgence: he will fear that poverty which comes through negligence: he will keep far from those ruinous connexions, which reduce the spendthrift to beggary; and improve the advantages, and guard against the temptations, of his situation and relations in life.—Wherever we turn our eyes, we discover conclusive proofs of human depravity. Even in accurately considering our children, while we may discern a striking difference in their tempers, endowments, and pursuits; we cannot but also lament the tendency to evil, in various directions, which every one of them manifests. But “every good and every perfect gift is from above:” and as the Lord gave them their senses and faculties, we should pray without ceasing, that he would bestow on them that special grace, by which they will be inclined and enabled to use all his other gifts in a proper manner. Our thankful praises also are his due, if he has, either in our own case or their’s, opened the eye, the ear, the understanding, and the heart, to the perception of his glory, in the person and salvation of Christ. We should desire for them, as well as for ourselves, the lips of knowledge, far more than gold and a multitude of jewels: that they may both be enabled “from the good treasure” in their own hearts to bring forth good things,” for the benefit of all around them; and also may possess understanding and address to draw forth from the hearts of other men, that useful instruction, which diffidence and timidity would have concealed. Finally, he who would know mankind, and discern the characters and purposes of those with whom he has to do, must first study his own heart: for self-knowledge, experience, and acquaintance with the word of God, confer the deepest discernment in this respect, and that which is the most capable of improvement to valuable purposes.

V. 17—30.

The real and permanent interest of princes is the same as that of their subjects: for wisdom, justice, truth, and mercy, securely uphold their thrones; while the tyrant continually feels that his totters under him. The regular and impartial administration of justice, a strict adherence to every engagement, and a delight in acts of clemency and mercy, as far as can consist with the vigour of good government, procure a monarch the love of his people; which is a surer protection than ten thousands of mercenary guards, who, by hope of better pay, may be induced to murder those whom they were hired to protect.—The

ness, falsehood, and cruelty to the poor: commendations of diligence, prudence, equity, and mercy: and the misery of domestick contention, 2—29. All events are at the Lord’s disposal, 30, 31.

evasion and equivocation, which men use with their consciences, respecting that part of their substance, which by precept, or by vow, belongs to the Lord or to the poor, but which is otherwise consumed; and the great ingenuity and care, with which they find excuses for the neglect of their evident duty; shew the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the human heart. It is thus, that they, who will be rich, fall into temptations and snares, and into divers foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown them in destruction and perdition. (*Note, 1 Tim. vi. 6—10.*)—Such bread of deceit may be sweet to man, and he may be greatly pleased with his unlawful gain or forbidden indulgences: but “afterwards his mouth will be filled with gravel,” and the anguish of his punishment will far exceed his momentary satisfaction. Thus estates are often acquired in a very rapid manner; and the successful cheat or plunderer thinks himself, and is thought by the foolish, very fortunate. But a wise man sees that a secret curse entwines round such prosperity, and will never permit either the owner or his family, to enjoy it with durable comfort.—Scriptural meekness, instead of exposing a man to insults, puts him under the protection of the Almighty. Pride and resentment indeed dispose men to say, “I will recompense evil:” and every fool will engage in quarrels to his own vexation or destruction. But the pious Christian conquers his passion, and avoids or ceases from strife, and when injured or endangered, he waits upon the Lord and spreads his case before him, and is preserved. When the conscience, that “candle of the LORD,” is enlightened according to the sacred word; a man by it daily searches the inward recesses of his imagination and affections, and is employed in regulating his whole temper and conduct according to it. Thus he learns that his “goings are of the LORD,” and that his way leadeth to eternal life. (*Note, John iii. 19—21.*) At the same time he is taught to shun both flatterers and slanderers; and those who revile, insult, and curse their parents, whom they are bound by every obligation to love, honour, and comfort to the utmost of their power. Nothing but misery and ruin can await such monsters in human form: and if severe afflictions and distresses do not bring them to deep repentance, their lamp will shortly be put out in obscure and eternal darkness. (*Note, Is. i. 10, 11.*)—But when the active vigour of youth is employed to useful purposes, it is indeed beautiful and honourable: and if pious and prudent young persons live to be old, they may hope, when no longer able to endure bodily labour, to become capable of advising and encouraging others, in the most important undertakings; and then their grey hairs will be more ornamental, than even their youthful comeliness and agility ever were. For every purpose is established by counsel, and war itself is rendered successful by good advice, even more than by valour.—But it must be said to great numbers, “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” They are still in love with the sleep of sin, and shut their eyes on the brink of ruin: nay, they are making war against God, by their impiety, and reproaches and persecutions of his people: and

THE ^aking's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, ^bas the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

2 Every way of a man *is* ^cright in his own eyes; but ^dthe LORD pondereth the hearts.

3 To ^edo justice and judgment *is* more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

4 ^fAn ^ghigh look, and a proud heart, ^hand the ⁱplowing of the wicked, *is* sin.

^a xvi. 1. 9. xx. 24. Ezra vii. 27, 28. Neh. i. 11. ii. 4. Ps. cv. 25. cvi. 46. Dan. iv. 35. Acts vii. 10. ^b Ps. lxxiv. 15. xciii. 4. cxiv. 3. 5. Is. xliii. 19. xlv. 27. Rev. xvi. 4. 12. ^c xvi. 2. 25. xx. 6. xxx. 12. Ps. xxxvi. 2. Luke xviii. 11, 12. Gal. vi. 3. Jam. i. 22. ^d xxiv. 12. 1 Sam. xvi. 7. Jer. xvii. 10. Luke xvi. 15. John ii. 24, 25. Rev. ii. 23. ^e xv. 8. 1 Sam. xv. 22. Ps. i. 8. Is. i. 11—17. Jer. vii. 21—23. ^f vi. 17. viii. 13. xxx. 13. Ps. x. 4. Is. ii. 11. 17. iii. 16. Luke xviii. 14. 1 Pet. v. 5. ^g 27. xv. 8. Rom. xiv. 23. ^h Heb. *Haughtiness* ⁱ Or, *light*.

5 The ^hthoughts of the diligent *tend* only to plenteousness; but ⁱof every one *that is* hasty only to want.

6 The ^kgetting of treasures by a lying tongue *is* a vanity tossed to and fro of them that ^lseek death.

7 The ^mrobbery of the wicked shall ⁿdestroy them; ^obecause they refuse to do judgment.

8 The ^pway of man *is* froward and strange; ^qbut *as for* the pure, his work *is* right.

^h x. 4. xliii. 4. xxvii. 23—27. Eph. iv. 26. 1 Thes. iv. 11. 12. ⁱ xiv. 29. xx. 21. xxviii. 22. ^k x. 2. xliii. 11. xx. 14. 21. xxii. 8. xxx. 8. Jer. xvii. 11. 1 Tim. vi. 9. 10. Tit. i. 11. 2 Pet. ii. 3. ^l viii. 36. Ez. xviii. 31. ^m i. 18. 19. x. 6. xxii. 22, 23. Ps. vii. 16. ix. 16. Is. i. 23, 24. Jer. vii. 9—11. 15. Ez. xxii. 13, 14. Mic. iii. 9—12. ⁿ Heb. *saw them, or, dwell with them.* Zech. v. 14. ^o Gen. vi. 5, 6. 12. Job xv. 14—16. ^p Ps. xiv. 2, 3. Ec. vii. 29. ix. 3. 1 Cor. iii. 3. Eph. ii. 2, 3. Tit. iii. 3. ^q xv. 26. xxx. 12. Dan. xii. 10. Matt. v. 8. xii. 33. Acts xv. 9. Tit. i. 15. ii. 14. iii. 5. 1 Pet. i. 22, 23. 1 John ii. 29. iii. 3.

what can be expected in so ill-advised a contest? But let us declare war against the world, sin, and Satan: let us do it with good advice, counting our cost, and forming an alliance with the Lord, whose power alone can render us victorious: let us enlist under the Captain of the Lord's host, and put on his whole armour: let us implicitly obey his orders and follow his steps: let us neither make peace nor truce with our foes, nor give them any quarter: if we be wounded or baffled in any conflict, let us apply to the Lord for healing and assistance, and renew the battle with increased watchfulness and vigour: and let us still wait on him, and he will save us; and will at length make us more than conquerors, and give us the crown of glory.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXI. V. 1. The Lord formed the rivers, and regulates their courses as he pleases: yet the water runs according to its own nature, without any force put upon it. Thus he influences the thoughts and determinations of the human mind, to suit his own wise and holy purposes, without interfering with the exercise of our natural powers, as rational and accountable agents: and the hearts of the mightiest or most absolute monarchs are as much under his controul, as those of the meanest persons. 'Their wills are subject to the great Lord of all, who diverts them as easily from what they intend, or inclines them to that which they resolve against; as the gardener draws the streams of water through the trenches he cuts, unto what part of the ground he thinks good.' *Bp. Patrick.* (Notes, xvi. 1. 9. xx. 24. Ezra i. 1—4. vii. 27, 28. Neh. i. 5—11, v. 7. Ps. lxxv. 10. xciii. 3, 4.)

V. 2. (See on Note, xvi. 2.)—'For the weightiness, I suppose, of the matter, and the proneness of men to flatter themselves, and not to judge sincerely of their own actions; this is here again repeated.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 3. Notes, xv. 8, 9. 1 Sam. xv. 22. Is. 10—20. Hos. vi. 6. Mic. vi. 6—8. Matt. xxiii. 23, 24. Mark xii. 28—34, v. 33.

V. 4. "A haughty look, and a proud heart, which is the light of the wicked," (that is the thing whereby he is guided,) "is sin." *Old Version.*—The word rendered *plowing* more frequently signifies a lamp, or light; (*Marg.*) and it is difficult to determine in which sense it is here used.—'A lofty look and a proud heart go generally together, that is, the countenance shews the disposition of the mind. ... "The lamp ... of the wicked is sin."

'The lamp signifies that which men make the rule or guide of their actions. In this sense the law of the Lord is the lamp of the righteous; but the lamp of the wicked is sin.' *Grey.*—'The sentence may be inverted in this manner, "Sin is the pride, the ambition, the glory, and "joy," (or the business,) "of wicked men:" that upon which they value themselves, and for which they think themselves brave fellows, &c. is that they dare do wickedly.' *Bp. Patrick.*—But our translation of this clause admits of an important meaning. The ungodly man does not perform a single action, *because it is the will of God, out of submission to his authority, or from a desire to glorify him:* and therefore even the plowing of his ground, in order to grow rich, and to have what he may spend upon his lusts, is sinful, as to its motive and object, and the spirit in which he does it. (Notes, vi. 16—19. viii. 13. Is. ii. 10—18. iii. 16, 17. Rom. xiv. 18—23, v. 23.)

V. 5. Those, who are steadily diligent, employ foresight and contrivance, as well as labour, in order to provide for what they may want hereafter; and generally they are prosperous. But if a man use some industry, yet do not consider how to conduct his affairs; but goes about his work hastily, or engages in rash projects, or undertakes more than he is capable of managing, as unduly eager after the world, and in haste to be rich; he acts, as if his thoughts were employed in devising how to reduce himself to poverty. (Notes, x. 4. xliii. 4. xx. 21. xxvii. 23—27. xxviii. 20. 22.)

V. 6. Schemes of growing rich, speedily and easily, by gaming of any kind, by fraud and imposition in trade, or by lies, perjuries, or flattery, are learned by wicked men from each other, and are handed about as great mysteries and valuable discoveries. But they are vain and foolish projects: wealth thus gotten is vanity and vexation; and those who get it, act as if intentionally seeking for death and perdition. (Notes, viii. 36. xliii. 11. xx. 14. 21. Jer. xvii. 11.)

V. 7. Notes, 3. i. 10—19. xxii. 22, 23. Jer. vii. 8—11. xxii. 13—19. Ez. xviii. 10—13. xxii. 13, 14. Zech. v. 1—4. Mal. iii. 5, 6.—*Destroy.*] Or, *Terrify.* (*Marg.*) 'He meaneth this chiefly of judges and princes, which leave that vocation where unto God hath called them, and powl' (or exact from) 'their subjects to maintain their lusts.' (Notes, 1. Is. i. 21—24. Jer. v. 28—31. Mic. iii. 8—12.)

V. 8. The various paths of ungodliness and iniquity,

9 *It is* ^a better to dwell in a corner of the house-top, than with a ^{*} brawling woman in a wide house.

10 The ^r soul of the wicked desireth evil: his neighbour [†] findeth ^s no favour in his eyes.

11 When ^t the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise; and ^u when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.

xix. 25. Num. xvi. 34. Deut. xiii. 11. xxi. 21. Ps. lxiv. 7—9. Acts v. 5. 11—14. 1 Cor. x. 6—11. Heb. ii. 1—3. x. 23, 29. Rev. xi. 13. u i. 5. ix. 9. xv. 14. xviii. 1. 15.

into which men turn aside, are so many proofs of the forwardness and rebellion of the human heart; and of the blindness and folly of the human understanding, which are strange and surprising. But the few, who by divine grace are true and upright in heart, will shew it, by their works being right, i. e. according to the straight rule of God's word.—'Besides that sense which I have represented, the words are capable of another. ... As the ['] man is, so are his works: a man of tricks will act ['] strangely, (quite different from all the rules whereby we ['] ought to govern ourselves :) but an honest man you may ['] know where to have; for he acts conformable to the laws ['] of righteousness.' *Bp. Patrick.* The *honest man* in this paraphrase, must mean a *truly pious person*, as distinguished from all ungodly men: and thus the interpretation comes nearly to the same thing. (Notes, xxx. 11—14. Gen. vi. 5. Job xv. 14—16. Ps. cxxv. 4, 5. Ec. vii. 29. ix. 1—3, v. 3. Jer. xvii. 9, 10. Dan. xii. 10. Matt. v. 8. Tit. ii. 11—14.)

V. 9. (See on Note, xix. 13.) The most solitary, inconvenient, and exposed dwelling, is preferable to a large and commodious house and a great family, where the comforts of social life are embittered by contention; especially the contention of a passionate and clamorous wife. (*Marg.*) Such maxims are especially intended to caution men, in respect of the choice which they make in this important matter; and not, for lucre of money or other worldly motives, to risk such a calamity as no wealth can counterbalance. (xxv. 24. Notes, 19. xii. 4. xv. 17, 18. xvii. 1. xxvii. 15, 16.)

V. 10. The selfish desires of a wicked man's heart naturally lead to baseness in his conduct. He is intent upon gratifying his avarice, ambition, lust, or revenge; and the reputation, interest, peace, connexions, nay the life or soul of his neighbour, seem to him but secondary considerations: he is therefore ready to seduce, defraud, libel, oppress, or even rob and murder, when he can do it with impunity, and render it subservient to his purposes. No one can be safe who stands in his way: for he loves his selfish gratifications better than even friend or brother; so that none must expect to find favour in his eyes, when they interfere with his base pursuits. (Notes, 13. xii. 12. 1 Sam. xxv. 7—11. Ps. xxxvi. 3, 4. lii. 2—4. Jam. v. 1—6.)

V. 11. (Note, xix. 25.) This verse may mean, that the simple, (or, such as are incautious, inexperienced, and liable to be deluded by profane scoffers, and not avowed and hardened in vice and impiety,) will not only be taught wisdom by the punishment of the wicked, but also by observing how wise men profit by instruction.—“When

12 The righteous *man* ^x wisely considers the house of the wicked; but *God* ^y overthroweth the wicked for their wickedness.

13 Whoso ^z stoppeth his ears ^a at the cry of the poor, he also shall ^b cry himself, but shall not be heard.

14 A ^c gift ^d in secret pacifieth anger, and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.

9. Jer. xxxiv. 16, 17. Zech. vii. 9—13. Matt. vi. 14. vii. 2. xviii. 30—35. b See on i. 28. Ps. xviii. 41. Luke xiii. 25. c xvii. 8. 23. xviii. 16. xix. 6. Gen. xxxii. 20. xliii. 11. 1 Sam. xxv. 35. d Matt. vi. 3, 4.

“the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and “when the wise is instructed, he” (the simple,) “receiveth knowledge.” He profits by the example of the scorner's punishment, and by that of the wise man's teachableness; or prosperity, for so the word may signify. (Notes, ix. 7—9. Num. xvi. 28—34. Deut. xiii. 6—11, v. 11. xxi. 18—21. Ps. lxiv. 7—9. Acts v. 1—11. Rom. xvi. 17—20. 1 Tim. v. 19, 20.)

V. 12. Some explain this verse to mean, that righteous magistrates carefully search the houses of wicked men, to detect their crimes, that they may punish them. As we read it, the meaning is, that the righteous make a proper estimate of the prosperity of ungodly men, and observe the course of Providence respecting them, expecting that God will speedily overthrow them for their wickedness. (Notes, xi. 3—6. xiv. 32. Job v. 3—5. viii. 11—19. Ps. xxxvii. 35, 36. cvii. 33—43, v. 43. Hos. xiv. 9. Hab. ii. 9—14. 1 Cor. x. 1—12. 2 Pet. ii. 4—9. Jude 5—8.)

V. 13. Those who oppress the poor, by beating down their wages till they cannot earn the necessities of life, and then refuse to hear their complaints; and they who will not relieve, according to their ability, such as cry to them in distress; and magistrates who neglect to do the poor justice against their rich oppressors; “evidently stop “their ears at the cry of the poor.”—The number of beggars in our streets, or vagrants in our villages, many of whom are poor through idleness and drunkenness, or are mere impostors in their apparent distress; and who spend all which they can extort by pathetick cries, upon their vicious indulgences; render an *apparent stopping of the ears at the cry of the poor* in some cases absolutely unavoidable. Certainly those who are *known* to be honest and industrious, and in real distress, have by far a preferable claim to assistance: few are able to contribute to both classes: and doubtless discretion should direct the exercise of charity; for every shilling a man can spare is so much committed to him, to be made the best use of which he can.—But he, who selfishly and unfeelingly disregards the sufferings of the poor in general, without contributing his portion to relieve them, may now mock God with hypocritical prayers, but he will not be heard; and he may at length cry for a drop of water to cool his tongue, and not obtain even that small alleviation of his misery. “For he “shall have judgment without mercy, who hath shewed no “mercy.” (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, i. 24—31, v. 28. xxviii. 27. Is. lviii. 8—12. Jer. xxxiv. 15—17. Zech. vii. 8—13. Matt. xviii. 20—35.)

V. 14. (See on Notes, xvii. 8. 23. xviii. 16. xix. 6.)

e Job xxix. 12—
17. Ps. xl. 8.
cxii. 1. cxix. 16.
92. Ec. iii. 12.
Is. lxiv. 5. John
iv. 34. Rom. vii.
22.

f 12. v. 20. Matt.
vii. 23. xiii. 41.
42. Luke xiii.
27, 28.

g Ps. cxxv. 5.
Zeph. i. 6. John
iii. 19, 20. Heb.
vi. 4—6. x. 26.
27. 38. 2 Pet. ii.
21, 22. 1 John
ii. 19.

h ii. 18, 19. vii.
26, 27. ix. 18.
Eph. ii. 1. Jude
12.

i 20. v. 10, 11.
xxiii. 21. Luke
xv. 13—16. xvi.
24, 25. 1 Tim.
v. 6. 2 Tim. iii.
4.

* Heb. sport.

k xi. 8. Is. xliii.
3, 4. liii. 4, 5.
lv. 8, 9. 1 Pet. iii. 18.
land of the desert.

15 *It is* ^e joy to the just to do judgment; but ^f destruction *shall be* to the workers of iniquity.

16 The man, that ^g wandereth out of the way of understanding, shall ^h remain in the congregation of the dead.

17 He that ⁱ loveth ^{*} pleasure *shall be* a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich.

18 The ^k wicked *shall be* a ransom for the righteous, and the transgressor for the upright.

19 *It is* [†] better to dwell in the [†] wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman.

1 See on 9. Ps. lv. 6, 7. cxx. 5, 6. Jer. ix. 2. † Heb.

20 *There is* ^m a treasure to be desired, and ⁿ oil in the dwelling of the wise; ^o but a foolish man spendeth it up.

21 He ^p that followeth after righteousness and mercy, ^q findeth life, righteousness, and honour.

22 A ^r wise man scaleth the city of the mighty, and casteth down the strength of the confidence thereof.

23 Whoso ^s keepeth his mouth and his tongue, keepeth his soul from troubles.

24 Proud and ^t haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in ^t proud wrath.

t vi. 17. xvi. 18. xviii. 12. xix. 29. Esth. iii. 5, 6. Ec. vii. 8, 9. Matt. ii. 16. † Heb. the wrath of pride.

m x. 22. xv. 6. Ps.
cxii. 3. Ec. v.
19. vii. 11. x.
19. Matt. vi.
19, 20.

n Ps. xxiii. 5. Jer.
xli. 8. Matt.
xxv. 3, 4.

o Matt. xxv. 8.
Luke xv. 14.
xvi. 1. 19—25.

p xv. 9. Is. li. 1.
Hos. vi. 3. Matt.
v. 6. Rom. xiv.
19. Phil. iii. 12.

q 1 Thes. v. 16.
1 Tim. vi. 1.
2 Tim. ii. 22.

r Heb. xii. 14.
q xxii. 4. Rom. ii.
7—10. 1 Cor. xv.
58. 2 Tim. iv. 7.

s 8. 1 Pet. i. 7.
r 2 Sam. xx. 16—
22. Ec. vii. 19.
ix. 13—18.

t x. 19. xii. 13.
xiii. 3. xvii. 27.
28. xviii. 21.
Jam. i. 26. iii.
2—13.

† Heb.

Presents, conferred to induce men to deviate from impartial justice and sincerity, must always be abominable: but a gift made to one, who has taken offence and is greatly exasperated, may be a proper and effectual means of subduing his resentment, and preventing discord; as it may appear a testimony of respect, and dispose him to conclude that the offence was not intended, or that the giver is sensible of his fault. But then it must be the gift of something which is known to be acceptable, and it must be presented with prudence and secrecy, as conceding the superiority, and not as making an ostentation of generosity.

V. 15. The righteous delight in justice and equity; good magistrates take pleasure in the conscientious discharge of their important duties; and good members of the community rejoice, when justice is impartially executed: but the workers of iniquity are alarmed at such proceedings, as tending to the destruction which awaits their evil deeds. (Notes, Job xxix. 12—17. Ps. xl. 6—8, v. 8. cxii. 1. cxix. 92. 111. Is. lxiv. 5. Matt. vii. 21—23.)

V. 16. 'He that will not live by those wise laws, which God hath prescribed him, but follows the conduct of his own foolish lusts and passions, shall ... be sent down to hell; and there confined to the company of the old giants, who giving themselves over to debauched courses, were swept away with a deluge.' Bp. Patrick.—(Marg. Ref. —Notes, ii. 18. ix. 13—18, v. 18.)—Apostates seem especially intended. (Ps. cxxv. 4, 5.)

V. 17. Addictedness to worldly and jovial mirth and feasting, and sensual indulgence, is inconsistent with a man's advantage and permanent comfort, both here and hereafter. (Notes, 20. xxiii. 20, 21. 29—35. Ec. ii. 1—3. Luke xv. 13—16. P. O. 11—16. Notes, xvi. 24—26. 1 Tim. v. 5, 6. 1 Pet. iv. 3—5. Rev. xviii. 4—8, v. 7.)

V. 18. The Lord ransoms his people from calamities, by punishing the wicked. He ransomed Israel by desolating Egypt; he slew Sennacherib's army, to ransom Hezekiah and Jerusalem; in short, he so values the righteous, that when their welfare requires it, he gives up any number of the wicked to destruction.—'God shall cause that to fall on their own heads, which they intended against the just; by delivering the just, and putting the

'wicked in their places.' (Notes, xi. 8. Is. xliii. 3, 4. liii. 4—6.)

V. 19. (See on Note, 9.) 'I had rather dwell with a lion or a dragon, than to keep house with a wicked woman.' Ecclesiasticus xxv. 16.

V. 20. That plenty, which is obtained by prudence, industry, and frugality, is a desirable treasure: and it may generally be found in the dwellings of the wise and righteous, though mean and homely. But the extravagant and self-indulgent spend even their ample revenues in riot and excess, and thus run in debt, and involve themselves in extreme difficulties. (Notes, 17. x. 22. xv. 6. Ps. cxii. 2, 3. Ec. v. 18—20. x. 16—19. Luke xv. 13—16.)—Oil was one chief production of Canaan, and seems to be put for all things needful and comfortable. (Marg. Ref. n.)

V. 21. 'He that makes it his business to be good, not contenting himself merely with doing no harm, but greedily laying hold on all occasions to exercise justice and mercy, shall lead a most happy life; ... and be highly esteemed, honoured, and praised.' Bp. Patrick.—The marginal references shew, that infinitely greater blessings are implied, though these are not excluded. (Notes, xii. 28. xv. 8, 9, v. 9. Is. li. 1—3, v. 1. 7, 8. Hos. vi. 1—3. Matt. v. 6. Rom. ii. 7—11. Heb. xii. 14.)

V. 22. Wisdom is more efficacious than force. A wise man, by ingenuity, prudence, circumspection, and perseverance, will surmount the greatest difficulties; even those which resemble "the scaling of the city of the mighty, and the casting down of the strength of the confidence thereof." (Notes, 2 Sam. xx. 14—19. Ec. ix. 13—18.)

V. 23. Notes, x. 19. xii. 13. xiii. 3. xvii. 27, 28. xviii. 21. Jam. i. 26.

V. 24. 'A proud and haughty person, who may well be called a scorner, proceeds furiously and unsufferably in all that he doeth. ... He is puffed up with a great conceit of himself; ... he regards neither God nor man; ... he cannot endure the least opposition, nor do any thing with moderation; but being easily enraged, with insolent fierceness and cruelty, proceeds against those who cross his designs.' Bp. Patrick. (Notes, xiii. 20. xv. 17, 18. Ec. vii. 8, 9.)

^u vi. 6—11. xii. 24. 27. xiii. 4. xv. 19. xix. 24. xx. 4. xxii. 13. xxiv. 30—34. xxvi. 13. 16. Matt. xxv. 26. 25 The "desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour.

^x Acts xx. 33—35. 1 Thes. ii. 5—9. ^y Ps. xxxvii. 26. 26 He * coveteth greedily all the day long: but ^y the righteous giveth and spareth not.

^z xv. 8. xxviii. 9. 1 Sam. xiii. 12. 13. xv. 21—23. Ps. 1. 8—13. Is. i. 11—16. lxvii. 3. Jer. vi. 20. vii. 11. 12. Am. v. 21, 22. 27 The ^z sacrifice of the wicked is abomination: how much more, *when* he bringeth it * with a wicked mind!

^a vi. 19. xix. 5. 9. xxv. 18. Ex. xxiii. 1. 28 * A [†] false witness shall perish; * Heb. in wickedness. Matt. xxiii. 14. ^a vi. 19. xix. 5. 9. xxv. 18. Ex. xxiii. 1. Deut. xix. 16—19. [†] Heb. witness of lies.

V. 25. The unsatisfied desires of the slothful wear him out: or, "refusing to labour," he is tempted to plunder, and so comes to an untimely end. 'He thinketh to live 'by wishing and desiring all things; but will take no pains 'to get ought.' (Notes, vi. 6—11. xii. 24. 27. xiii. 4. xv. 19. xix. 24.)

V. 26. 'Nor is there any measure of his desires: ... 'but he that is diligent and honest, is so far from desiring, 'much less stealing his neighbour's goods, that he freely 'gives away his own, and hath not the less thereby, but 'still enough to spare.' *Bp. Patrick*. Some make this a distinct maxim. 'The unrighteous lusteth all the day after evil things: but the righteous pitieth, and sheweth compassion without sparing.' (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 27. (See on Note, xv. 8, 9.) When the sacrifice of the wicked man was intentionally brought, as a cloke of his iniquities, that under profession of sanctity he might perpetrate them without exciting suspicion; or as a proud attempt to pay his own debts, or merit the favour of God; or to compensate for the neglect of judgment and mercy, and to purchase an indulgence or dispensation to commit his favourite sin; or as a step to worldly preferment; it would be most emphatically "an abomination to God." (Notes, Jer. vii. 5—11. Matt. xxiii. 5—7. 14.)

V. 28. (Notes, xiv. 25. xix. 9. Deut. xix. 15—21.)—He who testifies only to what he himself has heard, or is fully acquainted with, will persevere in his testimony, and gain more and more credit, even if at first neglected. (Notes, xii. 18, 19. 2 Cor. i. 17—20. Tit. iii. 8.)

V. 29. 'All the endeavours of a man resolvedly wicked, 'is to grow so impudent, that he may not blush at what he 'doeth; nor be moved in the least by any man's admonitions or reproofs: but a man sincerely virtuous ... examines and censures his own actions, if they be amiss; 'and makes it all his care so to live, that he may not be 'ashamed of what he doeth.' *Bp. Patrick*. (Notes, xi. 5, 6. xxviii. 14. xxix. 1. Jer. v. 3—6, v. 3. vi. 13—15. xlv. 15—18. Ez. xviii. 28. Jam. i. 22—25.)

V. 30. Whatever appears to be wisdom, understanding, or counsel, but is employed in forwarding sinful projects, will in the end be proved to have been madness and folly: and those plans, which have been laid with the most consummate policy, and are conducted with the utmost discretion, cannot but be frustrated, when they run counter to the purposes of God. 'They all signify nothing, if 'they oppose the counsels and decrees of heaven.' *Bp. Patrick*. (Notes, xix. 21. Gen. 1. 20. Ps. lxxvi. 10. Is. viii. 9, 10. xlv. 10, 11. Acts iv. 23—28.)

but ^b the man that heareth, speaketh constantly. ^b xii. 19. Acts xii. 15. 2 Cor. i. 17—20. iv. 13. Tit. iii. 8.

29 A wicked man ^c hardeneth his face; but *as for* the upright, ^d he [†] directeth his way. ^c xxviii. 14. xxix. 1. Jer. iii. 2, 3. v. 3. viii. 12. xlv. 16, 17. ^d xi. 5. 1 Thes. iii. 11.

30 *There is* ^e no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the LORD. ^e Or, *considereth*. Ps. cxix. 59. Ez. xviii. 28. Hag. i. 5. 7. ii. 15. 18, 19. Luke xv. 17.

31 The ^e horse is prepared against the day of battle; ^g but [†] safety is of the LORD. ^e xix. 21. Is. vii. 5—7. viii. 9, 10. xiv. 27. xlv. 10, 11. Jon. i. 13. Acts iv. 27, 28. ^g Ps. v. 39. 1 Pet. ii. 8. ^f Ps. xx. 7. xxxiii. 17, 18. cxlvii. 10. Ec. ix. 11. ^g Or, *victory*. Ps. cxliv. 10. *marg.*

v. 39. 1 Pet. ii. 8. ^f Ps. xx. 7. xxxiii. 17, 18. cxlvii. 10. Ec. ix. 11. ^g Or, *victory*. Ps. cxliv. 10. *marg.*

V. 31. Warlike preparations, however formidable, (of which the horse seems here to be mentioned as the chief,) are no more effectual against God's purposes, than wisdom and counsel. The security and salvation of those whom he favours, are effected without them; and the destruction of his enemies cannot by them be prevented. (Notes, Deut. xvii. 16. xx. 1—4. Josh. xi. 4—6. Ps. iii. 6—8. xx. 6—8. lxviii. 19, 20. cxliv. 10. cxlvii. 10, 11.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

As we are extremely prone to confide in second causes, or to perplex ourselves about them, we need repeated admonitions, that God is our great first Cause of all. Faith rests on this truth: and the believer, in proportion to the strength of his faith, perceiving that the Lord rules every heart, seeks to have his own heart directed in his fear and love; and then relies on God to restrain, incline, or change the hearts of others, as may best prevent their injuring him, or dispose them to help and favour him. Should then some potentate menace vengeance against him; instead of seeking to appease his wrath by sinful compliances, he will make "the name of the LORD his strong tower," and by fervent prayer seek to him to dispose the prince's heart to lenity. (Notes, Gen. xxxii. 6—12. 24—30. xxxiii. 4.) On the other hand, should he need the countenance and assistance of the king or his nobles, he would make his first application to Him who has their hearts in his hand. (Note, Neh. i. 5—11, v. 11.) And this carries him through the greatest difficulties and improbabilities. For prayer can unlock all gates, divide rivers and seas, and even remove mountains; when it engages the arm of the Almighty, to support the cause, or prosper the measures, of his servants. If we then profess to be of that favoured company, we ought most of all to fear, lest "our way should be right in "our own eyes," but wrong in his sight, "who pondereth "the hearts." Here is the preciousness of true knowledge: for "the man, that wandereth out of the way of under- "standing," and remains in ignorance or embraces error, because he hates the truth and loves sin, "must remain "in the congregation of the dead." Through ignorance and error, poor wretched sinners are rendered arrogant and vain-glorious: their high looks, and proud hearts are their sin and condemnation: and while they glory in the management or success of their temporal concerns; they seldom consider, that the covetous, ambitious, or sensual motives, by which they are actuated, render the employments, which are most lawful in themselves, acts of selfishness and disobedience, as performed by them. "To

CHAP. XXII.

The worth of a good name, and the dependence of both rich and poor on God, 1, 2. Commendations of prudence, humility, piety, charity, and the proper tuition of children; and cautions against frowardness,

iniquity, sloth, intimacy with bad women, and oppression, 3—16. An address to the reader, calling his attention to wisdom; again exhorting him to avoid oppression, friendship with angry men, suretiship, and removing ancient land-marks; and shewing the advantages of diligence, 17—29.

“do justice and judgment are more acceptable to the **“LORD,”** than any sacrifices we can offer; though it does not supersede the necessity of the Redeemer’s sacrifice of inestimable value, or of our entire dependence on it.—He, who is taught according to the word of God, will escape many ruinous extremes. He will not desire those riches which are got by lies or robbery: for however ungodly men toss this vanity to and fro, and please themselves with it; yet he knows that in so doing they seek death, and that “destruction will be to the workers of iniquity,” who “refuse to do judgment.” He wisely considers the splendid houses of prosperous sinners; and, foreseeing their overthrow, he desires and envies nothing they possess. He would rather deny his vanity a useless ornament, or his appetite an injurious or needless gratification, or even be censured for not treating his rich friends according to their expectation, than be condemned for “stopping his ears at the cry of the poor:” and as he cries and hopes for mercy from God, he dares not embezzle or waste that, which was entrusted to him for the relief of such as are distressed; lest he should call for mercy from God, and not be heard.—The judicious Christian will also avoid all those hasty schemes, by which many ruin themselves. He will study, by frugality and industry, to keep out of temptation to mean dependence or shuffling dishonesty; and he will be ready to labour, “that he may have to give to him that needeth.”—But, after every warning, wicked men sin on, without fear or shame, getting all they can by their injustice, and spending it upon their lusts; and shewing no mercy or favour to their neighbours, because of the evil which their souls desire. So froward and strange is the way of man, as left to himself! so different from that of “the pure, whose work is right!” Hence it is, that while the righteous delight in justice and mercy; the workers of iniquity are not only determined to go on in the way of destruction, but shew scorn and enmity against those, who “run not with them to the same excess of riot” and impiety! Nay, their anger and hatred are often more vehement against those who “testify of them that their works are evil,” than against such as behave most injuriously and deceitfully towards them: so that, while in the latter case, a few well-timed and acceptable gifts will pacify their strongest wrath; in the former the most persevering, disinterested, and liberal kindness is insufficient to conciliate them! When sinners arrive at this pitch of hardened impiety; it seems almost desirable, though awful in itself, that some punishment may overtake them, which may make the simple wise enough to shun their destructive paths, to imitate the wise, who hearken to instruction, and to escape the miseries which scorers must undergo. Thus they will become happy in themselves, and blessings in the families to which they belong; and, instead of driving their nearest relatives into retirement or bad company to escape contention; make numbers ready to say, “Happy are” even “thy servants which stand continually before thee,

“and hear thy wisdom,” share thy amiable society and kindness, and witness thy edifying example.’

V. 17—31.

He who has a well grounded assurance that God is on his side, needs not “fear what man can do to him;” for there is “no wisdom, nor understanding, nor counsel against the **LORD**;” nor can any power reach those whom he protects. And though “the horse may be prepared against the day of battle,” and various means may be used to secure our persons and habitations; yet “safety is only from the **LORD**.” But in vain do men expect to please a holy and omniscient God by such formal services, as the unconverted, while persisting in their evil courses, can present; even when they offer them in a kind of ignorant sincerity. How greatly then must he abhor the most costly oblations, or abundant devotions, of those who are consciously hypocrites; and who employ these methods, with a most wicked mind, to mask their covetousness, oppression, or secret licentiousness, and to blind the eyes of their fellow creatures!—True repentance, and reliance on the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, always influence men to “follow after righteousness and mercy” in their own conduct. Such believers, and such only, “find life, righteousness, and honour.” They “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all other things are added to them.”—Thus they generally partake of the desirable treasures found in the dwellings of the wise; which they obtain with credit and a good conscience, enjoy with gratitude and temperance, and use to the best of purposes. To this plenteousness their thoughts, as well as labours, tend. They desire, in submission to Providence, to have things needful and comfortable for themselves and families, and to be enabled to “use hospitality without grudging.” They will not therefore spend all on themselves as foolish men do; being aware that those, who love pleasure and indulge their appetites, will always, however large their incomes, be too poor to do much good to their indigent neighbours. Though they do not account riches worthy of being obtained by iniquity, or of being idolized: yet they consider them as too good to be wasted in revellings, banquetings, and other extravagant expenses: (*Note, Ec. x. 16—19, v. 19:*) and, though not disposed to look on honest poverty, as an intolerable evil; they dread and shun the disgraceful and ruinous “desires of the slothful, whose hands refuse to labour,” even when “he coveteth greedily all the day long.” By the due government of their appetites and passions, and by keeping their tongues, they preserve their souls from numberless troubles, to which the sensual, the passionate, and the loquacious expose themselves: and, learning wisdom from its very source, they are enabled to accomplish important designs, for their own good and that of others, in a quiet and unexceptionable manner; while the “proud and haughty scorers, who deal in proud wrath,” render

A GOOD * name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and * loving favour rather than silver and gold.

2 The ^b rich and poor meet together: ^c the LORD is the Maker of them all.

3 A ^d prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but ^e the simple pass on, and are punished.

a 1 Kings i. 47. Ec. vii. 1. Luke x. 20. Phil. iv. 3. Heb. xi. 39. * Or, favour is better than, &c. Acts vii. 10. b xxix. 13. 1 Sam. ii. 7. Ps. xlix. 1. 2. Luke xvi. 19. 20. 1 Cor. xii. 21. Jam. ii. 2—5. c xiv. 31. Job xxxi. 15. xxxiv. 19. d xiv. 16. xxvii. 12. Ex. ix. 20. 21. 1s. xxvi. 20, 21. Matt. xxiv. 15—18. 1 Thes. v. 2—6. Heb. vi. 18. xi. 7. e vii. 7. 22, 23. ix. 16—18. xxix. 1.

themselves hated and dreaded; and with all their violence, (even when possessed of sagacity and power,) seldom prosper in their enterprises. For the great Disposer of all events so orders it, that “the wicked is a ransom for the “righteous; and the transgressor for the upright.”—The consistent Christian is always a lover of peace; and ready to give up any thing, except his duty, for the sake of it. He will not therefore, either in private, or in a court of justice, be a false witness: but if called to bear his testimony, he must “speak constantly,” and declare what he knows; whatever offence it may give, or however it may tend to the condemnation of the guilty. Much more then, must the minister of the gospel “speak constantly” the whole of his message; whatever ridicule, anger, and obloquy he may incur by his faithfulness, from proud and haughty scorners; for in this case especially, “a false witness shall perish;” and generally he occasions the ruin of multitudes along with him.—That state of the judgment and heart, which is produced by Christian principles, will never permit a man to risk the want or the loss of domestick peace, for the sake of acquiring an accession of wealth: knowing that it is better to dwell in a garret or a desert, than “with a brawling woman in a “wide house.” But should his patience be exercised by such a painful trial, he will shun embittered contention, by retiring into any corner, or into the fields and deserts, that he may pour out his heart before God, rather than run into temptation, into vain company, excess, or the society of other women. Nay, he will not despair but that, by meekness, prudence, patience, firmness, and persevering kindness; and by constant prayer to him who has all hearts in his hand; the trial may at length be removed, or at least its worst effects prevented. For as every thing lawful may be rendered a part of a believer’s duty, so every event may subserve his growth in grace: whilst even the lawful and needful employments of ungodly men become their sin; and their best comforts tend to their increasing condemnation.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXII. V. 1. A reputation for wisdom, piety, and integrity, is far more valuable than great riches; and the loving favour which it procures, renders a man more respected than wealth can do: and whilst affluence commonly tempts the possessor to give a loose to his inclinations; an established character is a perpetual restraint, and renders a man doubly watchful against every kind of impropriety. To live also respected and beloved in the family and neighbourhood, where a man spends most of his days, tends far more to his enjoyment of life, than treasures of gold and silver, with contempt and aversion can

4 [†] By [†] humility, and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life.

5 [‡] Thorns and snares are in the way of the froward: ^h he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them.

6 [‡] Train up ⁱ a child in ⁱ the way he should go; and ^k when he is old, he will not depart from it.

† Heb. The reward of humility, &c. f iii. 16. xxi. 21. Ps. xxxiv. 9, 10. cxii. 1—3. 1s. xxxiii. 6. lvii. 15. Matt. vi. 33. 1 Tim. iv. 8. Jam. iv. 6. 10. g xiii. 15. xv. 19. Josh. xxiii. 13. Ps. xi. 6. xviii. 26, 27. h xiii. 3. xvi. 17. xix. 16. Ps. xci. 1. 1 John v. 18. i Jude 20, 21. ‡ Or, Catechize. i Gen. xviii. 19. Deut. iv. 9. vi. 7. Eph. vi. 4. 2 Tim. iii. 15. § Heb. his way. k 1 Sam. i. 28. ii. 26. xii. 2, 3.

do. Above all it enables him to do more good, than if he possessed riches without a good name: it gives peculiar influence, and adds energy to all his counsels, exhortations, and measures; and it obtains him access to such opportunities of usefulness, and enables him to compass such designs, as otherwise would have been impracticable. (Notes, Ec. vii. 1. x. 1.)

V. 2. The rich and poor live together on earth, and meet in many of the same places of resort, secular and religious, yet seldom without envy and contempt, though they have mutually need of one another. They will likewise soon meet in the grave; and at the judgment-seat they will be convened before their common Maker. He has wise reasons for making in his providence this difference in their outward station; but he will judge them, without respect of persons, concerning the manner in which they have discharged their respective duties.—“The wisdom of ‘God hath not thought fit to make all men rich, or all ‘poor; but hath intermixed the one with the other, that ‘each of them might have use of the other: neither is it for ‘the wealthy to insult upon or oppress the needy; since it ‘is God that hath made them both such as they are; and ‘he both can and will revenge any unjust measure, that is ‘offered by the one to the other.’ Bp. Hall. (Notes, xiv. 31. xxix. 13. 1 Sam. ii. 4—8, v. 7. Job xxxi. 13—15. xxxiv. 16—19, v. 19. Ps. xlix. 1—4, v. 2. Luke xvi. 19—23. Jam. ii. 1—7.)

V. 3. (xxvii. 12.) Prudence consists very much in foreseeing the various evils to which men are exposed, and discerning the methods by which they may escape. In temporal affairs, however, they can seldom proceed beyond probability, in either respect: but in the concerns of the soul, faith foresees the evil coming upon sinners in the eternal state, and discerns Jesus Christ as the Refuge from this impending storm; and the believer flees thither, hides himself, and is safe as Noah in the ark. But the careless and unbelieving go on without concern, till they “lift up “their eyes in hell, being in torments.” (Notes, vii. 6—23, vv. 7. 22, 23. ix. 13—18. xiv. 16. xviii. 10, 11. xxix. 1. Ex. ix. 20, 21. Heb. xi. 7.)

V. 4. (Notes, iii. 7, 8. 13—18. xv. 33. xxi. 21. Mic. vi. 6—8. Jam. iv. 4—10.) The connexion between “humility and the fear of the LORD,” should be noted.—The marginal reading does not seem exact.—“The footstep of “humility &c.” appears more literal.

V. 5. (Notes, xiii. 15. xv. 19. xvi. 17. Josh. xxiii. 11—13, v. 13. Ps. xi. 6.)—The man who takes proper care either of his life or soul, will shun the society of designing, ungodly men; that he may escape the thorns and snares, which are in their path.

V. 6. (Marg.) When children are instructed from in-

1 16. 22 xiv. 31. 7 The ¹rich ruleth over the poor, and
xviii. 23. Am. ^mthe borrower is servant to the ²lender.
ii. 6. iv. 1. v. 11. 12. viii. 4. 6.
Jam. ii. 6. v. 1. 8 He ⁿthat soweth iniquity shall
4. reap vanity; and [†]the ^orod of his anger shall fail.
^m2 Kings iv. 1. Neh. v. 4, 5. 12. xxiv. 2. Matt. xviii. 25.
* Heb. *man that lendeth.* 9 [†]He that ^phath a bountiful eye
n Job iv. 8. Hos. viii. 7. x. 13. Gal. vi. 7, 8. [†] Or, with the rod of his anger he shall be consumed. o xiv. 3. Ps. cxxv. 3. Is. ix. 4. x. 5. xiv. 29. xxx. 31.
† Heb. *Good of eye.* Deut. xxviii. 56. Matt. xx. 15. Mark vii. 22. p xi. 25.
xix. 17. xxi. 13. Deut. xv. 7—11. Job xxxi. 16—20. Ps. xli. 1—3. cxlii. 9. Ec. xi. 1, 2. 1s. xxxii. 8. lviii. 7—12. Matt. xxv. 34—40. Luke vi. 35—38. Acts xx. 35. 2 Cor. viii. 4. 2 ix 6—11. 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19. Heb. vi. 10. xiii. 16. 1 Pet. iv. 9.

shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor.

10 ^aCast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.

11 He ^rthat loveth pureness of heart, ^sfor the grace of his lips ^sthe king shall be his friend.

q xxi. 24. xxi. 20, 21. Gen. xxi. 9, 10. Neh. iv. 1—3. xiii. 28. Ps. ci. 5. Matt. xviii. 17. 1 Cor. v. 5, 6. 13. r xvi. 13. Ps. ci. 6. Matt. v. 8. § Or, and hath grace in his lips. Ps. xlv. 2. Luke iv. 22. s Gen. xli. 39, &c. Ezra vii. 6, &c. Neh. ii. 4—6. Esth. x. 3. Dan. ii. 46—49. iii. 30. vi. 20—23.

fancy in the truths and ways of God; when they are inured to submission, industry, and the government of their passions; when they are restrained and corrected, with a due mixture of firmness and affection; when they are trained up, as soldiers are disciplined to handle their arms, endure hardship, keep their ranks, and obey orders; and when all is enforced by good examples set before them, and constant prayers made for and with them; they generally retain the early impression even to old age. If they turn aside into devious paths, they always have an inward check, and will frequently be brought back again: and the good effects will commonly be visible to the end of their lives.—But a way of talking to children about religion, while they are left to contract bad habits, and to indulge wayward tempers; and while they see little or nothing of the holy and lovely tendency of the gospel in the conduct of their parents or teachers, is very different from this “nurture and admonition of the Lord;” and often leaves a rooted prejudice in the mind against those truths, of which they heard much, but perceived and experienced no good effects. (See on Note, xiii. 24.—Notes, 15. Gen. xviii. 18, 19. Deut. vi. 6—9. Ps. lxxviii. 5—8. Eph. vi. 1—4, v. 4. 2 Tim. i. 3—5. iii. 14—17.)

V. 7. This proverb shews how important it is for every man, who would act according to his own judgment and conscience, or even permanently according to his own inclinations, and as independent master of his own actions, to be strictly frugal and industrious; and to keep as much as he can out of debt: for the rich too commonly domineer over the poor. Even those who are not poor, if on any account they lay themselves under great obligations by borrowing money, are frequently treated as servants to the lenders; who in many cases expect even sinful compliances from them, and call them ungrateful if they refuse to make them. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xviii. 23. 2 Kings iv. 1. Neh. v. 1—5.)

V. 8. *And the rod, &c.* The power which many possess and abuse, of making others feel the weight of their resentment, will soon fail them; and then they must reap the fruits of their injustice and oppression. (Notes, xiv. 3. Job iv. 7—11, v. 8. Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. Hos. viii. 7, 8. x. 12, 13. Gal. vi. 6—10, vv. 7, 8.)

V. 9. ‘Whoso is liberal of his meat men shall speak well of him; and the report of his good house-keeping will be believed: but against him that is a niggard of his meat the whole city shall murmur, and the testimonies of his niggardliness shall not be doubted of.’ Ecclesiast. xxxi. 23, 24.—The good of eye, (marg.) is the opposite to the evil eye, which marks out those who envy and grudge, and are niggardly and selfish.—The bountiful shall not only be spoken well of by men, but also, when their

bounty springs from proper motives, receive an abundant blessing and recompence from God. (Marg. Ref.—See on Notes, xi. 24, 25. xix. 17.—Notes, Is. xxxii. 5—8. Matt. xxv. 34—40. 2 Cor. ix. 8—11. Heb. vi. 9, 10.)

V. 10. Profane scoffers and contentious revilers disturb the peace of every family, society, or company, into which they gain admission, and where they are allowed to continue, or have any influence; the only method therefore of obtaining or restoring peace, is to expel them; and this will generally be successful. If then it be painful, and expose them to imminent peril; it is only like pulling down a ruinous house to stop the progress of a conflagration. (Notes, xxi. 24. xxvi. 20, 21. Ps. ci. 5.)

V. 11. Some suppose, that this verse is defective, and that the word JEHOVAH is wanting in the first clause. Accordingly they would thus render the verse: “The LORD loveth purity of heart: the king is a friend to the ‘grace of the lips.’—‘Purity of heart ... alone ... gives ‘favour in the sight of God: though eloquence of speech and gracefulness of address may be sufficient to recommend a man to the favour of his prince.’ Grey.—This the LXX seem to favour: but their authority in this book is small; and it is not desirable to alter, except on strong grounds, the received reading.—‘He that loves sincerity ‘above all things, and is able to deliver his mind in acceptable language, is fit to be a privy-counsellor to a king.’ Bp. Patrick.—But “loving pureness of heart,” seems to imply far more than loving sincerity, in the common use of the terms: and “the grace of the lips” may denote the wisdom and piety, as well as the eloquence and address, of a man’s discourse. (Ps. xlv. 2. Luke iv. 22.) Thus Pharaoh was won by the wise and pious counsel of Joseph. Thus Ezra and Nehemiah, rather by their eminent wisdom and piety, than by eloquence and address, were greatly favoured by Artaxerxes; Mordecai, by Ahasuerus; and Daniel both by the Chaldean and Persian princes. (Marg. Ref. s.) In this view, the verse may perhaps be rendered, “He that loveth purity of heart! the grace of his lips! “the king his friend!”—“Out of the abundance of the “heart the mouth speaketh.” He that is eminently wise, pious, and pure in heart, is an extraordinary character. His wisdom, piety, and integrity will lead him to give such prudent counsel, so simply and seasonably, that notwithstanding the prejudices of men against true religion, he will not unfrequently be favoured even by kings.—According, however, either to the present reading; or that proposed above, the verse may be thus either explained or accommodated: ‘He who loves pureness of heart, and speaks in a kind and edifying manner, will be found among the friends of the King of heaven.’ (Notes, xvi. 12, 13. Ps. xlv. 2. ci. 6, 7. Matt. v. 8.)

^t 2 Chr. xvi. 9. Is. lix. 19—21. Matt. xvi. 16—18. Acts v. 39. xii. 23, 24. Rev. xi. 3—11. xii. 14—17.

12 The 'eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge, and 'he overthroweth the words of the transgressor.

^u Job v. 12, 13. Acts viii. 9—12. xiii. 8—12. 2 Thes. ii. 8. 2 Tim. iii. 8, 9.

13 The 'slothful man saith, *There is a lion without; I shall be slain in the streets.*

^x xv. 19. xxvi. 13. —16. Num. xiii. 32, 33.

14 The 'mouth of strange women is a deep pit: he that is 'abhorred of the LORD shall fall therein.

^y ii. 16—19. v. 3. &c. vi. 24—29. vii. 5, &c. Judg. xvi. 20, 21. Neh. xiii. 26. Ec. vii. 26.

15 'Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; ^bbut the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

^z Deut. xxxii. 19. Ps. lxxxii. 12.

^a Job xiv. 4. Ps. li. 5. John iii. 6. Eph. ii. 3.

^b xiii. 24. xix. 18. xxiii. 13, 14. xxix. 15, 17. Heb. xii. 10, 11.

V. 12. The watchful care of the Lord preserves the knowledge of himself, and of his truth and will, from being lost in ignorance, idolatry, infidelity, or error; notwithstanding all the machinations of Satan and ungodly men to run it down. The plausible schemes, contained in "the words of transgressors," are overthrown one after another, and sink into oblivion or contempt: but the truth of God's word maintains its ground from age to age. Thus it had been observed during many ages, in the days of Solomon. For above 2700 years this *proverb* has been fulfilling as a *prophecy*: and it will be verified to future generations, when the words of modern opposers or perverters of Revelation, who now vaunt, as if they were about to carry all before them, shall be overthrown before the Bible, as Dagon was before the ark. The marvellous preservation of the Scriptures, in a more correct state than any other book of any thing like equal antiquity; though, through successive generations, it has been the evident interest of immense numbers to corrupt them, if they would support their own systems; is a manifest proof how "the eyes of the LORD preserve knowledge." And indeed they are so well preserved, that they little need, and are not likely to receive much good from conjectural criticism; being capable of a useful and consistent meaning, in almost every part, as they now stand: though doubtless they want immense alterations, to make them consistent with some creeds; and numbers complain of obscurity in the book, because their own eyes are so blinded through pride, love of the world, and various prejudices, that they cannot read it. (*Notes*, Job v. 11—16. Is. lix. 20, 21. Matt. xvi. 18. Acts v. 33—39, vv. 38, 39. xii. 24. 2 Thes. ii. 8—12. 2 Tim. ii. 14—19. iii. 6—9. Rev. xi. 3—12. xix. 19—21.)

V. 13. 'He derideth them that invent vain excuses, 'because they would not do their duty.' Lions seldom are found in the streets of cities or villages. (See on *Notes*, 5. xv. 19. xxi. 25, 26.)—Some apply this to cowardly magistrates, who dare not punish great and powerful offenders.—'A worthy magistrate, would meet with such a lion 'to choose; that he might make God's ordinance to be 'reverenced. ... He would no more fear to make a *worshipful thief*, or a *right worshipful murderer*, (if such a one 'should come in his circuit,) an example of justice, than 'to twitch up a poor sheep-stealer.' Bp. Sanderson, quoted by Bp. Patrick.

V. 14. 'God punisheth one sin by another, when he 'suffereth the wicked to fall into the acquaintance of an

16 He 'that oppresseth the poor to increase his riches, and 'he that giveth to the rich, *shall surely come to want.*

17 ¶ 'Bow down thine ear, 'and hear the words of the wise, and 'apply thine heart unto my knowledge.

18 For ^hit is a pleasant thing if thou keep them 'within thee; they shall withal be 'fitted in thy lips.

19 That ^kthy trust may be in the

[†] Heb. in thy belly. Job xxxii. 18, 19. John vii. 38. 21. xxv. 11. Ps. cxix. 13. 171. Mal. ii. 7. Heb. xiii. 15. xii. 2 xxvi. 4. Jer. xvii. 7. 1 Pet. i. 21.

ⁱ viii. 6. x. 13. 21. xv. 7. xvi. k iii. 5. Ps. lxii. 8. 1s.

'narlot.' (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, ii. 16—19. v. 3—14. vii. 6—23. Ps. lxxxii. 11, 12. Rom. i. 21—27. 2 Thes. ii. 8—12.)

V. 15. "The child," that is, every child, is naturally and powerfully propense to foolishness; to imbibe false principles, contract bad habits, and take ungodly and ruinous courses. But good tuition, connected with early and firm correction, and used as a 'means of grace,' in obedience to God, in dependence on his blessing, and with fervent prayer for it; will generally be prospered in driving far away this foolishness, and preventing its fatal consequences: and in all cases it is by far the most efficacious remedy, that can be prescribed. (See on *Notes*, xiii. 24. xix. 18.)

V. 16. Rapacious oppression of the poor, and ostentatious generosity to the rich, often go together; since the one gratifies a man's avarice, the other his pride. Nay, some fraudulently or violently rob the poor, and then by large presents bribe the rich to connive at their iniquity. But these and similar practices, in the course of God's righteous providence, bring a secret curse on men's affairs, which at length reduces them to poverty. Either the expense of their prodigality exceeds the gain of their rapacity; or they are detected and punished for their crimes.—Luther renders the verse; 'He that squeezes the poor 'to increase his own estate, gives to the rich only to im-poverish himself.' Others will exact from him, what he has exacted from the poor. The oppressors shall be oppressed and ruined. (*Notes*, 22, 23. xiv. 31. xxviii. 3. Mic. vii. 1—4. Luke xiv. 12—14. xvi. 19—26.)

V. 17. From this verse to the end of the twenty-fourth chapter, the sacred writer adopts a more connected method, and more directly addressed to the reader; not wholly unlike the introductory part of the book. This, therefore, may be considered as the third part of it. (*Notes*, ii. 1—9. iv. 1—13.)

V. 18. 'It will give thee most high satisfaction, if thou 'dost so heartily entertain them, and thoroughly digest 'them, and faithfully preserve them in mind; that thou 'art able withal to produce any of them, as there is occasion, and aptly communicate them for other men's instruction.' Bp. Patrick. (*Notes*, ii. 10, 11. iii. 16, 17. x. 13. 21. xv. 7. xvi. 21. xxv. 11, 12.)—*Within thee.* *Marg.—Notes*, Job xxxii. 18—22, vv. 18, 19. John vii. 37—39.

V. 19. The main scope and design of all the foregoing instruction, was, that the reader might learn to trust in the Lord, and expect all good from him alone, according to

LORD, I have made known to thee this day, * even to thee.

20 Have not ¹ I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge,

21 That ^m I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest ⁿ answer the words of truth to them that ^t send unto thee?

22 ^o Rob not the poor, because he is poor; neither ^r oppress the afflicted in the gate:

23 For ^a the LORD will plead their cause, and ^r spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.

24 ^s Make no friendship with an

angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go;

25 Lest ^t thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.

26 Be not thou ^u one of them that strike hands, or of them that are sureties for debts.

27 If thou hast nothing to pay, ^x why should he take away thy bed from under thee?

28 ^y Remove not the ancient ^z land-mark which thy fathers have set.

29 Seest thou ^z a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings: he shall not stand before ^z mean men.

* Or, trust thou

also.

1 viii. 6. Ps. xii.

6. Hos. viii. 12.

2 Tim. iii. 15—

17. 2 Pet. i. 19—

21.

m Luke i. 3, 4.

John xx. 31.

1 John v. 13.

n 1 Pet. iii. 15.

* Or send thee.

o xxiii. 10, 11. Ez.

xxii. 29.

p 16. Ex. xxiii. 6.

Job xxix. 12—

16. xxxi. 21.

Zech. vii. 10.

Mal. iii. 5.

q xxiii. 11. 1 Sam.

xxiv. 15. xxv.

39. Ps. xxxv. 1

xliv. 1. lxxviii

5. cxi. 12. Jer.

l. 34. li. 36. Mic.

vii. 9.

r Is. xxxiii. 1.

Hab. ii. 8.

s xxi. 24. xxix.

22. 2 Cor. vi.

14—17

xiii. 20. Ps. cvi.

35. 1 Cor. xv.

33.

u vi 1—5. xi. 15.

xvii. 18. xxvii.

13.

x xx. 16. Ex. xxii.

26, 27. 2 Kings

iv. 1.

xxiii. 10. Deut.

xix. 14. xxvii.

17. Job xxiv. 2.

† Or, bound.

z x. 4. xii. 24.

1 Kings xi. 28.

Ec. ix. 10. Matt.

xxv. 21. 23.

Rom. xii. 11.

2 Tim. iv. 2.

§ Heb. obscure

men.

his word, in the prescribed manner, and in the use of appointed, or allowed and hallowed means exclusively. This the writer applies explicitly to each reader: as if he said to each, "Thou art the man;" look to thyself, and not to others. (Notes, iii. 5, 6. xiv. 26, 27. xviii. 10, 11. Ps. lxii. 8—10. cxlii. 5, 6. cxlvi. 3—6. Jer. xvii. 5—8.)

V. 20. The word rendered *excellent*, may signify *three times*, that is, many times. 'Have I not inculcated these things many times?' But some understand it according to another meaning of the same word, to signify 'words fit for a prince to speak, and the best men in the world to hear.' (Notes, i. 20—23. viii. 6—8. Ps. xii. 5, 6.)

V. 21. *Send unto thee.*] That is, to "ask a reason of the hope that is in thee;" or who otherwise request thy counsel. (Notes, Luke i. 1—4, v. 4. John xx. 30, 31. 1 Pet. iii. 13—16, v. 15. 1 John v. 13.) The clause may mean, 'That thou mayest be capable of managing business, however difficult, to the satisfaction of those that employ thee.'—The prudent statesman, the sagacious ambassador, and the faithful minister of religion, are characters of this description, each of whom is able to answer words, even *truth*, (that is, to give a true and faithful account of his proceedings,) to him that commissioned him.

V. 22, 23. The rich and powerful think that they may oppress the poor and helpless with impunity, either in the ordinary intercourse of life, or "in the gate," that is, when acting as magistrates. But that very poverty which encourages their oppression, should deter them from it: not only from motives of compassion, and on account of the extreme cruelty of such conduct; but because God himself is the Patron of the poor, and will surely crush those who crush them, and that even to the life or soul of the oppressor. (Notes, 16. xxiii. 10, 11. Ex. xxii. 21—24. xxiii. 6—9. Job xxix. 12—17. xxxi. 16—23. Ez. xxii. 27—30. Mal. iii. 5, 6.)

V. 24, 25. 'It highly concerns us ... for the preserving of the peace and safety of our life, that we intermingle not our matters with men of a cholerick nature, and such as easily provoke or undertake quarrels and debates. For such kind of friends will perpetually engage us in contentions and factions: so that we shall be constrained either to break off friendship, or to be wanting to our own personal safety.' Lord Bacon, quoted by Bp. Pa-

trick.—Law-suits, duels, and broils of every kind, destructive of comfort, dangerous to life, and wholly inconsistent with religion, are the snares to the souls of those who venture on such intimacies: and it seldom happens, that the quarrelsome humour fails of becoming contagious: so that friends of this character often, in every sense, murder one another. (Notes, xiii. 20. xxi. 24.)

V. 26, 27. (Notes, vi. 1—5. xi. 15. xvii. 18.) Solomon here adds, 'when a man is conscious to himself that he hath no estate, and doth but deceive him to whom he stands bound for the debt: and so, by pretending to be more able than he really is, deprives himself of the benefit of that law, mentioned Ex. xxii. 26, 27, and repeated Deut. xxiv. 6.' Bp. Patrick.—Those laws, however, relate only to *pledges*, not to insolvent debtors, and least of all to fraudulent debtors. (Notes, xx. 16. Ex. xxii. 25—27. 2 Kings iv. 1. Matt. xviii. 23—27.)

V. 28. (Note, Deut. xix. 14. Job xxiv. 2—12, v. 2.) This verse is generally accommodated, as a caution against changing the laws, which antiquity by grave authority hath delivered, unless there be an evident necessity; (Melancthon;) and against innovations in general, which can seldom be safely made, and without urgent necessity ought never to be ventured on.—If the caution be applied to religious concerns; it must be remembered, that the religion of the Scriptures is of the most venerable antiquity; and all deviations from it, even in the first ages were innovations. "To the law and to the testimony." (Note, Is. viii. 20.) If it had been proved, that an Israelite had moved an ancient land-mark, and defrauded his neighbour; the law of God would not have allowed any *prescription*, by which the new land-mark was to continue to the injury of the honest man's posterity, and the advantage of the robbers. Much less must *prescription* be admitted against the doctrines, precepts, and ordinances of God. For we know who said, in this case, "Full well ye reject the commandments of God, that ye may keep your own traditions." (Notes, Matt. xv. 3—6. 12—14. Mark vii. 9.) And we know, that he and his apostles were considered, by those men, as innovators. (Note, Acts vi. 9—14.)

V. 29. The words rendered *diligent in his business*, imply *celerity*, *readiness*, and *cheerfulness*, in a man's proper employment, whatever that may be. 'To which is re-

CHAP. XXIII.

Cautions against self-indulgence before rulers; against avarice; visiting a churl; speaking before a fool: and oppression, 1—11. Exhortations to study

‘quired a quickness of apprehension, in discovering the ‘fittest means, and a dexterity in the application of them: ‘so that the business is not only done, but done speedily, ‘and without much noise and bustle. ... Such a person, if ‘he can be found, ... is likely to come to great preferment. ‘... Mark a man that is not rash, but yet quick and dexterous in the dispatch of any business he is charged withal: ‘and thou mayest foretel that he shall not long continue ‘obscure, ... but be taken notice of, and preferred to the ‘service of his prince, in some publick ministry.’ *Bp. Patrick*. On this text, Lord Bacon shews, that *profound* men are too prying; *popular* men draw men’s eyes too much to themselves; men of courage are apt to be turbulent; and *honest* men too stiff, to be the most successful courtiers: but celerity in dispatching business has nothing in it that does not please.—It is however, after all, of small value, without most of the other qualities. (*Notes*, xii. 24. 1 *Kings* xi. 26—28. *Ec.* viii. 10.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

True wisdom greatly consists in being able to judge accurately of the comparative value of objects, which stand in competition with each other: that we may choose the more excellent, and bestow proportionable care and labour to secure them; and be willing to sacrifice the inferior to the superior interest. The salvation of our souls, a name in the book of life, and the “loving favour” of the Lord, are the grand concerns of all: but a good name among men is the next most valuable possession. In fact, that reputation, which just passes current in the world, or even in the church, is of small value. The fame, which men obtain by ingenuity, valour, learning, or illustrious actions, or by whatever merely serves to render a person popular, is so often lavished on most unworthy characters, and is so ruinous to the vain-glorious idol and his besotted idolaters, that a wise man cannot desire it: nor can it be expected that the world will generally honour those whom God honours. But when a Christian, regardless of his own glory, but zealous for the honour of the gospel, is enabled to live down prejudice and calumny, and to convince opposers by a uniform course of integrity and discretion; when he so lives, that those who dislike his creed, hesitate not to rely on his veracity and fidelity, even where their interests are most deeply concerned; when he can thus extort the concession from all parties, that he is an honest and friendly man, who would do good to every one; he then has realized a treasure, compared with which gold and silver are baubles. A long life, spent in acquiring such an ascendancy over the minds and consciences of men, is by it well repayed; and the closing scene may produce effects of the most extensive benefit. But this kind of reputation is acquired with great difficulty, and it is easily forfeited; for the higher it is advanced, the more will be expected from the possessor. (*Note*, *Ec.* x. 1.) Nay, it may possibly admit of great abuse: and such is the incon-

wisdom; and to correct children for their good, 12—14. The joy of teachers and parents over wise children: with cautions against envy, intemperance, and whoredom; and exhortations to buy the truth, to honour parents, and to give God the heart, 15—26. The infatuation of drunkards, 27—35.

sistency of man, that some have by a long course of good conduct acquired a deservedly high reputation, and then have strangely been induced to give currency to error with it! We should therefore not only be careful to obtain and preserve a good name; but we should be very circumspect what use we make of the character we possess.—We are continually reminded that the rich and the poor will meet together before their common Creator, as their impartial Judge. If then the rich have authority over his poor neighbour, let him use it with gentleness, and without arrogance or contempt: if he lend or give to him, let him not attempt to domineer over him on that account, remembering that both are upon a level before the Lord. Riches and power are as land to be cultivated: but “he who sows iniquity, will reap vanity,” and be turned out of his stewardship with disgrace. Those who oppress the poor to increase their riches; and even those who spend that in presents and entertainments for the rich, which was entrusted to them that they might feed the poor; will surely come to want, either here or hereafter. But he, whose eye is looking out continually for necessitous persons, to whom he may dispense his bounty, and who gives liberally “of his bread to the poor,” shall abound in blessings: and the rich “have the poor always with them, that whensoever they will, they may do them good,” and so obtain those blessings. And let the poor remember, that the Lord made the difference between their lot, and that of the rich: let them then submit to his wise and righteous will, without envy or murmurings: let them be humble, obliging, frugal, and industrious, attending to the duties of their station, and expecting the great decisive day: for “by humility and the fear of the LORD, are true riches, and honour, and life;” but proud, ungodly, dishonest, and licentious poverty is indeed disgraceful and ruinous. In short, “thorns and snares are in the path of the froward,” whatever be his rank in life: he must be pierced with sorrows, and entangled in temptations, from which “he that keepeth his soul” shall be far removed.—The scorner, for instance, must be excluded from every orderly family, and all instructive company, in order that strife and contention may got out, and peace may be preserved. Thus he is driven to associate with those, who are pests of society, and to sink deeper into sin and misery continually. And if he be not fit for those families, which have some feeble resemblance to the regions of peace and love; he will never find admission into heaven, but must remain in outer darkness and despair. It is indeed desirable in the highest degree to live, as much as may be, like the blessed company above, where strife and envy never find admission: and that our families also may be peaceful and orderly, we should very carefully train up our children “in the way in which they should go;” that as they grow up, they may set an example of obedience, as well as give a hopeful prospect of living pious and useful lives. For every kind of foolishness and vice is bound up in the heart of a child, and will be unfolded by years, temptations, and opportunities: but the

WHEN thou ^asittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee :

2 And ^bput a knife to thy throat, if thou *be* a man given to appetite.

3 Be not ^cdesirous of his dainties : for they *are* deceitful meat.

4 ^dLabour not to be rich : ^ecease from thine own wisdom.

5 Wilt ^fthou ^gset thine eyes upon ^hthat which is not ? for ⁱriches certainly make themselves wings : they fly away as an eagle towards heaven.

^a Gen. xliii. 32—34. Jude 12. ^b Matt. xviii. 8, 9. 1 Cor. ix. 27. Phil. iii. 19. ^c 6. Ps. cxli. 4. Dan. i. 8. Luke xxi. 34. Eph. iv. 22. ^d xxviii. 20. John vi. 27. 1 Tim. vi. 8—10. ^e iii. 5. xxvi. 12. Is. v. 21. Rom. xi. 25. xii. 16. ^f cxix. 36, 37. Jer. xxii. 17. 1 John ii. 16. ^g Heb. *cause thine eyes to fly upon,* &c. ^h xxvii. 24. Job i. 14. ⁱ Gen. xliii. 36. Ec. i. 2. xii. 8. Is. lv. 2. 1 Cor. vii. 29—31. Ps. xxxix. 6. Ec. v. 13, 14. Matt. vi. 19. 1 Tim. vi. 17. Jam. v. 1, 2.

discreet use of the rod of correction has a powerful tendency to check its growth ; and, when used in obedience to God and in dependence on him, is an appointed means of driving it away : so that generally those who are properly educated, when they grow old do not depart from the way in which they were trained up. But humoured and neglected children soon contract habits of sloth : every exertion or difficulty dismays them, as if a lion were in their path ready to devour them ; and thus abject poverty comes upon them.—Again, ill instructed youths seldom escape that deep pit, which swallows up the abhorred of the LORD. They are lazy and loitering, and come within the flattering speech of the strange woman, who decoys them into the most ruinous courses ; from which a prudent and pious education is the best preservative. The prudent man foreseeing these and similar evils, to which he or his children are exposed, will take proper precautions against them ; “ but the simple pass on, and are punished.”—Let us then be very thankful, that the good providence of God has preserved to us these words of knowledge, during so long a course of years ; while numerous systems of vain philosophy have sunk into oblivion, and the words of more atrocious transgressors have perished : and let us seek to have our hearts purified by faith, and our words seasoned by grace ; and then, whatever be our outward condition, the King of kings will be our everlasting Friend.

V. 17—29.

How important is it, that we “ bow down our ears, and “ apply our hearts to knowledge ! ” For if we keep these instructions within us, they will be a source of constant pleasure to us ; and we shall learn to fit them to our lips, and to speak of them with constancy to others, when we practise them ourselves. Indeed those are excellent things in counsels and knowledge, which shew us the certainty of divine truths, and how to answer all, who enquire after them or object to them. And we should, after the example of the wise man, try every method of gaining the attention, and impressing the hearts of others with them.—How often are we warned against oppressing the poor and needy ! And after all that Christianity has effected, and all that equitable laws and impartial judges can do, in those few places where they are found, these warnings are by no means superfluous. But let it be remembered that he who robs the poor, especially under colour of law, rouses the dormant vengeance of the righteous and merciful God, who makes their cause his own.—A great deal of the comfort, safety, and happiness of life, depends on our choice of friends : we should then especially avoid the furious and contentious man, if we value our lives and souls ; and such as would draw us in to engage for more than we are worth, to the defrauding of creditors, and our own utter ruin.—Habits of industry, and expert activity in business,

formed in youth, when connected with integrity and propriety of conduct, are of great importance : for they do more towards a man’s comfort and credit even in this world, than large inheritances or splendid talents can do.—But after all, this world is of little value. All other distinctions will soon be swallowed up in that grand one, which subsists between those who trust in the Lord, and those that do not. We may come short of wealth, or reputation, and the friendship of great men ; but the King of heaven will guard, and bless, and honour, all who trust in him ; while he “ reserves the wicked to the day of judgment to be punished.” Let us then be diligent in his work : and though we live and die among mean men, we shall at length be numbered with the princes of his people, and stand with acceptance before the King of glory.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIII. V. 1—3. At the tables of princes and rulers, there are abundant incentives to excess : but many reasons will induce a wise man to be more abstemious there than elsewhere. Persons of inferior rank are seldom admitted to such tables, but upon particular occasions : and their behaviour will be narrowly observed, especially if they profess religion, or are publick teachers. Indulgence of the appetite frequently betrays into impropriety of conduct, which excites resentment, or renders the superior less friendly. It must lessen a man’s character to be delighted with an opportunity of self-indulgence : he appears to covet that abundance which he does not possess : he sanctions the excesses and luxurious indulgences of ungodly men, against which his example at least should protest : and it weakens his influence, and deprives him of opportunities of usefulness, which are too valuable to be sold at so contemptible a price. A man should therefore “ consider diligently ” what and who is before him, and what consequences his conduct may produce : and if he knows himself liable to be overcome by his appetite, he should double his guard ; and act as if a knife were at his throat to give him a mortal wound, if he yielded to the temptation ; that is, he should dread such unseemly behaviour worse than even death. He should learn to be indifferent about “ deceitful meat ; ” which promises pleasure, but produces painful effects to the health, character, interests, and conscience. “ For oft times the rich, when ‘ they bid their inferiors to their tables, it is not for the ‘ love they bear them ; but for their own secret purposes.’ — The words rendered *given to appetite*, may mean, *possession of thy soul*, that is ‘ If thou hast thy wits about ‘ thee.’ (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 6—8. Ps. cxli. 3, 4. Jude 11—13, v. 12.)

V. 4, 5. The *wisdom* of the world greatly consists in skilfully labouring to be rich ; and in contriving every plan, without being over scrupulous, and in giving all diligence,

i xxii. 9. Deut. xv. 9. xxviii. 56. Matt. xx. 15. Mark vii. 22. k 3. Ps. cxli. 4. Dan. i. 8—10. l xix. 22. Matt. ix. 3. 4. Luke vii. 39.

6 Eat thou not the bread of *him* that *hath* ⁱ an evil eye, neither ^k desire thou his dainty meats.

7 For ^l as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: ^m Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.

8 The morsel *which* thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.

9 ⁿ Speak not in the ears of a fool; for ^o he will despise the wisdom of thy words.

10 ^p Remove not the old ^{*} landmark; and enter not into the fields of the ^q fatherless:

11 For ^r their Redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee.

r xxii. 23. Ex. xxii. 22—24. Deut. xxvii. 19. Ps. xii. 5. Jer. i. 33, 34. li. 36.

12 'Apply thine heart unto instruction, and thine ears to the words of knowledge.

13 Withhold ^u not correction from the child; for *if* thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.

14 Thou shalt ^y beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.

15 ^z My son, [†] if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, [†] even mine.

16 Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when ^z thy lips speak right things.

17 Let ^a not thine heart envy sinners; but ^b *be thou* in the fear of the LORD all the day long.

18 For ^c surely there is an ^{*} end, and

Acts ix. 31. 2 Cor. vii. 1. 1 Pet. i. 17. c Ps. xxxvii. 37. Jer. xxix. 11. Luke xvi. 25. Rom. vi. 21, 22. † Or, reward. xxiv. 14. Heb. x. 35.

to get forward in this grand concern: for prodigality, and other vices inconsistent with growing rich, are generally considered as a man's *folly*. Solomon therefore not only exhorts the reader to cease from his own *folly*, but from his own *wisdom*: and not to *weary himself* about acquiring wealth; but to subordinate all his worldly interests and pursuits to the acquisition of wisdom and piety, and thus to lay up more certain and valuable treasures. For why should a man let his eyes and heart eagerly pursue an empty, fleeting shadow? especially when substantial good is within his reach. Yet riches are an empty, fleeting shadow, of this kind, which the worldly man watches and broods over, till at length they form themselves, as it were, wings, and fly away, quite out of his reach, as the swift and soaring eagle flies towards heaven. (Notes, xxvi. 12. xxvii. 23—27. Job i. 14—17. Ps. xxxix. 6. Ec. v. 13—17. Matt. vi. 19—21. 1 Tim. vi. 6—10, vv. 8—10.)

V. 6—8. Many make a shew of entertaining their acquaintance, who sordidly grudge the expense, and often betray symptoms of this ostentatious penuriousness. But a wise man would not be under obligations to persons of so base and insincere a character: for though their words be friendly and their entertainment good, there is no cordial welcome; and in their hearts they are best pleased with those who decline their invitations. It is enough to make a man loathe every morsel that he has eaten at the expense of such persons, and to wish they had it again: and he cannot but be ashamed and grieved to reflect, that he wasted his sweet words in complimenting, flattering, or even thanking, those who so little deserve it.—The word rendered *lose*, equally means *corrupt*; and may intimate the temptation to which the guest of a churl is exposed, of deviating from sincerity and piety in his conversation, to avoid giving offence. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1—3. xxii. 9. Deut. xv. 9, 10.)

V. 9. (See on Note, ix. 7—9.) This maxim implies speaking on important subjects to others, *in the hearing of a foolish and wicked man*, who will do all he can to expose it to ridicule and contempt. (Ps. xxxix. 1.)

V. 10, 11. (See on Notes, xxii. 22, 23. 28.) The redeemer was the next of kin, who was authorized, and

required, and even bound in interest, to see that his poor relations were not oppressed or defrauded (Note, Lev. xxv. 25—55;) and he was the avenger of blood in case they were murdered. The redeemer of orphans and widows, in this case, might be so poor and helpless, that a rich and powerful oppressor would despise and defy him: but let it be well attended to, that the almighty God is the Redeemer of the fatherless, and will defend their cause against all who injure them. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps. xii. 5, 6. xciv. 1—7. Is. xlvii. 4. Jer. i. 33, 34.)

V. 12. Marg. Ref.—Notes, ii. 1—10.

V. 13, 14. (Marg. Ref.)—'Do not turn over this business to another, but do it thyself; which may save the public officers the labour: nay, by making his body smart for his faults, both body and soul may be delivered from utter destruction.' Bp. Patrick.—The word is *Sheol*, which doubtless means here more than the grave. The verses may also imply a caution not to correct children in an improper manner, as well as an admonition not to withhold correction from them. Those who strike children in a passion, often use improper weapons, and risk material evil consequences: and this abuse has tended to discredit wholesome and scriptural correction. But the use of the rod, though it pains the child, (and the tender parent perhaps still more,) will be sure not to kill him, and is calculated to deliver his soul from hell. (Notes, xiii. 24. xix. 18. xxii. 15. xxix. 15. 17. Heb. xii. 9—11.)

V. 15, 16. Some interpret these verses as the language of a wise and pious parent; who conscientiously corrects his child, and at the same time affectionately expostulates with him, and shows him, that he has nothing in view except his good, which would give the tender parent an inexpressible satisfaction: especially if the child were not only kept from evil ways, but enabled to be useful, by pious conversation, prudence, and upright counsel, to others also. This is a very interesting and instructive application of the passage, and well worthy the attention of parents. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 24, 25. x. 1. xv. 20. 1 Thes. iii. 6—10. Philem. 17—21. 3 John i—4.)

V. 17, 18. When we habitually act with an awful yet animating sense of God in our minds, as in his presence,

^d Ps. ix. 18. Jer. ^{xxix.} 11. Phil. i. 20. ^e 12. 26. iv. 10. 23. ^f 29—35. xx. 1.

19 Hear thou, my son, and be wise, ^e and guide thine heart in the way.

20 Be ^f not among wine-bibbers; among riotous eaters of ^g flesh.

21 For ^h the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and ⁱ drowsiness shall clothe *a man* with rags.

22 ^j Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and ^k despise not thy mother when she is old.

23 ^l Buy the truth, and ^m sell *it* not; *also* wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.

ⁿ 1 ii. 2—4. iv. 5—7. xvi. 16. xvii. 16. Job xxviii. 12—19. Ps. cxix. 72. 162. Is. lv. 1. Matt. xiii. 44. 46. Phil. iii. 7, 8. Rev. iii. 18. m Matt. xvi. 26. Acts xx. 23, 24. Heb. xii. 26. Rev. xii. 11.

24 The ⁿ father of the righteous shall greatly rejoice, and he that begetteth a wise *child* ^o shall have joy of him.

25 Thy father and thy mother shall be glad, ^p and she that bare thee shall rejoice.

26 ^q My son, ^r give me thine heart, and ^s let thine eyes observe my ways.

27 For a whore *is* a deep ditch; and a strange woman *is* a narrow pit.

28 She also lieth in wait ^t as *for* ^u a prey, and ^v increaseth the transgressors among men.

29 ¶ ^w Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who ^x 21. xx. 1. 1 Sam. xxv. 36, 37. 2 Sam. xiii. 28. 45, 46. Eph. v. 18.

n 15, 16. x. 1. xv. 20. 1 Kings i. 43. ii. 1—3. 9. Ec. ii. 19. o Philemon 19, 20. p xvii. 25. 1 Chr. iv. 9, 10. Luke i. 31—33. 40—47. 58. xi. 27, 28. q 15. r iv. 23. Deut. vi. 5. Matt. x. 37, 38. Luke xiv. 26. 2 Cor. v. 14. 15. viii. 5. Eph. iii. 17. s iv. 25—27. Pa. cvii. 43. cxix. 9—11. Hos. xiv. 9. 2 Pet. i. 19. t Or, as a robber. Jer. iii. 2. u Num. xxv. 1. Hos. iv. 11. 2 Sam. xiii. 28. Luke xii. 45, 46. Eph. v. 18.

and according to his commands, seeking to please him, and expecting help and happiness from him: then we are “in the fear of the LORD all the day long.” And such persons have no need to envy prosperous sinners: for the end of their trials and of the sinner’s prosperity is at hand; and the believer’s “expectation shall not be cut off,” or perish in disappointment. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xv. 16. xxviii. 14. Ps. xxxvii. 1—11. 37, 38. Ec. xii. 11—14. Acts ix. 31. Rom. vi. 21—23.)

V. 19. *In the way.*] ‘In the observation of God’s ‘commandments.’ (*Notes*, iv. 11—13. 18, 19. 23.)

V. 20—22. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 29—35. vi. 6—11. xx. 1. xxi. 17. xxviii. 7. xxxi. 4—7. Is. v. 11—17. Luke xv. 13—16. Phil. iii. 17—19. 1 Pet. iv. 3—5.) The connexion between the verses leads our thoughts to that law of God by Moses, which enacted, that the stubborn and rebellious son, who was a “glutton and a drunkard,” should, when convicted by the combined testimony of both his parents, be stoned. (*Note*, Deut. xxi. 18—21.)—The latter clause is literally, “Despise not thy mother, because “she is grown old:” that being the very reason why the son ought to love, honour, and be a comfort to her, as far as he possibly can. (*Notes*, i. 8. vi. 20, 21. xxx. 11—14, v. 11. 17. Lev. xix. 3. Matt. xv. 3—6. John xix. 25—27.)

V. 23. ‘Riches should be employed to get learning; ‘and not learning applied to gather up riches.’ Lord Bacon, quoted by Bp. Patrick.—‘Spare no costs for truth’s ‘sake, neither depart from it for any gains.’—The knowledge of divine truth, with that profession of it, and obedience to God, which are inseparable from it, often costs much; not only great labour, but loss of property, friends, character, liberty, and even life: yet it cannot possibly be bought too dear. We should determine to make the truth our own, though it cost us our lives, and not to sell it at any price. Christ is this Truth. Many, like Herod, Felix, Agrippa, and the rich young man, will not go to the price of becoming his true disciples; and many, after professing themselves his followers, like Demas, forsake him, and “sell the truth,” “having loved this present world.” But true Christians “count all but loss, for the excellency of “the knowledge of Christ,” and compared with his righteousness and salvation. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, ii. 1—9. iv.

5—7. xvi. 16. Matt. xiii. 44—46. xvi. 24—28, v. 26. Phil. iii. 8—11. Heb. xi. 24—26. Rev. ii. 12, 13. iii. 18, 19.)

V. 24, 25. ‘There is no greater joy a parent can have, ‘than to see his son take virtuous courses. ... Let not thy ‘father and mother then want this singular pleasure: but ‘by thy well-doing fill the heart of her that bare thee with ‘joy and triumph, who for all the pains and care she hath ‘had in thy birth, and about thy education, desires no ‘other requital, but only this.’ Bp. Patrick. (See on *Notes*, 15. 20—22, v. 22.)

V. 26. ‘Give thyself wholly to wisdom.’—If this verse be considered, merely as the words of Solomon to his son, or to the reader, it means no more than an affectionate call for earnest attention to instruction, and especially to the subsequent important cautions. But in these chapters, Wisdom, (that is, Christ, the Word and Wisdom of God,) seems to address the reader, as at the beginning of the book: (*Notes*, i. 20. viii. 12. ix. 1—6:) and on that supposition, this verse is a call of Christ to every reader, to give him his heart. The law demands love to God with the whole heart and soul; but sin and the world have possession of it in fallen creatures: and the express design of the gospel is to bring us, by repentance and faith, to give our hearts to the Saviour and to God through him; that he may there set up his kingdom, write his law, and reign the undisputed Lord of all our affections. And unless this call be obeyed, all else will be decidedly rejected. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, iv. 23—27. Deut. vi. 5. Matt. x. 37—39. 1 Cor. xvi. 21—24, v. 22. 2 Cor. v. 13—15. 1 John iv. 19.)

V. 27, 28. (*Marg. Ref.—See on Note*, xxii. 14.)—“A “narrow pit,” out of which it is extremely difficult to escape. (*Notes*, ii. 18, 19. v. 3—14. vii. 6—23.)—‘Such ‘are her arts, notwithstanding all the straits and hardships ‘thou shalt suffer by her; it will be an hard matter, when ‘thou art once engaged, to get quit of her. ... She is of ‘no other use in the world, which already is too bad, but ‘to make it worse, by increasing the number of lewd, dis- ‘loyal, and faithless men.’ Bp. Patrick. (*Note*, v. 14.)

V. 29. ‘Every wickedness brings mischief with it: ‘but who is the man that especially draws on himself all

hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?

30 They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek a mixed wine.

31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.

32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

33 Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.

34 Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.

35 They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.

‘manner of sorrows and inconveniences, both in soul, body, and estate? Who is he that raiseth quarrels and contentions upon every trifle? Who is he that is full of idle, obscene, and unsavoury words? Who is he that in distempered frays gets stripes and wounds? Who is he that afflicts his eyes with defluations and inflammations?’ *Bp. Hall.* But no translation or paraphrase can do justice to the concise, abrupt, and energetick manner of the original. (*Marg. Ref.*—See on *Note*, xx. 1.)

V. 30. “They that are the last at the wine.” ‘He that sits long at the wine, that hunts about from one tavern to another, where he may find the most exquisite wine.’ (*Notes*, *Ps.* lxxv. 8. *Is.* v. 11—17, *vv.* 11, 12. *Am.* vi. 3—8.)

V. 31—33. *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xxxi. 4—7. *Gen.* xix. 31—38. *Is.* v. 22, 23. xxviii. 7, 8. lvi. 9—12. *Dan.* v. 1—4. *Hos.* vii. 5—7. *Hab.* ii. 15—17. *Matt.* xiv. 6, 7. *Luke* xxi. 34—36. *Eph.* v. 15—20, v. 18. 1 *Pet.* 3—5.

V. 34, 35. The perils, to which drunken men expose themselves, are as imminent as if they lay down to sleep upon the unstable waves of the sea, or upon the top of the ship’s mast in a storm. A drunken man may be beaten and bruised, and not be sensible of it at the time; but he will feel it severely afterwards: yet so inveterate are his habits, and so great his infatuation; that as soon as he has, with difficulty, shaken off the drowsiness of the last night’s debauch, he is determined to “seek it yet again.” No loss, pain, sickness, poverty, ill-treatment, imminent dangers, and merciful deliverances, can prevail with him so much as, sincerely and constantly, to desire to break his chain. (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—18.

How good are all the laws and counsels of the Lord! His prohibitions only say to us, “Do thyself no harm.” He “giveth us all things richly to enjoy,” as far as it is good for us; and then enters his paternal caveat against our disgracing or ruining ourselves by excess. He requires his rational creatures to be the lords, and not the slaves, of their animal appetites: and how mean and senseless is it, to rush upon indulgence, when the honour of God, the good of our neighbour, and our own advantage, concur in ‘aying the appetite under a temporary interdict! Such is the holy law of God in all its strictness; and its goodness renders the transgression of it inexcusable. But the gospel alone encourages us with the assurance of pardon and ef-

fectual grace: and, through the motives, encouragements, and aids thus proposed to us, we may cheerfully hearken to the instructions of wisdom, and hope practically to derive benefit from them.—Let us then “apply our hearts unto instruction,” and “our ears unto the words of knowledge.” Thus we shall learn to avoid every inexpedient indulgence; and to be of his mind who “would eat no flesh, while the world stood, rather than cause his weak brother to offend.” We shall consider times and circumstances, where we are, and “what is before us,” and what impression our conduct may make, or what effects it may produce, upon others: we shall place the strongest guard on the weakest side: and when we most feel our weakness; we shall shun temptation, or be doubly earnest in prayer to overcome it: we shall not allow a desire after the delicacies, which we find to be ensnaring to our souls; and shall endeavour especially to practise abstemiousness, where incentives to excess most abound. He who is thus instructed, will feel little inclination to come to the table of a selfish man, however well it is spread, or however pressingly he is invited. For what should he do there? Edifying conversation would be thrown away; and it would be worse than a waste of words, to speak sweet language to a man, whom he cannot but regard with a mixture of pity and contempt.—He, who hears the words of Christ, will beware also of covetousness. In his honest industry he will aim to do his duty, but will not “labour to be rich;” he will not set his eyes, or his heart, on such fleeting treasures, knowing how speedily and certainly a separation must take place. For he, whose treasures are left on earth, and whose soul is in hell, will find that he coveted what *was not*; that his wealth was a phantom, but his crimes a reality. Who then, that is wise, would remove the old land-mark, or take possession of the estate of the fatherless, or get wealth by any kind or degree of injustice or oppression of the poor? For “their Redeemer is mighty,” (though he became poor, that he might be their Brother and Redeemer,) and he will plead their cause with those that wrong them. But if any are resolved to grow rich by such means, we must let them alone: the covetous Pharisees derided even Christ, when he warned them to be faithful in the unrighteous mammon: and he bids us, not to “speak in the ears of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of our words.” But surely we shall “not envy sinners;” let us but live conscientiously “in the fear of God all the day long,” and “wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal

CHAP. XXIV.

Cautions against envy, discontent, sinful thoughts, neglect of doing good, or deferring to do it; rejoicing over an enemy's calamity; respect of persons, flattery, revenge, and sloth: with recommendations of the knowledge and fear of God, and obedience to the king; and declarations of the safety of the righteous, 1—34.

“life:” and when the end comes, and our expectations are fully answered, we shall find that true godliness is great gain. As the Lord commands us, with a solemn introduction, not to withhold correction from our children, but “to beat them with the rod to save their souls” from destruction; so we may expect, that he will correct us for our good, if we are the objects of his special love. Let us then take affliction in good part, and seek to have it sanctified, that we “may be partakers of his holiness.” Thus our teachers will rejoice on our account; nay, the Lord himself will “rejoice over us to do us good:” and, obeying his commands and copying his example, in educating our children, we may hope to enjoy with exulting hearts, the highest satisfaction which can be derived from outward things, while we witness their pious, wise, and useful conduct, in the situations which Providence shall allot them; and may cheerfully leave the world, assured that the best part of all we knew, spoke, or did, will survive us, and through them be made useful to the next generation.

V. 19—35.

The gracious Saviour, who purchased for his people pardon and peace, with all the affection of a kind preceptor, yea, of a tender parent, counsels us to “hear and be wise, and to guide our hearts in his ways:” and at the same time he is ready to assist us in obeying every one of his injunctions. “Be not,” says he, “amongst wine-bibbers, amongst riotous eaters of flesh: for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty,” and the “drowsiness,” which such excess occasions, “will clothe a man with rags.” Mark, says he, and learn wisdom by the painful experience of other men. Who has more misery and sorrow than his neighbours? Who is always engaged in riots, fightings, duels, or law-suits? Who renders himself despised or hated by his babblings? Who is frequently covered with bruises, or laid up with dangerous wounds, when neither called to defend himself, nor his friends, nor his country? Who carries the marks of his distempered body, in the redness of his eyes, and in his bloated countenance? Do you not see that these are the wretched distinctions of those, “that tarry long at the wine, that go to seek mixed wine?” Do you envy their advantages? or do you wish to be exempted from such miseries? If you desire the latter, then beware of contracting the habit of drinking beyond the bounds of the strictest temperance. The wine may sparkle in the glass, and appear beautiful to the eye, and drunken poets may write very ingenious things in praise of it: it may also please the palate, and exhilarate the mind for a moment; but at “the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.” Whatever exceeds exact sobriety, is poisoned: it is far worse than the fabled cup of Circe, which transformed men into brutes; for it inflames the passions, and

BE ^a not thou envious against evil men, ^b neither desire to be with them.

2 For ^c their heart studieth destruction, and their lips talk of mischief.

3 Through ^d wisdom is an house

a 19. iii. 31. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. 7. lxxiii. 3. Gal. v. 19—21. Jam. iv. 5, 6. b i. 11—15. xiii. 20. Gen. xiii. 10—13. xix. 1. &c. Ps. xxvi. 9. c 8. vi. 14. 1 Sam. xxiii. 9. Esth. iii. 6, 7. Job xv. 35. Ps. vii. 14. x. 7. xxviii. 3. xxxvi. 4. lxiv. 2—6. cxi. 2. Is. lix. 4. Mic. vii. 3. Matt. xxvi. 3, 4. Luke xxiii. 20, 21. Acts xiii. 10. d ix. 1. xiv. 1. 1 Cor. iii. 9, 10.

fits them for every hateful crime: it ruins a man's constitution and character, and tends to beggar his family: it is an incentive to the basest lusts, and causes many to fall into that deep ditch and narrow pit, from which so few escape with their lives; making them an easy prey to those bad women, who lie in wait for them, and whose constant employment it is to “increase the transgressors among men:” it lets loose the tongue to utter every thing impious, polluting, and provoking: it leads a man, without precaution, to run himself into unnumbered dangers; and yet it fascinates him into such a love for his cruel oppressor and his galling chains, that he only sleeps to recruit himself, that when he awakes he may return to his destructive indulgence! Who then, that has common sense, would contract such a habit, or sell himself to an iniquity, which tends to such accumulated guilt and misery, and exposes a man every day to the danger of dying intoxicated, and awaking in hell? Thus the Wisdom and Word of God warns men against this common but fatal vice; and he exhorts young persons to notice the admonitions of their parents to this effect: “Hearken,” says he, “unto thy father, that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.” Their counsel is salutary, their authority from God, the child's obligations are great; and the guilt of those that despise their aged parents is exceedingly heinous. And it should be the aim, and honest ambition, of every young person, to be the joy, comfort, and honour of his aged father and mother, in their declining years.—But the Saviour himself addresses us, as children, and says, “My son give me thy heart; and let thine eyes observe my ways:” and if we desire to be wise and happy, we should surrender them to him, and he will prepare them for himself, and make them a treasury of wisdom and grace, that from the abundance of good in them we may speak and do what is right and good. Thus his salvation is freely bestowed upon us: yet we must “buy the truth,” we must spare no cost or pains, and sacrifice every lust and interest, that we may purchase this inestimable prize. On the other hand, we must refuse to give up our religious profession, or to act inconsistently with it, or to relinquish the pursuit of wisdom; even if we could be tempted to it, by the offer of “all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them.” And what part soever of our conduct we may at any time be sorry for; we shall not, when the end comes, repent of following this counsel, even though we should lose our lives, rather than deviate from it.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXIV. V. 1, 2. *Marg. Ref.—Notes*, i. 10—19. xxiii. 17, 18. Ps. xxxvii. 1—8. lxxiii. 2—22.

V. 3—6. Some render the two first of these verses thus: “Let thy house be builded in wisdom, and let it be

e 2 Sam. vii. 26. Jer. x. 12. Col. ii. 7. f xv. 6. xxi. 20. xxvii. 23—27. 1 Kings iv. 22—28. 1 Chr. xxvii. 25, &c. xxix. 2, &c. 2 Chr. iv. 18—22. xxvi. 4—11. Neh. x. 39. xiii. 5—13. Matt. xiii. 52. g viii. 14. x. 29. xxi. 22. Ec. vii. 19. ix. 14—18. * Heb. in strength. † Heb. strengtheneth might. Ps. lxxxiv. 7. Is. xl. 31. Col. i. 11. h xx. 18. Luke xiv. 31. 1 Cor. ix. 25—27. Eph. vi. 10, &c. i Tim. vi. 11, 12. 2 Tim. iv. 7. i xi. 14. xv. 22. k xiv. 6. xv. 24. xvii. 24. Ps. x. 5. xcii. 5, 6. 1 Cor. ii. 14. xxxi. 21. Is. xxix. 21. Am. v. 10. 12. 15. 11. Is. x. 7—13. xxxii. 7. Ez. xxxviii. 10, 11. Nah. i. 11. Rom. i. 30.

builted; and by understanding * it is established:

4 And ^f by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.

5 A ^e wise man is * strong; yea, a man of knowledge [†] increaseth strength.

6 For ^h by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war; [†] and in multitude of counsellors *there* is safety.

7 Wisdom is ^k too high for a fool: he [†] openeth not his mouth in the gate.

8 He ^m that deviseth to do evil, shall be called a mischievous person.

9 The ⁿ thought of foolishness is sin: and ^o the scorner is an abomination to men.

10 If ^p thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is ^q small.

11 If ^r thou forbear to deliver *them* that are drawn unto death, and *those* that are ready to be slain;

12 If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; ^s doth not he that pondereth the heart consider *it*? and he ^t that keepeth thy soul, doth *not* he know *it*? ^u and shall *not* he render to *every* man according to his works?

1 Sam. xvi. 7. Ps. vii. 9. xvii. 3. xlv. 21. Ec. v. 8. Jer. xvii. 10. Rom. ii. 16. 1 Cor. iv. 5. Heb. iv. 12, 13. Rev. ii. 18, 23. s 1 Sam. ii. 6. xxv. 29. Ps. lxxvi. 9. cxxi. 3, 8. Dan. v. 23. Acts xvii. 28. Rev. i. 18. t Job xxxiv. 11. Ps. lxii. 12. Jer. xxxii. 19. Matt. xvi. 27. Rom. ii. 6. 2 Cor. v. 10. Rev. xx. 12—15. xxii. 12.

‘established with understanding; and the chambers will be filled by knowledge with all precious and pleasant riches.’ The original is *future*: a counsel rather than an affirmation.—Dishonesty in many cases seems the readiest road to wealth; but prudence and piety lead the surest way to durable prosperity. (*Marg. Ref.* d—i.—*Notes*, xiv. 1. xxi. 20. 22. xxvii. 23—27. *Ec.* vii. 19, 20. ix. 13—18.) A wise, upright, and pious person is most likely to advance and establish himself and family, in a comfortable and respectable situation; and to obtain that plenty, which conduces to the real enjoyment of life, and enables a man to do good: and his sober, discreet, and charitable use of it renders it precious and pleasant. His wisdom also will prove a greater security to him, and give him a greater ascendancy over others, than mere power and authority could do: by knowledge he increases his strength. And when such a wise man is placed upon a throne, he will so conduct himself, as to avoid contests if he can by any allowable means: and if he cannot, he will take such good counsel in waging war, that he will provide well for the safety of himself and of the state; even though he have to cope with an antagonist far more powerful than himself. (*Notes*, xi. 14. xv. 22. xx. 18.)

V. 7. (*Note*, xiv. 6. xv. 24.) The careless, sensual, and selfish man is *the fool* here spoken of. Wisdom is out of his reach; he is of too low and grovelling a disposition to raise his thoughts to so noble an object, or to bestow the pains which are requisite in order to obtain it. (*Note*, Ps. xcii. 6, 7.) “He openeth not his mouth” in the convention of the elders, to consult about publick concerns: not because he is too modest to speak his thoughts; but because he has nothing to say; and because he little cares how matters go with others, or even with his own soul, provided he may be unmolested in his worthless pursuits and gratifications; or, because he is rash and headstrong, he is not admitted to speak on such occasions. (*Notes*, xxxi. 8, 9. *Job* xxix. 7—11.)

V. 8, 9. ‘He, that deviseth new ways and arts of cheating, or doing mischief, ... shall be branded with the odious name of “An inventor of evil things.”’ *Rom.* i. 30. *Bp. Patrick*.—He who *devises* mischief, will be adjudged a mischievous man, even though he do not effect his purpose. The thought, intention, or desire, to commit any

kind of vice or mischief, nay, the very harbouring the idea in the imagination, or admitting it without abhorrence, is *sin*: but he who not only devises evil, but makes a jest of it when it is done, or scoffs at the precepts and warnings of God’s word, ought to be abhorred, and will become abominable to men, as he is an abomination among them. (*Notes*, xxii. 10. xxix. 8. *Gen.* vi. 5. *Is.* lv. 6, 7. *Jer.* iv. 14. *Matt.* xv. 15—20. *Acts* viii. 18—24, v. 22.)

V. 10. ‘Man hath no trial of his strength, till he be in troubles.’ When afflictions depress a man’s spirits, and unfit him for present duty, and lead him to neglect or decline it; it is manifest that his faith and grace are weak, and consequently he is wanting in vigour and courage; or, that he is a feeble man, not fit for difficult and trying services of any kind. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11, 12. If any man knows that his neighbour is in danger of losing his life, by false accusation, or a malicious prosecution, or in any other way; he is bound to do all in his power to deliver him. But if self-love, indolence, cowardice, or reluctance to incur expense or inconvenience, induce him to neglect his duty; he will be deemed an accessory to the crime: and it will be in vain for him to say that he was not fully acquainted with the matter, or aware of the danger, that it was none of his business, and he knew not how to prevent it; for the Lord sees through such fallacious excuses, and will expose them. ‘This chiefly belongs to magistrates, ... who ought not to be over-awed by great men, from undertaking the protection and relief of those who are unjustly oppressed.’ *Bp. Patrick*. Many of the proverbs, no doubt, were particularly intended for the instruction and warning of rulers; who may be supposed likely to notice the maxims of a great king, more than those of inferior men: but there is generally an important meaning, in which each proverb is applicable to the case of every reader.—‘The magistrate ought to be the guardian of innocent men’s lives: and private persons, in their places, ought to oppose, without sedition, unjust severity, as much as they are able. There are many examples of this in scripture. Jonathan opposed his father, and helped to preserve David. ... Obadiah fed the prophets whom Jezebel designed to have killed. The eunuch pulled up Jeremiah out of the dungeon: and the ... midwives saved the Israelites’ children,

ⁿ xxv. 16. 27. Cant. v. 1. Is. vii. 15. Matt. iii. 4. * Heb. upon thy palate.

^z xxii. 18. Ps. xix. 10, 11. cxix. 103. 111. Jer. xv. 16. v. ii. 1—5. 10. iii. 13—18.

^z xxiii. 18. Matt. xix. 21. 29. Jam. i. 25. a i. 11. 1 Sam. xix. 11. xxii. 18, 19. xxiii. 20—23. Ps. x. 8, 9. xxxvii. 32. lvi. 6. lix. 3. cxi. 5. Jer. xi. 19. Matt. xxvi. 4. Acts ix. 24. xxiii. 16. xxv. 3. b xxii. 28. Is. xxxii. 18.

^c Job v. 19. Ps. xxxiv. 19. xxxvii. 24. Mic. vii. 8—10. 2 Cor. i. 8—10. iv. 8—12. xi. 23—27.

¹³ My son, ^u eat thou honey, because ^{it} is good; and the honey-comb, ^{which} is sweet ^{*} to thy taste:

¹⁴ So ^{*} shall the knowledge of wisdom ^{be} unto thy soul, ^v when thou hast found ^{it}; then ^z there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off.

¹⁵ ^a Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous; ^b spoil not his resting-place.

¹⁶ For ^c a just man falleth seven

times, and riseth up again; ^d but the wicked shall fall into mischief.

¹⁷ ^e Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth, and let not thine heart be glad when he stumbleth:

¹⁸ Lest the LORD see ^{it}, and it [†] displease him, ^f and he turn away his wrath from him.

¹⁹ [†] Fret not thyself because of evil men, ^g neither be thou envious at the wicked;

²⁰ For ^h there shall be no reward to

thee, because thou hast hated him.

²¹ For ⁱ the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

²² For ^j the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

²³ For ^k the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

²⁴ For ^l the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

²⁵ For ^m the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

²⁶ For ⁿ the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

²⁷ For ^o the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

²⁸ For ^p the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

²⁹ For ^q the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

³⁰ For ^r the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

³¹ For ^s the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

³² For ^t the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

³³ For ^u the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

³⁴ For ^v the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

³⁵ For ^w the righteous shall be rewarded, and the wicked shall be punished.

^x xviii. 17. xxviii. 14—18. 1 Sam. xxvi. 10. xxxi. 4. Esth. vii. 10. Ps. vii. 16. lii. 5. Am. v. 2. viii. 14. Acts xii. 23. 1 Thes. v. 3. Rev. xviii. 20, 21.

^y xvii. 5. Judg. xvi. 25. 2 Sam. xvi. 5. &c. Job xxxi. 29. Ps. xxxv. 15. 19. xlii. 10. Ob. 12. 1 Cor. xiii. 6, 7. Heb. be evil in his eyes.

^z Lam. iv. 21, 22. Zech. i. 15, 16. † Or, Keep not company with the wicked. xiii. 20. Num. xvi. 26. Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

ⁱ Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^j Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^k Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^l Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^m Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

ⁿ Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^o Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^p Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^q Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^r Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^s Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^t Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^u Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^v Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^w Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^x Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^y Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

^z Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

[†] Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

[†] Ps. i. 1. xxvi. 4, 5. cxix. 115. 2 Cor. vi. 17. Eph. v. 11. 2 Tim. iii. 2—5. Rev. xviii. 4. g 1. xxiii. 17. Ps. xxxvii. 1. h Ps. ix. 17. xi. 6. Is. iii. 11.

ixiii. 9. xx. 20. the evil man; 'the candle of the wicked shall be put out.

21 My son, ^k fear thou the LORD and the king; and ^l meddle not with them that are [†] given to change:

22 For ^m their calamity shall rise suddenly; and ⁿ who knoweth the ruin of them both?

23 These ^o things also belong to the wise. ^p It is not good to have respect to persons in judgment.

24 He ^q that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous; ^r him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him.

25 But to ^s them that rebuke him shall be delight, and ^t a good blessing shall come upon them.

26 Every man ^u shall kiss his lips, that ^v giveth a right answer.

27 ^w Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house.

28 Be ^x not a witness against thy neighbour without cause; and ^y deceive not with thy lips.

29 ^z Say not, ^a I will do so to him as he hath done to me; I will render to the man according to his work.

30 ¶ I ^b went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man ^c void of understanding:

31 And, lo, ^d it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, ^e and the stone-wall thereof was broken down.

32 Every man ^f shall kiss his lips, that ^g giveth a right answer.

V. 21, 22. 'Have nothing to do with those, who ... vary from all good laws and orders, and are affected to innovation and change, both of princes and government.' Bp. Hall.—Kings and rulers must be revered and obeyed, in all things lawful, by those who fear God, and obey his commands. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Rom. xiii. 1—7.) The late events, for a series of years in Europe, have abundantly shewn, that Solomon's wisdom was far greater than that of modern philosophers, so called; or rather, that the wisdom of God is infinitely above the wisdom of man. The ruin of those who rebel against God, and of those who excite disturbances in the state, comes upon them in the most unsuspected manner, and is dreadful beyond conception. (Notes, xvii. 11. 2 Sam. xv—xviii. 1 Kings xii. 2 Chr. xiii.)

V. 23. The following things should be peculiarly considered by all, that would act as wise men, especially in the capacity of rulers and magistrates. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xviii. 5. xxviii. 21. Ex. xxiii. 1—9.)

V. 24, 25. The magistrate, who acquits a wicked man, or decides in his favour because of his wealth or power, will be generally and justly execrated: but those, who restrain and punish evil doers of every rank, will have the satisfaction of being generally favoured, and the advantage of having many prayers offered for them, and blessings pronounced on them. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xvii. 15. 1 Kings xxi. 8—14. Neh. v. 6—13. Job xxix. 12—25.) Those authors, or orators, who compose panegyrics on wicked men; those courtiers and dependents who flatter ungodly princes and nobles; and above all, those ministers who, through fear, sloth, ignorance, or love of filthy lucre, give that encouragement to wicked men which belongs only to the righteous, are by parity of reason included, and will be at length universally execrated: while they, who act faithfully, will have the comfort and benefit of it.

V. 26. He who speaks honestly, faithfully, season-

ably, and to the purpose, whether as a judge, a witness, a senator, a counsellor, a minister of religion, or a private person, will meet with general respect and affection: at least this ought to be the case. And every one, who experiences the benefit of the right answer, will be attached to him that gave it. (Notes, xv. 23. xxv. 11, 12. Gen. xli. 33—38. Matt. xxii. 15—40. Mark xii. 28—34. Col. iv. 5, 6, v. 6.)

V. 27. The most needful and profitable work should be first attended to. Men ought to employ their labour and expense in cultivating the land, before they proceed to build and beautify their houses, or furnish them in an elegant style, or even in a commodious manner. For if the house be built, and the land be neglected, another man will be likely to possess both of them.—Or the proverb may mean, that every thing should be done with deliberation, foresight, and contrivance. 'Get all ready, as well as count the cost, before you begin to build.' (Notes, 1 Kings v. 13—18. vi. 7. Luke xiv. 28—33.)

V. 28. 'Be not thou a witness against thy neighbour without cause: for wilt thou deceive with thy lips?' Old Version.—The expression without cause, seems to imply, not only the case of a man who bears false witness; but that of him, who from personal resentment, or any other corrupt motive, testifies the truth against his neighbour, when there is no sufficient reason why he should do it; that is, when neither the glory of God, nor the benefit of man requires it. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xiv. 25. xix. 9. Ex. xx. 16.)

V. 29. 'Suppose he hath been injurious, in that kind to thee heretofore, and thou hast now an opportunity to be revenged; let not that tempt thee to resolve with thyself to do to him as he hath done to thee.' Bp. Patrick.—'He sheweth what is in the nature of the wicked; to revenge wrong for wrong.' (Marg. Ref.—See on Note, xx. 22.—Note, xxv. 21, 22.)

V. 30—34. Marg. Ref.—Notes, vi. 6—11. xx. 4.

* Heb. set my heart. Job vii. 17. Ps. iv. 4. Luke ii. 19. 32 Then I saw, and * considered it well: † I looked upon it, and received instruction.

† Deut. xiii. 11. 33 Yet ‡ a little sleep, a little slum- g vi. 4—11. Rom. xiii. 11. Eph. v. 14. 1 Thes. v. 6—8.

Gen. iii. 17—19.—Ec. x. 16—19, v. 18. Matt. xiii. 22. Heb. vi. 7, 8.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—20.

The strong propensity in human nature to malignant and selfish tempers renders repeated cautions against them necessary. But it must be as foolish as it is wicked, to “be envious against evil men, or to desire” a share in their unlawful gains, while “their heart studieth destruction, “and their lips talk of mischief;” or to fret or distress ourselves at their short-lived success, in “laying wait “against the dwelling of the righteous, and spoiling his “resting-place:” for unless they repent they will soon “fall into mischief” to rise no more; and their wasting candle will expire in “the blackness of darkness for ever.” But the righteous man, though repeatedly cast down into trouble, nay, should he be again and again overcome with strong temptations, shall rise superior to them all, and have an eternal dwelling and resting place, which the wicked cannot approach.—We may foresee, but we should not desire, the destruction of sinners: neither may we “rejoice “when our enemy falleth.” Even when we are greatly injured, and sharply persecuted, we must not allow any emotions of revenge: for the Lord will “see it and be dis- “pleased;” he will even suffer the haughty persecutor to proceed a little longer with impunity, rather than allow his people to harbour in any measure so malignant a spirit; and instead of punishing their persecutors, he will previously and sharply chastise them, to prepare them to meet deliverance in a more Christian manner. How displeasing then must that revenge be, which is generally excited by trivial or imaginary offences, and puts men upon evident crimes, in order to retaliate on the offender!—We are here again reminded of the value of true wisdom; which alone can give a man establishment in that kind of reputation and prosperity, which is precious and desirable: for it will suggest to him the most beneficent designs, and afford him the greatest advantages for accomplishing them; and it will do more than all other things to render him safe and useful. But this wisdom is far too high and arduous a thing for the giddy and heedless, who waste their lives in low pursuits or childish amusements: and not only for the sensual and dissipated, but also for the avaricious, nay even the ambitious part of mankind. They alone obtain this invaluable good, who bestow pains to obtain it; who are taught so to prize it for the sake of its effects, that they would pursue it, if it were with present pain and uneasiness; and they find so much sweetness in it, that they would feed upon it, as men do on the purest honey, even if there were no future advantage from it. But the recompence is sure to those, who thus seek wisdom from the Lord; and its present usefulness is immense. While foolish and wicked men either do not open their mouths in the gate; or, intruding into offices for which they are not qualified, only “darken counsel by words without know-

ber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:

34 So shall ^h thy poverty come as ^h x. 4. xiii 4. one that travelleth; and thy want as † an armed man.

† Heb. a man of shield.

“ledge;” wisdom renders a man fit for his station in the community, whatever it be. So that should he even be called to fill a throne, he will conduct publick affairs with discretion, and benefit by the multitude of counsellors; and he will repress and be a terror to evil-doers alone. He will count it his highest honour to promote the happiness of his people: he will engage in no war, but for their protection and true interest: and his prudent conduct will do far more to secure success, and to strengthen the nation, and procure a safe and lasting peace, than any of those heroical achievements, which are so highly celebrated in the world.—We should never forget, that our heart-searching God will call us to account for the *devices* and *thoughts* of our heart. Instead therefore of inventing evil things with the mischievous person, or entertaining our minds with vain and sinful thoughts; we ought continually to be looking around us, to see what good we can do, or what mischief we can prevent: and we need not wait long for opportunities, if we be “zealous of good “works.” For when our neighbour, or even our enemy, is in danger of being ruined, condemned, or deeply injured, through malice or mistake, we are bound to risk every personal consequence in attempting his deliverance, if any thing be in our power. In such things, however, the deceitfulness of the heart must be peculiarly guarded against. For self-love suggests many plausible excuses, and the conscience may be bribed to bring in a favourable verdict: but the Lord will order a re-hearing of the cause; he will manifest the secrets of all hearts, and render unto every man according to his works: and if he find our excuses insufficient, and our conduct to be the effect of indolence, cowardice, self-indulgence, and unbelief; we shall be considered as chargeable with a share of that guilt, which we might have successfully opposed; and as having concurred in causing that misery, which we ought to have prevented.—But the same feebleness of mind, which causes many to “faint in the day of adversity,” induces numbers to shrink from such services, as cannot be performed without giving offence to powerful oppressors; or to those of lower rank, who will not relieve the urgent necessities of the poor themselves, and then take it as a reflection upon them, if others supply their deficiencies. This timid, indolent spirit is often mistaken for meekness: but it is in fact a *natural* disposition, which as much needs correcting by divine grace, as the impetuous violence of self-sufficient boldness does. We should therefore pray continually for the courage of faith, and the meekness of humility, and the persevering, enduring activity of fervent love.

V. 21—34.

“These things belong unto the wise:” and “if any “man lack wisdom let him ask of God.”—But that wisdom which he bestows will never suffer a man to say, “I “will do so to him, as he hath done to me: I will render “unto him according to his work.” (Note, Jam. iii. 17, 18.) For in this spirit, the most exact evidence, which

CHAP. XXV.

Of kings, and those who minister to them, 1—7. Of avoiding contention, and receiving reproof, 8—12. Of faithful messengers, and vain boasters, 13, 14. Of forbearance, temperance, and prudent conduct towards neighbours, 15—17. Of false witnesses, unfaithful friends, and unseasonable mirth, 18—20. Of kindness to enemies, frowning away backbiters, and domestick discord, 21—24. Of the righteous falling before the wicked; of vain glory and an ungoverned temper, 25—28.

could be given even in a court of justice, would be criminal before God. On such occasions we should be afraid of officiousness, or of wrong motives, in being “witness against our neighbour without a cause:” but resentment generally warps the judgment, induces a man to make the worst of every circumstance, and thus leads him to deceive with his lips, and to become a slanderer and false accuser.—In like manner, “the wisdom which is from above” will effectually prevent the magistrate from “respecting persons in judgment;” and both the magistrate, and the minister of religion, and every person, from saying “to the wicked, thou art righteous.”—When this is done by the magistrate, “the people will curse him, “nations will abhor him:” and though the minister, who flatters and deceives men’s souls, may here be caressed and prospered; he will hereafter be more deeply and universally execrated than any other person in the world. But he who rebukes and reproves with affectionate faithfulness; whatever return he may have from men, shall have delight in the testimony of his conscience, in the good done by him, and in the favour of his God, and “a good blessing will come upon him.”—In general even here, he who studies to adapt his discourse to every case, in which he is required to speak, will find a measure of respect and attention; for “every man will kiss his lips, who giveth a right answer,” and such as he derives good from.—But sloth and self-indulgence are the bane of all good. While we go past “the field of the slothful, and the vineyard of the “man void of understanding,” and view them overgrown with thorns and nettles, and the fences all broken down; we see an emblem of the far more deplorable state of many souls. Every evil and depraved affection grows exceedingly in the hearts of vast multitudes, all their faculties are thrown open to the delusions or suggestions of the devil and his agents, nothing good has any root or growth there, and everlasting poverty is coming upon them as an armed man: yet they are saying, “a little sleep, a little “slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep!”—A wise man will consider and receive instruction from the ruinous misconduct of a fool: though the fool will not profit by the example or counsel of a wise man. Let us then shew our wisdom, by taking the hint from the case of the sluggard, to redouble our diligence in every good thing, and to watch and pray more against the beginnings of so ruinous a vice. But many, who are diligent in worldly business, are slothful about their eternal interests. They mind minute concerns, but neglect the momentous: they establish the house, but neglect the estate. Let us then learn to begin at the right end; and to do every thing

THESE are also ^aproverbs of Solomon, ^bwhich the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out.

2 It is ^cthe glory of God to conceal a thing; but ^dthe honour of kings is to search out a matter.

3 The ^eheaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings ^fis unsearchable.

vii. 11. lv. 9. Rom. viii. 39.

* Heb. there is no searching. 1 Kings iv. 29.

^a 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

in season, and in order, and with prudence as well as diligence. (Note, Matt. vi. 33, 34.) And let us study to be “quiet, and to mind our own business,” conscientiously and in the fear of God: let us honour and obey the king, and have nothing to do with those turbulent spirits, who are given to change, and always aiming to raise disturbances and introduce innovations: thus we shall avoid the calamity and the ruin which come suddenly upon those, who rebel against God and the king; and shall so “pass through things temporal, that finally we lose not the “things which are eternal.”

NOTES.

CHAP. XXV. V. 1. The men of Hezekiah.] “Whom ‘Hezekiah appointed for that purpose.’—‘The friends of ‘Hezekiah.’ Sept.—It is probable, that Solomon himself, or some others by his order and under his inspection, had selected the proverbs contained in the preceding chapters, as most suited to general religious utility: but that all the rest of the “three thousand” were preserved by the kings of Israel, though not published for the use of the people: (Note, 1 Kings iv, 30—34, v. 32:) and that Hezekiah, with the concurrence and under the superintendence of Isaiah, and other contemporary prophets, employed some competent persons among his servants to collect from the rest, the proverbs contained in this and the following chapters.

V. 2, 3. It is the glory of God, that he knows all things most perfectly, and that he needs no information or counsel: that he gives no account of his matters, and conceals his purposes from the most penetrating and intruding; except as he has unfolded some particulars, of what he intended to do in future ages, to confirm his revelation of himself, and his truth and will, for men’s encouragement and instruction in their duty. (Notes, Deut. xxix. 29. Job xi. 7—12. xxxiii. 12, 13. Rom. xi. 33—36.) But earthly princes are in themselves as ignorant and fallible as their subjects: their honour therefore consists in investigating every matter with the utmost accuracy and attention. It behoves them to search out the revealed will of God; and to procure intelligence from every quarter, and information on every subject, connected with their important duties; and to avail themselves of the wisdom of others, whom they advise with as counsellors: that their laws, decisions, and measures may be the result of knowledge, equity, sound policy, and mature deliberation, and conducive to the true interests of their subjects; and not the dictates of pride, ambition, resentment, passion, or caprice. (Deut. xiii. 14. xvii. 4. xix. 18. Notes, Esth. iii.

4 Take ^faway the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.

5 Take ^gaway the wicked *from* before the king, and ^hhis throne shall be established in righteousness.

6 ^{*}Put not forth thyself ⁱin the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great *men* :

7 For better *it is* ^kthat it be said unto thee, ^lCome up hither; ^mthan that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

8 Go not forth ⁿhastily to strive,

lest *thou know not* ^owhat to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.

9 Debate thy cause ^pwith thy neighbour *himself*; and discover not [†]a secret to another :

10 Lest he that heareth *it* put thee to shame, and ^qthine infamy turn not away.

11 A ^rword ^{*}fitly spoken *is like* apples of gold in pictures of silver.

12 *As* ^san ear-ring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, *so is* ^ta wise re-prover upon an obedient ear.

13 *As* ^uthe cold of snow in the time

9—15. *Job* xxix. 12—17, v. 16. *Is.* xi. 2—5.) Yet a wise king will be upon the reserve, as to his determinations, till the event discovers them : and it will often be as impracticable for others, who are not consulted, or informed of his plans, however sagacious or inquisitive they may be, to dive into his secret intentions, as to measure the height of the heaven, or the depth of the earth.—‘It is too hard for men to attain to the reason of all the secret doings of the king, even when he is upright and doeth his duty.’ (*Marg. Ref.* e.—*Note*, 1 *Kings* iii. 23—28.)

V. 4, 5. As the artificer cannot make a beautiful cup or vessel, without well refining his metal ; so a king cannot establish his throne in righteousness, till he remove wicked men from places of publick trust, and drive them from his counsel and from about his person.—‘They should not keep so much as one ill man about them ; who oft-times corrupts the whole court, and disturbs the whole kingdom.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—The modern maxim, that the private character of a minister of state should not be investigated, flatly contradicts the wisdom of Solomon and of God. (*Notes*, xvi. 12, 13. xvii. 3. xx. 8. 28. xxix. 12. *Ps.* lxxv. 9, 10. ci. 3—8. *Is.* xxxii. 1—8. xxxiii. 5, 6.)

V. 6, 7. (*Note*, *Luke* xiv. 7—11.) There can be no reasonable doubt, that our Lord referred to these verses, in his admonitions to the ambitious guests at the Pharisee’s table, and was understood to do so. While, therefore, this gives his sanction to the Book of Proverbs, it also shews, that these maxims may fairly be applied to similar cases, and that we need not confine the interpretation exclusively to the subject which gave rise to the maxim. The ambitious competition of courtiers, the disgrace of being placed lower than a man’s self-sufficiency had arrogated to him, and the honour paid to modest worth by wise princes, gave our Lord the occasion of counselling the guests ; and that admonition forms one of the standard rules, by which he deals with those, who profess themselves his disciples. “Before honour is humility, and a haughty spirit before a fall.” (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 27. xvi. 19. xxvii. 2. *Luke* xviii. 9—14.)—The last words, “whom thine eyes have seen,” are thought by some learned men *redundant* ; and some add them to the next verse : but perhaps they may allude to the case of a person newly brought to court, getting a sight of the prince, and flattering himself with the hopes of high favour and preferment ;

but giving disgust by a self-sufficient conduct, and so finally excluded from the king’s presence. An apt emblem of many vain-glorious professors of Christianity!

V. 8—10. Precipitation in commencing contention can arise only from fierce passions, pride, and ignorance or forgetfulness of consequences. (*Notes*, xiii. 10. xvii. 14. xviii. 6, 7. *Luke* xiv. 28—33, vv. 31, 32.) This is equally applicable to engaging in foreign wars, or in civil dissensions ; and to entering on law-suits, controversies, or any other private contests. (*Notes*, xx. 18. xxiv. 3—6.) Those who are most eager to contend, are generally least able to maintain their ground : consequently their boastings and menaces frequently end in their own disgrace ; and they bring themselves into inextricable difficulties. To avoid this, men should previously consider what they are about to do : and if they have been materially injured, they should calmly expostulate with their offending neighbour, and state to him their earnest desire of agreement upon any reasonable terms ; and thus endeavour, by compromise or reference, to render an open contest unnecessary. None should, however, in any case, divulge private transactions to others, or traduce a man’s character out of resentment : for this will take away the prospect of an amicable settlement : and if words of this kind be reported to him, and he can shew them to be in any measure false and slanderous, or overcharged, the disgrace will rebound upon the speaker, and perhaps become indelible. This is precisely the instruction of the New Testament. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Matt.* xviii. 15—17. 1 *Cor.* vi. 1—8.) Solomon, speaking by divine inspiration, gave the same instructions, which were afterwards authoritatively given by his illustrious Antitype.

V. 11, 12. A word of counsel, encouragement, or reproof, when it is spoken with propriety, and is well-timed, and suited to the occasion, is conspicuously beautiful. As when apples of gold are painted, or presented to our view, in lattice-work of silver ; where ‘the fine fruit receives a new charm, by shewing itself through the elegant apertures of the basket.’ *Hervey*.—And when a wise reprover, and one that receives the reproof in good part, happen to meet ; no jewels of gold can be so ornamental as this becoming behaviour. (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xv. 23. xxiv. 26. 1 *Sam.* xxv. 32, 33. *Ps.* cxli. 5. *Is.* i. 4.)

V. 13. Liquor cooled with ice or snow, preserved or

of harvest, *so is a faithful messenger to them that send him : for he refresheth the soul of his masters.*

14 Whoso ^aboasteth himself ^{*}of a false gift *is like clouds and wind without rain.*

15 By ^ylong forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.

16 ^zHast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, ^alest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it.

17 [†]Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbour's house; lest he be [†]weary of thee, and so hate thee.

18 A man ^bthat beareth false witness against his neighbour *is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow.*

19 ^cConfidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble, *is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of joint.*

20 As he ^dthat taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as ^evinegar upon nitre; ^fso is he that singeth songs to an heavy heart.

21 If ^gthine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink.

22 For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and ^hthe LORD shall reward thee.

brought from the mountains for that purpose, according to the custom in hot countries, is very grateful in the heat of summer, especially to the husbandman when gathering in his harvest. Thus faithful ambassadors, or messengers, refresh the minds of those who employ them in business of great importance, and are anxious about the event. (25. Notes, xiii. 17. xxvi. 6. Phil. ii. 24—30.)

V. 14. 'He that makes bountiful promises of great gifts, which will never be performed, is like a cloud which makes a shew of that rain, which it will not and cannot yield.' Bp. Hall. (Notes, xx. 6. Hos. vi. 4, 5. Jude 11—13, v. 12.)

V. 15. By submission, and patient endurance under rebukes, and humble entreaties, even the prince, who has been greatly offended, may be pacified: whereas petulancy and passion would inflame his resentment, and prove of fatal consequence. Nay, soft, persuasive language is generally the most effectual, to prevail over the obdurate mind and stubborn resolution, and to carry the point in the midst of great difficulties. The marrow cannot be obtained, till the bone be broken: this is therefore an apt emblem of the advantages of gentle means; which, contrary to apparent probability, break the bone that violence would have rendered more obdurate. (Notes, xv. 1. Ec. viii. 3—5. x. 4.)

V. 16. Honey may be regarded as an emblem of sensual pleasure: though it is wholesome when eaten in moderation, yet when taken to excess it will produce a surfeit. (Notes, 27. xxiv. 13, 14.) Those animal indulgences, which are lawful in themselves, and placed within our reach, (as if we had found honey and it were all our own,) should yet be used with great moderation, or they will lead us into guilt and trouble. (Marg. Ref. a.)

V. 17. Our intercourse with neighbours cannot be conducted with comfort and cordiality, without discretion, as well as sincerity. Unseasonable, tedious, and too frequent visits, without invitation, or upon such as is general and slight; and indulging too freely at the expense of others, may create disgust. Such behaviour leaves an unfavourable opinion of a man's character on the mind of his neighbour: and it not only appears selfish, but it presses too hard upon the other's selfishness, and on both accounts may probably terminate in weariness, or even in

aversion or enmity. (Marg. Ref.)—Withdraw, &c.] Marg. "Make it precious." (הֵקֵר, from יָקָר.) 'Do not render thy company cheap; but keep up the value that might otherwise be set upon it.' (Notes, xxiii. 6—8. 1 Sam. iii. 1.)

V. 18. A maul.] Or a club, by which a man is beaten down to the ground: a "dasher in pieces." (Nah. ii. 2. Heb. Marg. Ref.—See on Note, xii. 18, 19.)

V. 19. (Marg. Ref.)—'As a broken tooth, or a leg out of joint, not only fails a man when he comes to use it, but likewise puts him into pain; so doth a faithless person serve them that depend on him, when they have the greatest need of his help. And such also is the confidence, that a faithless person himself places in riches, or craft, or great friends, &c. which some time or other will disappoint him to his great grief, when he expects the most from them.' Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref. c.)

V. 20. It would be an inhumanity peculiarly unseasonable, to take away a poor man's raiment, or the covering of his bed, in the depth of winter; and it is observed that when vinegar is poured on an alkali, their contrariety produces a violent effervescence: so incongruous and disquieting are the common expressions of mirth and joy, in company with one who is greatly troubled in his mind. (Note, Ps. cxxxvii. 1—6.)—Nitre, in this place, does not signify the salt now commonly so called, or salt-petre; but a fixed alkali called *nitrum* by the Romans; or some alkaline composition, which was used instead of soap by the Jews. (Note, Jer. ii. 22—24, v. 22.)

V. 21, 22. The apostle has quoted these verses from the Septuagint, *verbatim*, (except the last clause,) in his most beautiful exhortations to Christians, enforced by the consideration of the mercies of God to them. (Note, Rom. xii. 17—21, v. 20.) Such a quotation is the strongest testimony to the divine authority of the book whence it is made: and clearly evinces that the same rule of duty is contained in both testaments; however ancient scribes and Pharisees, and several modern writers, may have overlooked it. The law of love is not expounded more spiritually, in any single precept either of Christ or his apostles, than in this exhortation. Seize the moment of distress to shew kindness to him that *hates* thee. This will resemble the effort of the refiner with a piece of metal, untractable

ⁱ Job xxxvii. 22. ^o Or, *bringeth forth rain; so doth a backbiting tongue an angry countenance.* 23 The ⁱ north wind * driveth away rain: ^k so *doth* an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.

^k xxvi. 20. Ps. xv. 3. Rom. i. 30. 2 Cor. xii. 20. 24 It is ^l better to dwell in a corner of the house-top, than with a brawling woman, and in a wide house.

^m Gen. xxi. 16—19. Ex. xvii. 2, 3. 6. Judg. xv. 18. 19. 2 Sam. xxiii. 15. Ps. xlii. 1, 2. ⁿ so is good news from a far country. ^l xlii. 1. Is. lv. 1. Jer. xviii. 14. John vii. 37. Rev. xxi. 6. xxii. 17. ⁿ xv. 30. Is. lii. 7. Nah. i. 15. Luke ii. 10, 11. Rom. x. 15. 1 Tim. i. 15.

26 A ^o righteous man falling down before the wicked, is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring.

27 It is ^p not good to eat much honey: ^q so for men to search their own glory is not glory.

28 He ^r that hath no rule over his own spirit, is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.

^o Gen. iv. 8. 1 Sam. xxii. 14—18. 2 Chr. xxiv. 21, 22. Matt. xxiii. 34—37. xxvi. 69—74. Acts vii. 52. 1 Thes. ii. 15. Rev. xvii. 6. 16. ^p xxvii. 2. John v. 44. 2 Cor. xii. 1. 11. Phil. ii. 3. ^q xvi. 32. xxii. 24. 1 Sam. xx. 30. xxv. 17.

by ordinary means: he surrounds it beneath, above, and on every side, with coals intensely heated, and thus either melts or consumes it: and, however the plan may eventually succeed with him who thus labours to overcome evil with good, “verily he shall in no wise lose his reward.” The fair prospect of success seems especially intended, as the motive and end proposed, in attempting it. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 23. The meaning of this verse in our translation is obvious and instructive: yet the original seems to convey another meaning. “As the north wind produces rain,” (which it does in some countries,) “so a backbiting tongue *produceth* an angry countenance.” Either interpretation shews how hateful backbiters are, and how they should be frowned upon.

V. 24. *Marg. Ref.*—See on Note, xxi. 9.

V. 25. *Marg. Ref.*—Notes, 13. xv. 30. Is. lii. 7, 8. Luke ii. 8—14, vv. 10, 11. Rom. x. 12—17. 1 Thes. iii. 6—10.

V. 26. A troubled fountain or corrupt spring sends forth polluted streams, to the disappointment and annoyance of the neighbourhood. Thus, when a righteous man falls into any evident sin, in the presence of the wicked; or when he pays unseemly homage to them, from fear or interest; or when he falls under their oppressive power; in different ways these events tend to prejudice and embolden the minds of sinners, and are a grief, a snare, or a discouragement to the servants of God. (*Marg. Ref.*—Notes, 2 Sam. xi. 14—21. xxiv. 3, 4.)

V. 27. To supply a negative, in order to explain a maxim of wisdom, as in this verse, seems indefensible: and yet, of the various interpretations which have been proposed, in order to avoid this difficulty, none gives satisfaction, at least to me.—Might not the latter clause be read interrogatively: “To eat honey to excess is not good; and is it glory for men to seek their own glory?”—A moderate regard to reputation is proper; (*Note, Ec. x. 1*;) as it is to eat honey moderately: but does not the vain-glorious man run into pernicious excess, by rioting on what he delights in; as much as the man who eats honey, till he surfeits with it? (*Notes, 16. xxiv. 13, 14. xxvii. 2. John v. 39—44, v. 44. 2 Cor. x. 17, 18. xii. 11—13.*)

V. 28. The man, who has no command over his passions, especially over his anger, lies open to the assault of every invader: any one may exasperate and torment him, and rob him of his comfort, his peace, and his reason at pleasure: every temptation seduces him into sin, and the most trifling concerns involve him in the most serious contests. (*Notes, xvi. 32. xxii. 24, 25. 1 Sam. xx. 30. Esth. iii. 3—6. v. 13.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—15.

We ought carefully to recollect, and readily to communicate, the instructive lessons which wise and good men have left behind them: but selection is in this case of prime importance. The whole of what even Solomon wrote was not thought proper to be published. And to communicate to the publick, indiscriminately, all that eminent men have left in manuscript, is not only an injustice to their characters, but a detriment to mankind. By these means the effusions of an unguarded hour are sent forth into the world, under the sanction of a great name; and alas! men’s follies and mistakes are more likely to meet a favourable reception, than the result of their sober judgment and mature deliberation. This is therefore always an injudicious, and often an infamous, because a mercenary practice.—It is not for us, presumptuously to search into “the deep things of God,” whose glory it is to conceal his decrees in impenetrable secrecy: but let us diligently learn his revealed will, that we may believe and do it, and humbly bound our enquiries where he bounds his information. For how should we be able to know any thing of his unrevealed purposes; when we cannot discover the intentions of our earthly governors with any certainty, unless they inform us of them?—The honour of kings does not consist in external magnificence, numerous attendants, powerful armies, or splendid achievements: much less in domineering over their subjects, and in indulging their own lusts and passions. But it consists, in diligently learning and attending to the duties of their high station; in rendering their whole administration equitable, salutary, and conducive to the peace and happiness of mankind; and in copying his example, who “putteth away the ungodly as dross:” thus will “their thrones be established in righteousness.” For, the reformation of the court, and the good example of those, who possess authority or favour with the prince, will produce a salutary effect through the subordinate ranks of the community. This indeed is an arduous attempt, and requires both resolution and address: a frowning countenance, severe reproofs, and decisive measures must be used; men’s characters must be enquired into, and made trial of, as the finer discriminates between the gold and the dross. But the advantages will abundantly compensate the trouble, to those who are enabled to go through with such a reform. The vain-glorious men, who boast themselves of those talents and endowments which they do not possess, and excite expectations which they are sure to disappoint, being like clouds and wind without rain; and who assume the chief places, and claim the precedence wherever they go; are wholly unfit

CHAP. XXVI.

Divers maxims, concerning fools, sluggards, inter-

to be employed in services of this kind. Indeed, whether such persons are found in palaces or churches, they are to be suspected and kept down. He, who is a meet person to stand in the presence of the king, does not at first sight, or upon the first intimations of favour, aspire to the chief places, or want to thrust out his seniors and superiors; but is diffident, and reluctant to engage in such arduous affairs: and it will be needful to invite him to "come up hither;" and not to "put him lower in the presence of the prince," than he has placed himself. And, in like manner, he who is qualified to be the minister of the Lord of hosts, and has seen "his glory in the face of Jesus Christ," will be proportionably sensible of his own unworthiness and insufficiency. He may be induced by zeal and love, and a sense of duty, to "desire this good work:" but he will not rush upon it with inconsiderate forwardness; nor be disposed to thrust himself into the most conspicuous places, but be satisfied in an obscure sphere, until he be evidently called up higher. Thus in every thing, modesty and humility attend real excellence and precede durable honour: but pride and ostentation are evidences of a worthless character, and lead to contempt and disgrace. The love of peace, and that gentle and circumspect behaviour which best secures it, spring from humility. He, who considers the fatal effects of contention in publick and in private life, will use every means to avoid all occasions of it. He will meditate seriously upon the causes and consequences of any contest in which he may be tempted to engage, before he will venture upon it: he will practise equity, sincerity, candour, and long forbearance; and will study that softness of speech which "breaketh the bone," and disarms the resentment of the powerful or the haughty, and wins to reason and justice those who are infringing on the rights of others. He will not disclose to another person the injuries that he has received, till he has debated the matter with the injurious party: much less will he propagate a distorted and aggravated report, as is too common in such cases. Thus he will be generally enabled to avoid litigations; while precipitation, unguarded language, and partial and *publick* statements of facts, to the injury of men's reputations, lead to irreconcilable discords; and often terminate in irretrievable detriment to the circumstances and character of the offender. And let it be observed, that the hasty entrance upon *religious* controversy is as perilous to a man's *spirit*, as engaging in a duel is to his *life*; and is often as fatal to the welfare of the church, as needless wars are to the community.—It is well worth our while to study acceptable words fitted to take effect; and to know how both to give seasonable counsel, and to yield an obedient ear to salutary reproof; which is very becoming a man professing godliness, and peculiarly conducive to his advantage and usefulness. Indeed prudence, modesty, and faithfulness will render a person valuable in every situation, from that of the ambassador of a powerful monarch, to that of an ordinary messenger to a man of low condition; and will conduce greatly to the comfort of those who employ him.

meddlers with strife, those who do mischief in sport, tale-bearers, dissemblers, liars, and flatterers, 1—28.

V. 16—28.

In publick as well as in private life, misplaced confidence must induce uneasiness, disappointment, and disasters: and if a monarch rely on a mercenary and unfaithful minister of state; he can have no security that he will not betray him in the critical conjuncture, like "a broken tooth," "and a foot out of joint;" and thus involve him in the deepest distress. And what fidelity to his prince can be expected from him, who is a daring rebel against God; and who sacrifices every relative and domestick duty, to the indulgence of his avarice, or his lust? But a minister, "who feareth God and worketh righteousness," and whose integrity and prudence are approved, relieves a prince of his cares and solicitude, and excites the confidence, that good news will be heard, from time to time, out of those distant countries with which he is connected; which will be grateful as the cold water to the thirsty traveller. How welcome then should the faithful messengers of God be to us, who are approved by their Lord for declaring "the truth as it is!" and who bring good news from heaven, that far country, from which we sinners had great reason to expect heavy tidings! May he furnish very many such, and send them forth into all the nations of the earth!—In order to live in peace, and to be prepared to resist temptation, nothing is more important than habitual self-government: for "he, that has no rule over his own spirit, is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." In this case a man lies open to the incursion of every enemy: and if he listen, (as it is most likely he will,) to false witnesses and slanderers, his life must be one continued scene of contention and vexation, of sin and misery. Indeed, we ought not only to avoid these hateful and mischievous vices ourselves; but to frown all calumniators from our presence: and a frown will generally suffice; for they seldom persevere in coming where they are not made welcome. But self-government must be exercised over all our passions and appetites, even in respect of things lawful: that, while many ruin themselves and others by criminal gratifications, and some are useless, troublesome, and uncomfortable through inexpedient indulgence; we may know how to use the good gifts of Providence with thankful moderation, to take what is conducive to health and comfort, and to avoid all excess. It is also incumbent upon us to conduct our social intercourse with our neighbours in a prudent manner, without encroaching, or giving umbrage to them: at the same time we should be thankful, that we never can come to the Lord unseasonably, or too frequently; and that he will never be weary of us or displeased with us, for asking too much of him: and we should make *his love*, and not *man's selfishness*, the pattern of our conduct toward others, though not of our expectations from them. We should also learn to sympathize with the afflicted; and we ought no more to wound their feelings by impertinent levity, than to injure the poor by cruelty and oppression: and we ought steadily and constantly to be aiming to "overcome evil with good;" and to watch for an opportunity, when an enemy is in want or trouble, to shew our good-will to him by a seasonable re-

AS snow ^ain summer, and as rain in harvest, ^bso honour is not seemly for a fool.

2 As the bird by wandering, as the swallow by flying, ^cso the curse causeless shall not come.

3 A ^dwhip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.

4 Answer ^enot a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him.

5 Answer ^fa fool according to his folly, ^glest he be wise in his own ^hconceit.

6 He that ⁱsends a message by the hand of a fool, cuts off the feet, and drinks ^jdamage.

7 The legs of the lame are ^knot

^exvii. 14. Judg. xii. 1—6. 2 Sam. xix. 41—43. 1 Kings xii. 14. 16. 2 Kings xiv. 8—10. 1 Pet. ii. 21—23. iii. 9. Jude 9.

^f1 Kings xxii. 24—28. Jer. xxxvi. 17, 18. Matt. xv. 1—3. xvi. 1—4. xxi. 23—27. xxii. 15—32. Luke xii. 13—21. xiii. 23—30. John viii. 7. ix. 26—33. Tit. i. 13.

^g12. xxviii. 11. h x. 26. xiii. 17.

Rom. xi. 25. * Heb. eyes. 1s. v. 21. Rom. xii. 16. xxv. 13. Num. xiii. 31. † Or, violence. ‡ Heb. lifted up.

lief. This may melt him into kindness : or if, contrary to our intention, it should only increase his guilt, yet it will conduce to our own good, and the Lord will reward us. We should moreover keep a peculiar watch over our tempers and our words, whilst in the company of ungodly men : and we ought by no means to pay undue respect to them for any secular ends ; lest our example should produce a prejudicial effect on others, and leave an unfavourable impression concerning our religion on their minds. If we see the righteous cast down by oppression before the wicked ; we should desire to possess our souls in faith and patience, and to keep silence in so evil a time. And though we may not seek our own glory, yet the honour of our profession should be very near our hearts ; and we ought to be willing rather to suffer death, than to live to the disgrace of the doctrine of God our Saviour.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVI. V. 1. Snow in summer and rain in harvest are unseasonable, and often prejudicial, in every country : but in the land of Canaan they were unusual, and denoted the divine displeasure. (Note, 1 Sam. xii. 16—19.) Thus the advancement of ignorant and wicked men to dignity and authority, especially in Israel, was ominous, and foreboded the pouring out of divine judgments upon the nation.—‘ The blending of summer and winter would not cause a greater disorder in the natural world, than the disposal of honour to bad men (and consequently throwing contempt on the good) does in the world moral.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Judg. ix. 1—20. 50—57. Esth. iii. 2.)

V. 2. The birds which fly over our heads cannot hurt us, and they will soon return to their nests from which they wandered. In like manner, unmerited anathemas, imprecations, and calumnies, will not eventually harm us ; but will alight on those who uttered them. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Num. xxii. 6. xxiii. 7, 8. 1 Sam. xvii. 42—44. 2 Kings iv. 23, 24. Matt. xvi. 19. 2 Cor. xiii. 7—10.)

V. 3. The whip and the bridle are needful for the proper management of the horse or the ass ; and every creature must be dealt with according to its nature : but the nature of careless and profligate sinners is such, that they will not be ruled by reason and persuasion, and therefore severe treatment must be their portion. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, x. 13. xvii. 10. xix. 25. xxvii. 22. Ps. xxxii. 8—11, v. 9.)

V. 4, 5. ‘ Consent not unto him in his doings. Reprove him as the matter requireth.’—It is highly improper to answer a fool, in his own foolish manner ; to meet him on his own ground ; or to retort on him his scurrilous, abusive, impertinent language. It is indeed often improper, to

enter on disputes with him, and to answer his vain cavils or objections ; or to treat his folly and impiety, as if it were greatly worthy of notice or refutation. This may be doing him an honour, to which he is not entitled : and by thus descending to his level, his opponent might insensibly get into his trifling, contentious, railing spirit, and become like unto him. (Notes, xvii. 14. Judg. xii. 1—6. 2 Sam. xix. 40—43. 1 Kings xii. 16. 2 Kings xiv. 8—10.) But, on the other hand, it is highly important to consider the character and intention of men ; and to level an answer against a foolish and impertinent railer and caviller, with such poignancy, and force of argument, as may admit of no reply : and so to adapt the remarks to the man, and address them to his conscience, as may best expose his ignorance or malice, stop his mouth, and end the debate at once. A notorious profligate, scoffer, or infidel, has no just claim to that respectful treatment, to which a more modest and decent enquirer is entitled : for this would feed his vanity and augment his self-importance. But a decided and pointed answer to his captious queries, which manifest the ignorance and wickedness that dictated them, forms the proper method of dealing with him. So that we should not answer a foolish man, in a foolish manner : but we should answer him in a way, suited to expose his folly, to mortify his pride, and to prevent others from being deluded by him. Of this we have very many beautiful examples in the history of Jesus Christ. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 12. Judg. viii. 1—3. 1 Kings xxii. 24, 25. Jer. xxxvi. 17, 18. Matt. xv. 1—6. xxi. 23—27. xxii. 15—40. John viii. 3—11, v. 7. ix. 39—41.)

V. 6. He who employs an ignorant and worthless man in any important business, as it were, cuts off his own feet, puts himself to much pain, disables himself, and obstructs his affairs ; and he can expect nothing but disappointment, vexation, and damage in abundance, as the recompence of his folly. The princes of this world sometimes employ such envoys : but the Lord never sends those, as his messengers, who do not understand their message, or are not able to deliver it, or whose foolish and wicked conduct is an habitual disgrace to him ; though many such wear the garb, and appear in the character, of his messengers. (Notes, x. 26. xiii. 17.)

V. 7. (Marg.) A lame man never moves so ungracefully, as when he affects to be nimble : and thus a foolish man never appears to so great a disadvantage, as when he pretends to wisdom. He either shews his ignorance and folly, by speaking things false and inapplicable to the occasion : or the wise remarks, which he has picked up, are so contrary to his own general conduct and converse, that

9. xvii. 7. Ps. 1. equal: ⁱso is a parable in the mouth of
16—21. lxiv. 8
Matt. vii. 4, 5. fools.

* Heb. putteth a precious stone in a sling, ^kso is he that giveth honour to a fool.

1 xxiii. 35.
† Or, A great man grieveth all; and he hireth the fool, he hireth also transgressors.
19 *As* ^la thorn goeth up into the hand of a drunkard, so is a parable in the mouth of fools.

10 ⁺The great God, that formed all things, ^mboth rewardeth the fool, and rewardeth transgressors.

11 ⁿAs a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool ⁺returneth to his folly.

12 ^oSeest thou ^pa man wise in his own conceit? *there is* more hope of a fool than of him.

13 ¶ The ^qslothful man saith, *there is* a lion in the way; a lion *is* in the streets.

14 *As* ^rthe door turneth upon his hinges, so *doth* the slothful upon his bed.

15 The ^sslothful hideth his hand in his bosom; ^tit grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth.

16 The sluggard *is* ^uwiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason.

17 ¶ He that ^vpasseth by, *and* ^wmeddleth with strife *belonging* not to him, *is like* one that taketh a dog by the ears.

18 As a mad man, who casteth ^xfire-brands, arrows, and death;

they render him the more contemptible. (Notes, 9. xvii. 7. Ps. 1. 16—21. Matt. vii. 3—5. Rom. ii. 17—24.)

V. 8. He, who fixes a stone in a sling, probably prepares mischief for some one, perhaps for himself: so does he, who confers authority on a foolish and wicked man, or helps to advance his reputation. It is like putting a sword or a loaded pistol into a madman's hand. (Notes, 1. xix. 10. Esth. iii. 1—5.)

V. 9. A drunken man will heedlessly lay hold on thorns, or other sharp things, which run into his hand; and perhaps be insensible to it, till he becomes sober, and the wound begins to rankle. (Notes, xxiii. 29—35.) Thus a parable, or wise observation, is so ill managed by a fool, that it wounds himself by exposing his wickedness, and increasing his condemnation: and though he may not be sensible of it at present, yet he will be, when he shall be condemned out of his own mouth and by his own doctrine. (Notes, 7. Ps. lxiv. 7—9. Ec. x. 11—15. Luke xix. 11—27, vv. 20—23.)

V. 10. This proverb may either declare how the Lord, the Creator of all men, will deal with sinners, according to the degrees and aggravations of their guilt; whether they be ignorant, careless, or presumptuous: or how the great and powerful among men, who do so much towards forming the manners of all others, ought to act. Instead of honouring and employing worthless and wicked men, they ought to disgrace and punish them according to their deserts. The margin reads it; "A great man grieveth all, and he hireth the fool, he hireth also transgressors." But the sense may thus be more clearly expressed, "When he hireth the fool, and hireth transgressors." "The great God, who made all things, governs them also most wisely and equally: ... whom a good prince imitates; but a bad proves an universal grievance, by employing either fools, or profane persons, ... who vex the rest of his subjects." Bp. Patrick. (See on Note, 8.)

V. 11. This greedy animal, which alone is observed to act in the manner here described, is the loathsome emblem of those sinners, who return to their vices, after they have in various ways smarted for them, and been made conscious of their folly in them: they seem to be weary of their sins, and to repent of them; but they soon shake off the conviction, and return to them with more greediness

than ever. (Notes, Matt. xii. 43—45. 2 Pet. ii. 20—22.) Do any feel disgusted at the allusion? Let them remember, that the emblem is far less filthy, than the thing denoted by it: and that the whole race of animals does not afford anything so debasing, as not to be far out-done by the excesses of libertines, and drunkards, and gluttons. (Notes, xxiii. 29—35. xxvii. 22. Num. xxxi. 8. Jude 9—13.)

V. 12. If the sottish person above described, be not altogether insensible of his folly, nor refuse admonition; there is more hope of his amendment, than of his, who takes himself to be so wise and virtuous, that he despises his betters, and thinks he is above instruction. Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 4, 5. 13—16, v. 16.)

V. 13—16. (Notes, xix. 24. xxii. 13.) "He who hath no mind to labour, never wants pretences for his idleness." Bp. Patrick.—Two words are used here, both of which are translated *lion*; but the former is generally supposed to signify a most fierce and large lion. Lions, however, are seldom to be met with in the streets; and are generally in their dens, when man is required to attend to his work. (Note, Ps. civ. 20—23.) As the door moves on, but not from, its hinges; so the slothful move on, but not from, their beds; or, at best, they make no progress in any employment. (Notes, vi. 6—11. xii. 24. 27. xxiv. 30—34.) The most needful exertion is grievous to them: ease is their chief good; the preservation of it for the present, is their chief wisdom: and, whilst they sacrifice to this base end the interests of time and eternity; they foolishly deem themselves wiser than all those, who render a reason why they should bestir themselves, and attend to their business and duty. (Notes, 12. iii. 7, 8. xii. 15. Is. v. 21. Rom. xi. 25—32, v. 25. xii. 14—16, v. 16.)

V. 17. (Marg.) To take a part in quarrels, in which men have no concern; or even zealously to interfere to settle disputes and litigations, where neither party is disposed to take a man's advice, is a great imprudence, and is sure to lead him into many difficulties. It is as if any one should seize a fierce dog, as he passed him, by the ears, by which he could expect no other than to be bitten: and it is hard to say, whether it would be safest to try to hold him, or to let him go. (Notes, xviii. 6, 7. xx. 3. Luke xii. 13, 14.)

V. 18, 19. A madman, without intentional malice

19 So is the man *that* deceiveth his neighbour, * and saith, Am not I in sport?

* Heb. *Without wood.* 20 * Where no wood is, *there* the fire goeth out: † so where *there* is no † tale-bearer, the strife † ceaseth.

† Or, *whisperer.* † Heb. *is silent.* 21 As † coals *are* to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife.

a xviii. 8. xx. 19. Ez. xxii. 9. 22 The † words of a tale-bearer *are* as wounds, and they go down into the † innermost parts of the belly.

b x. 18. 2 Sam. xx. 9, 10. Ez. xxxiii. 31. Luke xxii. 47, 48. 23 † Burning lips and a wicked heart *are like* a potsherd covered with silver dross.

may do immense mischief in a very little time, by firing houses, or murdering those whom he meets; and it may be a kind of amusement for him. But he who, without the excuse of madness, diverts himself with imposing upon his neighbour, and leading him into errors, contentions, and trouble, merely that he may laugh at his distresses and disappointments; is a man of a most mischievous disposition, and worthy of the severest punishment, or the closest confinement.—The word rendered “madman” seems to mean *one who feigns himself mad*; and then the propriety of the similitude would lie, in the false pretences, under which each of the persons did the mischief. One *pretends to be mad*, the other *to be in jest*; but this makes no amends to the injured party. (Notes, x. 23. xiv. 9. 2 Pet. ii. 12—14.)

V. 20, 21. (Marg.) ‘Look upon him as an incendiary, ‘that carries tales, and whispers false stories; and expel ‘him from the family which he has disturbed by back-biting: for as the fire will go out, if you take away the ‘wood that feeds it; so will quarrels and contentions cease, ‘when he is thrust out of doors that blows up the flame.’ Bp. Patrick. (Notes, 22. xv. 17, 18. xvi. 28. xxii. 10. Jam. iii. 4—6.)

V. 22. See on Note, xviii. 8.

V. 23. A potsherd, when lacquered over with silver dross instead of lead, may appear valuable to ignorant people; but it is as worthless as ever, and more fitted for the purposes of imposition. Thus when men gloss over their malicious and selfish intentions, with warm professions of affection, they become the more dangerous deceivers.—Some indeed interpret *burning lips* to mean passionate and malicious language: but in that case, the potsherd appears without the dross of silver. (Notes, x. 18. 2 Sam. xx. 8—10. Ez. xxxiii. 30—33, v. 31. Matt. xxii. 15—22, v. 16. xxvi. 47—56, v. 49.)

V. 24—27. These verses seem to be connected together, and likewise with the preceding verse.—‘He that harbours enmity in his heart, pretends friendship with his lips, or shall be known by his lips.’ (Marg.)—‘Do not credulously listen to his flatteries, and professions of regard and esteem; (in which he will often overact his part;) for he conceals many base designs within. But wait a while without committing thyself; and if his hatred be covered with deceit, his wickedness will ere long be publicly ex-

24 He that hateth, † dissembleth † Or, *is known.* with his lips, and layeth up deceit within him:

25 When † he † speaketh fair, † believe him not; for *there are* † seven abominations in his heart.

26 † Whose hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness shall be shewed before the *whole* congregation.

27 Whoso † diggeth a pit shall fall therein; and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him.

28 A † lying tongue hateth *those that are* afflicted by it; and † a flattering mouth worketh ruin.

c Ps. xii. 2. xxviii. 3. Jer. ix. 2—8. Mic. vii. 5. * Heb. *maketh his voice gracious.* d Jer. xii. 6. Matt. xxiv. 23. e vi. 16—19. † Or, *Hatred is covered in secret.* Gen. iv. 8. 1 Sam. xviii. 17. 21. 2 Sam. iii. 27, &c. xiii. 22—28. Ps. lv. 21—23. f xxviii. 10. Esth. vii. 10. Ps. vii. 15, 16. ix. 15. x. 2. lvii. 6. Ec. x. 8. g John viii. 40. 44—49. x. 32, 33. xv. 22—24. h vi. 24. vii. 5. 21—23. xxix. 5. Luke xx. 20, 21.

posed: he will fall into the pit which he has bestowed pains to dig for thee, and be crushed by the stone which he meant to roll upon thee.’ (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, vi. 16—19. xxviii. 10. Gen. iv. 8. 1 Sam. xviii. 17—19. 2 Sam. xiii. 22—29. Ps. vii. 14—16. ix. 15, 16. xii. 1—4. Ec. x. 8—10.)

V. 28. Calumny is the offspring of malice, and an open declaration of enmity: and the slanderer, instead of pitying the man whom he has wounded by his lies, becomes more inveterate in his hatred of him, through fear of being exposed, or feeling the weight of his vengeance. Yet the flatterer is the more dangerous character: his poison is more insinuating and unsuspected; while it tends to increase pride and to inflame the passions, and to prompt a man to those undertakings, for which he is not qualified, and which prove ruinous to him. (Notes, 23—27. xx. 19. xxix. 5. Luke xx. 19—26, v. 20. John viii. 40—47.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—16.

When ungodly and unqualified men are advanced to authority, we are called on to prepare for correction, and to repent of our sins. But, if our ways please God, we need not fear either the oppressor’s iron rod, or the persecutor’s impious anathema, or the enraged imprecations of those who delight in cursing. In such cases, let us hold our peace, keep on our way, and trust in the Lord; and then we shall be blessed in him, let who will menace, curse, or revile. “The great God, that formed all things,” will recompense such men, in due time, according to their folly and wickedness: and if the kings of the earth, instead of copying his example, and treating infidels and profligates with marked disapprobation, caress and honour them, they will be sure to prove a hindrance and a detriment to all their undertakings: and what mischief they may do to others cannot be ascertained; for “as he that bindeth a “stone in a sling, so is he that giveth honour to a fool.”—It behoves every one to take warning, and not “be like “unto the horse, or mule, that have no understanding;” for then, severe discipline will be requisite, and great and many plagues remain for those that are obstinate in impiety. But whilst we follow after wisdom ourselves, we shall constantly need her counsels, how to behave towards foolish and impious men.—In language, which the superficial

CHAP. XXVII.

Maxims against procrastination, carnal security, vain glory, wrath, and envy, 1—4 : concerning reproof, contentment, steadiness, friendship, and pru-

reader may perhaps deem contradictory, the divine Instructor here marks out that line of conduct to us, which afterwards in human nature he most perfectly observed. The disciple of Christ, keeping his example in view, will never answer the impertinence, the boast, the scoffs, or the blasphemies of fools, in such a manner as to become like unto them : but, keeping at a distance from wrath and railing, from levity and ostentation, and from a boisterous, disdainful style or manner ; he will know how to answer their folly with brevity and decision, so as to silence them, and put them to shame, when they expect to triumph and to be applauded ; that they may neither be “ wise in their own conceit,” nor deceive the ignorant by their empty but confident pretensions. But he that would attain to this useful endowment, must begin by practising what he has learned : otherwise the wisest and most pointed observations, will be as the unequal legs of the lame, or as “ a parable in the mouth of a fool.” They will give those, against whom they are directed, an opportunity to retort, “ Physician, heal thyself ;” and to call the attention of the hearers, to the inconsistency of this or the other part of their conduct, with their own doctrine : thus they will only expose and wound themselves ; nay, it will turn to their condemnation, that they have not profited by their own preaching. Nor must this practice be a mere partial or external matter : for until the love of sinful pleasures and advantages be mortified, and the love of God and holiness implanted in our hearts ; we shall still be numbered among the foolish : and, notwithstanding convictions and partial reformatations, shall be ready, when tempted, to return to folly “ as the dog to his vomit.” Pride also must be peculiarly guarded against : for it is evidenced by facts, that no careless, profligate, or ignorant unbeliever, is so hopeless, as the “ man who is wise in his own conceit.” Thus self-sufficient professors of evangelical doctrines, pharisaical formalists, and philosophical infidels and scoffers, are of all descriptions of men, the least likely to repent and obey the gospel : and the instances of conversion are more unfrequent among them than among publicans and harlots ; because they are more wise in their own conceit ; and, thinking that they see, they are at rest in their tenfold darkness. (*Note, Matt. vi. 22, 23.*) Nor are any persons more likely to be taken in this snare, than those who are slothful in the concerns of their souls. They take the most important matters upon trust, or are satisfied with a superficial enquiry : their sloth retains them in ignorance and error, and their ignorance fosters their self-conceit. Nay, they think themselves extremely wise, in having hit upon a method of quieting their consciences, without renouncing their ease, interest, or indulgence ; and they ignorantly flatter themselves, that they know how to “ serve God and mammon,” and to get to heaven without self-denial, striving, or labour. Some of this stamp exclaim, ‘ All this is *legal*, we must be saved by grace alone : why do you tell us of diligence, obedience, and good works ?’ Others rest in a formal profession : they deny not, that

dence, 5—12 : against suretiship, lavish commendations, and domestick discord, 13—16 : concerning industry, the conformity of one man’s heart to another’s, insatiable desires, the effects of praise, and the obstinacy of fools, 17—22 : and recommending diligence, good management, and rural plenty, 23—27.

such and such things should be done ; but there is always some lion in the way at the present. They cannot be quite at rest in their negligence ; but they can no more find in their hearts to renounce it, than the sluggard can to leave his bed. They have a scanty round of outward observances, in which they move as the door on its hinges, but they get no further : they are ingenious at devising excuses for neglecting every duty which would cost them any thing : nay, they pride themselves in this ingenuity : they starve their souls, because they will not bestow pains to feed them, though the Bread of life is set before them : and yet, though their conduct is so irrational and ruinous, they will deem themselves wiser, than all who would teach them better ; and will be offended with every one who refuses to flatter them in this fond conceit of themselves.

V. 17—28.

True wisdom is always attended with humility and diligence ; and it will direct a man, in the most difficult circumstances. He who truly seeks this gift from God, by fervent prayers, will know when to attempt the blessed work of a peace-maker ; and when to stand aloof from contentions, which do not belong to him. He will be far from deceiving or injuring any one, and then saying “ Am I not in sport ?” For it is diabolical to delight in mischief : it is the part of “ a madman to cast about “ fire-brands, arrows, and death :” and those, who tell lies to make themselves merry, will easily be tempted to tell lies to make themselves *rich* : so that he, who regards the word of God, will abhor all falsehood ; but that most which is most mischievous. The lies of the tale-bearer will appear to him peculiarly aggravated ; for little bickerings, in families and neighbourhoods, would generally cease in a short time, did not these officious incendiaries, from direct love of contention, bring wood and coals, to kindle and keep up the fire. Thus their words are irreparably mischievous, and their characters completely odious.—The Christian, no doubt, desires to hope the best of every one, as far as facts will admit of it ; but his *candour* is not *folly* : he must judge of men by the general tenour of their conduct ; and if they are evidently selfish, envious, or malicious, he cannot value their fulsome professions of affection, and the crafty dissimulation by which they cover over their wickedness, the deceit which is harboured within, and their purposes of hatred and malice. Indeed, whatever is excessive is suspicious ; and though Christians should be “ harmless as doves,” they need to be “ wise as serpents ;” that they may not, by believing fair words, sanction, or receive detriment from, such as have seven abominations in their hearts. For, whilst the open calumniator is a bitter and cruel enemy ; the insidious flatterer is still more to be dreaded and shunned : because he will stab a man, as Joab did Amasa, while he salutes him ; and will betray him, as Judas betrayed Jesus, with a kiss. But let such men remember, that the wickedness of him whose hatred is covered with deceit, will be shewed before the

BOAST not thyself of *to-morrow;
 for thou knowest not what a day may
 bring forth.

2 Let *another man praise thee, and
 not thine own mouth; a stranger,
 and not thine own lips.

3 A stone is †heavy, and the sand
 weighty; †but a fool's wrath is hea-
 vyer than them both.

4 Wrath is †cruel, and anger is out-

rageous; *but who is able to stand
 before †envy?

5 Open †rebuke is better than se-
 cret love.

6 Faithful are †the wounds of a
 friend; but †the kisses of an enemy
 are †deceitful.

7 The †full soul *loatheth an honey-

cxli. 5. Heb. xii. 10. Rev. iii. 19. h x. 18. xxvi. 23—26. 2 Sam. xx. 9, 10. Matt.
 xxvi. 48—50. || Or, earnest, or frequent. i Num. xi. 4—9. 18—20. xxi. 5.
 * Heb. treadeth under foot.

xiv. 30. Gen.
 xxvi. 14. xxvii.
 11. Job v. 2.
 Matt. xxvii. 18.
 Acts v. 17
 marg. vii. 9.
 xvii. 5. Rom. 1.
 29. Jam. iii. 14
 —16. iv. 5, 6.
 Or, jealousy. vi.
 34. Cant. viii. 6.
 xxviii. 23. Lev.
 xix. 17. Matt.
 xviii. 15. Gal. ii.
 14. 1 Tim. v. 20.

g 2 Sam. xii. 7, &c.
 Job v. 17, 18. Pa.

assembled world: and those who devise mischief for others,
 will themselves be overwhelmed by it, and sink into it for
 ever.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVII. V. 1. 'Be not so confident of thy
 present power, riches, or any thing else, as to grow pre-
 sumptuous, and brag what thou wilt do or enjoy here-
 after: for thou canst not be secure of this very day, ...
 which may produce something, for any thing thou know-
 est, that shall spoil all thy designs, and frustrate all thy
 expectations, which thou hast for to-morrow.' Bp. Pa-
 trick.—'Delay not the time, but take occasion when it is
 offered.' (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Is. lvi. 9—12, v. 12. Luke
 xii. 15—20, vv. 19, 20. Heb. iii. 7—13. Jam. iv. 13—17.)

V. 2. (See on Note, xxv. 27.) 'Be not so blinded by
 self-love as to praise thyself: ...but take care to do
 praise-worthy things, which will force commendation even
 from strangers and foreigners.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 3. 'What is heavier than lead? and what is the
 name of it but a fool? Sand and salt, and a mass of
 iron, is easier to bear than a man without understanding.'
Ecclesiasticus xxii. 15. The effects of a foolish and wicked
 man's ungoverned rage are more intolerable than the hea-
 viest burden, or the hardest labour. (Marg. Ref.—Notes,
 xvii. 12. xxix. 9. Gen. xlix. 5—7. 1 Sam. xxii. 14—19. *Esth.*
 iii. 6. Dan. ii. 10—13.)

V. 4. (Marg.) Violent passion and deep resentment
 are often very cruel and outrageous, and produce dreadful
 effects; yet the one is soon over; and the other may be
 mollified by prudent concessions and repeated favours.
 (Notes, Gen. xxxii. 16—20. xxxiii. 4.) But envy is ex-
 cited, not by affronts or misconduct, but by the too con-
 spicuous talents or performances of one, who is considered
 as a competitor; by the praises bestowed on him, and the
 favour shewn him: and the more wisely and well the envied
 person behaves, the more will envy increase in the breast of
 his jealous rival. There is therefore little to be done to
 abate its force, and there is no standing against it, when
 the envious person is in authority: and it is often best to
 retire out of the reach of its effects, as David did from the
 envy of Saul. (Notes, 1 Sam. xviii. 6—16. 23—27. xix.
 8—10.)—The original word for *envy* is often rendered *jea-*
lousy: and the passion is the same, though the object or
 occasion be different. It is a spirit of rivalry, or compe-
 tition, either for the favour of an individual, or for publick
 applause, or for some other object; mingled with haughty
 indignation, malignity, and enmity, at being supplanted, un-
 dervalued, and eclipsed; or with envenomed suspicions that

this is the case, or fears that it will soon become so. When
 the word is used concerning God, it denotes his holy *zeal*
 for the honour of his own name, and determination to
 punish those who give his glory to another. It is therefore
 often translated *zeal*: and then it is either a fervent regard
 for the glory of God, shewn in a holy manner consistent
 with love to all men; or a proud and eager desire of a
 man's own honour or that of his party, manifested with
 bitterness, adopting unhallowed means of securing suc-
 cess, and thus degenerating into envy of the worst kind;
 even such as instigated the crucifiers of Christ, and the an-
 tichristian persecutors of his church in all subsequent ages;
 and excites fierce controversies, base slanders, and deep-
 rooted malice, between bigots and zealots of different de-
 scriptions. (Notes, vi. 27—35. xiv. 30. Job v. 2. Cant. viii.
 6, 7. Acts xvii. 5—9. Jam. iii. 13—16. iv. 4—6.)

V. 5. Plain and faithful rebukes, prudently given, are
 better effects of friendship, than that excessive tenderness
 and respect, which connives at a man's faults, for fear of
 paining or offending him: so that open rebuke is not only
 preferable to secret enmity; but even to secret love, which
 in this respect is of no real service to the beloved person.
 (Notes, 6. xxviii. 23. Lev. xix. 17. Matt. xviii. 15—17.
Gal. ii. 11—16, v. 14.)

V. 6. The skilful and faithful surgeon wounds, in order
 to preserve life, or recover the patient. He pains by cut-
 ting; but he never cuts wider or deeper, than he judges
 necessary. Such is the conduct of the faithful, affectionate,
 and discreet reprovcr: such are the corrections of our hea-
 venly Friend. (Notes, 5. 2 Sam. xii. 7. Job v. 17—19.
Rev. iii. 18, 19.) But the flatterer and false friend, who
 clokes his malice under the language and demeanour of
 excessive love, only aims to deceive and ruin us.—The
 latter clause is variously rendered. "The kisses of him
 that hates are frequent." (Marg.) "They are to be de-
 precated." We had need to pray him to forbear, and
 pray God to preserve us from being too credulous.' Bp.
 Patrick.—They "are pleasant." *Old Version*. Expressions
 of kindness, though excessive, are so agreeable, that most
 men prefer them to plain-dealing: so that the fulsome flat-
 terer is generally caressed as a friend, and the faithful re-
 provcr shunned as an enemy; to the unspeakable detri-
 ment of mankind. (See on Notes, xxvi. 23—27.)

V. 7. Abundance and excess spoil the appetite, and pre-
 vent the luxurious from relishing any of their delicacies.
 But he who labours hard, and fares meanly, and eats not
 till he is hungry, relishes the most unsavoury morsel;
 which gives poverty an advantage as to real enjoyment,
 almost sufficient to counter-balance all its disadvantages.—

comb; but ^kto the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet.

8 As ^la bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a ^mman that wandereth from his place.

9 ⁿOintment and perfume rejoice the heart: ^oso doth the sweetness of a man's friend ^{*}by hearty counsel.

10 Thine ^pown friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not; ^qneither go into thy brother's house in the day of thy calamity: *for* ^rbetter is a neigh-

bour *that is* near, than a brother far off.

11 My son, ^sbe wise, and make my heart glad, ^tthat I may answer him that reproacheth me.

12 A ^uprudent *man* foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: *but* the simple pass on, and are punished.

13 Take ^vhis garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman.

14 He ^wthat blesseth his friend with a loud voice, rising early in the morning, it shall be counted a curse to him.

than the nearest relations. And indeed, prudent, pious, and honest men may expect to obtain friends in the neighbourhood where they live; who are nearer at hand, and more ready to assist, than relations, who are perhaps as far off in affection as in their places of abode. 'As a man that is closely joined to us in affection, is better than one of our nearest kindred, whose heart is not knit to us; so a good neighbour near at hand, is better than either friend or brother, who is so far off that we may perish before he come to our assistance.' *Bp. Patrick.* (Notes, xvii. 17. xviii. 24. xix. 7. 1 Kings xii. 6, 7. 8—15, vv. 8, 9. Luke x. 30—37.)—God is "a present help in time of trouble:" but saints and angels, to whom numbers pray, must, as to most of them, be, at best, the friend or brother that is far off. (Ps. xlv. 1.)

V. 11. This may be intended as the address of an affectionate parent to his son; whose prudent conduct would both gladden his heart, and furnish him with an answer to those, who reproached him as negligent of the duties of that relation. But "Wisdom also is justified of her children," (Matt. xi. 19,) from the reproaches of her enemies: and the good conduct of professed Christians supplies the most effectual answer to those, who reproach the gospel as tending to licentiousness. (Notes, x. 1. xv. 20. xxiii. 15, 16. 24, 25. Ps. cxix. 41, 42. Ec. ii. 18—23, v. 19. Tit. ii. 7, 8. 1 Pet. iii. 13—16. 3 John 1—4, v. 4.)

V. 12. *Marg. Ref.*—See on Note, xxii. 3.

V. 13. *Marg. Ref.*—See on Note, xx. 16.

V. 14. Excessive commendations, and professions of gratitude and friendship, are always to be suspected as insincere and selfish. (Notes, xxvi. 23—27.) They are also of bad consequence: they put a man off his guard, and tend to give force to his passions; and they excite envy, and set men to hunt after his faults, that they may blacken that character which is enhanced so much above their level. So that he who makes it his great business, (as if he rose early in the morning for that single purpose,) to lavish praises on any one whom he calls his friend and benefactor; and who bestows pains to proclaim his excellences and bounty to every body; will not be looked upon by a wise man, much more favourably, than if he had traduced or cursed him: nay, he will think the friendship of so injudicious or designing a man, a disgrace rather than an honour to him. 'The intention of which is only to get still more from them; which is commonly the end of all

In like manner the proud and self-sufficient disdain the provisions of the gospel; but "the poor in spirit," and "they who hunger and thirst after righteousness," can find much comfort from every part of the word of God, and from the meanest book or sermon, which accords to it. (Num. xi. 4—9. 31—34. xxi. 4, 5. Job vi. 5—7. Matt. v. 6.)

V. 8. The bird, which forsakes its nest, leaves the place where it had found repose, warmth, and shelter, and thus is exposed to various hardships and dangers. Thus every man has his proper place in society, in which he may be safe and comfortable: but when, out of levity, discontent, avarice, or ambition, he rashly quits it, he generally changes imaginary for real inquietudes. In like manner, those who are never easy at home, and in their own families and employments, seldom prosper, or are happy any where: and they, who affect to appear like their superiors, generally bring themselves into difficulties.—There may be cases, in which it is a man's duty and prudence to change his situation or employment; but then he will do it upon good grounds, and with deliberation. (Note, 1 Cor. vii. 17—24.) Every one has calls from home; but a prudent man will be glad to return, when the end of his absence is effected. But an unsettled, roving, dissatisfied spirit; a turn for scheming, and shifting from one place or undertaking to another; and an aversion to our own situation or business, are extremely dangerous and sinful. (*Marg. Ref.*—Notes, xxi. 16. Gen. xvi. 7—9.)

V. 9. The affectionate and faithful counsel of a cordial friend is more refreshing to a man in trouble, than any ointment or perfumes could be to his senses. "As ointment and perfume gladden the heart; so the sweetness of his friend, more than hearty counsel." (*Marg.*) An affectionate manner, though of less intrinsic value, is so generally more acceptable, than the most prudent and sincere good advice, given rudely; that, in order to do good, the sweetness of the manner, as well as the integrity and faithfulness of the intention, and the wisdom of the counsel, should be carefully attended to. (*Marg. Ref.*—Notes, xv. 23. xvi. 21—24. 1 Sam. xxiii. 16.)

V. 10. It is generally most advisable to cultivate the friendship of those, who have shewn themselves attached to a man by inclination and esteem; and of those who have been the friends of his father and family. Such are generally more to be depended on in trying circumstances,

15 A ^z continual dropping in a very rainy day, and a contentious woman are alike.

16 Whosoever hideth her, hideth the wind, and ^a the ointment of his right hand, *which bewrayeth itself.*

17 ^b Iron sharpeneth iron: ^c so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.

18 Whoso ^d keepeth the fig-tree

^z xix. 13. xxi. 9. 19. xxv. 24. Job xiv. 19.

^a John xii. 3.

^b 1 Sam. xiii. 20, 21.

^c 9. Josh. i. 18. ii. 24. 1 Sam. xi. 9, 10. xxiii. 16. 2 Sam. x. 11, 12. Job iv. 3, 4. Is. xxxv. 3, 4. 1 Thes. iii. 3, 4. 2 Tim. i. 8. 12. ii. 3. 9—13. Heb. x. 24. Jam. i. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 12, 13.

^d Cant. viii. 12. 1 Cor. ix. 7.

shall eat the fruit thereof: ^e so he that waiteth on his master ^f shall be honoured.

19 As ^g in water face *answereth* to ^f face; ^h so the heart of man to man.

20 ⁱ Hell and destruction are ^{*} never full: ^k so the eyes of man are never satisfied.

21 As ^l the fining-pot for silver, and

^e xvii. 2. xxii. 29. Gen. xxiv. 2, 3. xxxix. 2—5. 22. 28. Ex. xxiv. 14. 2 Kings iii. 11. v. 2, 3. 25. 27. Acts x. 7.

^f 1 Sam. ii. 30. Ps. cxxiii. 2. Matt. xxiv. 45. 46. xxv. 21, 22. Luke xii. 37. 43. 44. John xii. 26. Jam. i. 22—25.

^g Gen. vi. 5. Ps. xxxiii. 15. Mark vii. 21.

^h xxx. 15, 16. Hab. ii. 5.

ⁱ Heb. not. k xxiii. 5. Ec. i. 8. ii. 10, 11. v. 10, 11. vi. 7. Jer. xxii. 17. 1 John ii. 16. l xvii. 3. Ps. xii. 6. lxvi. 10. Zech. xiii. 9. Mal. iii. 3. 1 Pet. i. 7. iv. 12.

[‘] those, that praise others immoderately: ...hoping thereby [‘] to make them extraordinary kind to them, above all other [‘] men.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—Some interpret the clause, “ rising early in the morning,” of too great haste in lavishly commending. [‘] There is nothing more dangerous than to [‘] cry up men too soon, ...before they be sufficiently tried: [‘] ...for this, instead of doing them service, proves many [‘] times their ruin.’ *Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Sam. xviii. 6—9. 2 Sam. xvi. 15—19. Acts xii. 20—23, vv. 22, 23.)*

V. 15, 16. Litigious neighbours sometimes excite contentions, which resemble a hasty shower that is soon over: but a contentious wife is as the constant dropping through a decayed roof in a very rainy day; so that a man can neither keep himself dry out of doors nor in the house. The utmost meekness and prudence will be found, in such a case, insufficient to conceal her unseemly behaviour: however a man might be disposed to hide or connive at her faults, her own unruly temper will betray them, and render their disagreements the common topick of conversation: even as it is impossible to conceal the boisterous wind; and as the fragrancy of the ointment would make him known, who had anointed his hands with it, whatever pains he took to hide it.—[‘] The best way for a man to [‘] avoid the trouble of a bad wife is, not to choose one for [‘] his consort, because she is rich, or because she is beautiful only; but because she is like him in humour, inclination, and condition, &c.’ *Bp. Patrick. (Notes, xix. 13. xxi. 9. 19.)*

V. 17. Iron is often effectually used to sharpen iron: and thus friends of correspondent dispositions whet each other’s ingenuity; suggest to each other useful hints and good counsels; encourage one another against despondency, and excite such as grow slack: and thus they help one another forward in every useful attempt. *(Marg. Ref. c. —Notes, 9. Gen. ii. 18. 1 Sam. xiii. 19—21. xxiii. 16. Ec. iv. 9—12.)*—The advantages of society and conversation are thus emphatically shewn. Indeed it has been observed, that the most useful inventions have originated from the collision of men’s thoughts, when earnestly engaged in conversation.

V. 18. The labour of planting and pruning the fig-tree, is recompensed by the pleasant fruit which it yields: thus even servants may obtain solid reputation and advantage, by attending diligently to the duties of their situation, though obscure and laborious. [‘] He that faithfully defends [‘] his master’s person or reputation, and takes care his estate be not wasted, shall in due time be largely rewarded.’ *Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xvii. 2. xxii. 29. Cant.*

viii. 11, 12. *Matt. xxv. 19—23. 1 Cor. ix. 7—12. Eph. vi. 5—9.)*

V. 19. The reflection from the clear water, or mirror, corresponds to the face of him that looks in it: thus do the hearts of men to each other. The judgments, dispositions, desires, and imaginations of sinners are much the same; or only varied by constitution, habit, education, and rank in life. Godly people are of the same judgment and disposition as to the main things, in proportion to their degree of grace and information. The opposition between conscience and inclination is nearly the same, in one wicked man, as in another; except as some are more ignorant or more hardened than others. The conflict between corrupt nature and grace is similar in all believers; and their varying joys, sorrows, hopes, fears, and other experiences have a surprising coincidence: so that he, who well knows and watches his own heart, will not greatly be a stranger to those of other men; but will often so speak to their secret thoughts and purposes, that he will appear to have received some special information about them. In order then to know human nature, we should first study our own hearts, in all the variety of situations in which we are successively placed.—This proverb, however, is variously interpreted:—[‘] As a man may know what kind of face he [‘] hath, if he will look into the water; so he may know [‘] what kind of man he is, if he will examine his conscience.’ *Castalio*, quoted by *Bp. Patrick.* This is an important instruction: but it does not seem the sense of the maxim.—[‘] A man may see himself, while he looks upon [‘] other men, as well as know other men by considering his [‘] own inclinations.’ *Bp. Patrick.* Indeed this seems the true interpretation, provided another idea be suggested:—[‘] There is no difference betwixt man and man by nature; [‘] but only the grace of God maketh the difference.’ *(Notes, Gen. vi. 5. Ps. xxxiii. 13—15. 1 Cor. xiv. 20—25, vv. 24, 25. Jam. i. 22—25.)*

V. 20. The grave still yawns to receive the bodies of men, though it has devoured innumerable millions: and the place of separate spirits is ready for their souls; nay, the pit of destruction is still open to receive the wicked. Thus insatiable are the senses, appetites, and hearts of men: curiosity, thirst for novelty, variety, and ornament; covetousness, ambition, sensuality, even blood-thirstiness, are all insatiable, and grow more craving by indulgence: they still devour, and demand more and more. *(Notes, xxx. 15, 16. Ec. i. 4—11, v. 8. ii. 9—11. v. 9—12. vv. 10, 11. vi. 7—9. Hab. ii. 5—8, v. 5. 1 Cor. xv. 55—58, v. 55.)*

V. 21. The characters of men may be in some measure

^m 1 Sam. xviii. 7, 8, 15, 16, 30. the furnace for gold; ^m so is a man to his praise.

ⁿ xxiii. 35. Ex. xii. 30. xiv. 3. xv. 9. 2 Chr. xxviii. 22, 23. Is. i. 5. Jer. v. 3. xlv. 15, 16. Rev. xvi. 10, 11. 22 Though ⁿ thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.

^o Gen. xxxi. 38—40. xxxiii. 13. 1 Sam. xvii. 28. 1 Chr. xxvii. 29—31. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10. Ez. xxxiv. 22—24. 31. John xxi. 15. 23 ¶ Be thou ^o diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and ^{*} look well to thy herds.

^{*} Heb. set thy heart. xxiv. 32. marg. Ex. vii. 23. Deut. xxxii. 46. 24 ^p For [†] riches are not for ever:

and ^q doth the crown endure to [†] every generation?

25 The ^r hay appeareth, and the tender grass sheweth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered.

26 The ^s lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are the price of the field: ^s Job xxxi. 20.

27 And thou shalt have goats' milk 'enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and for ' maintenance for thy maidens. ^t xxx. 8, 9. Matt. vi. 33. [†] Heb. life.

known, by considering what sort of persons most commend them; but more decidedly by observing the effects which praise produces on them. If a man, when greatly applauded, grow insolent and assuming; if he affect state, and become negligent, or above his work; if he be disappointed and peevish, when not commended; and if this be habitual to him, it proves him to be dross, which will not endure the furnace. But if applause render a person more circumspect in his walk, and diligent in this duty: if he remain contented in his former situation, and easy in performing obscure services; if he continue modest in his deportment, and affable to men of low estate; and if this appear unaffected and habitual, it marks him gold: and he who can endure this furnace, and grow purer in it, will not be injured by any other. There are many degrees between the two extremes; and a man's character must rise or fall, in the judgment of wise men, according as he approaches to the one or the other of them. (See on Note, xvii. 3.—Notes, 1 Sam. xviii. 12—16. 28—30. 2 Sam. xiv. 18—20. 25—27. xv. 1—6.)

V. 22. The straw and chaff may be separated from the wheat by threshing and winnowing. Nay, the husks or bran may be beaten off, by braying it in a mortar. But no afflictions or punishments, however severe, will cure a hardened and impious profligate of his folly and wickedness. His heart and life are all of a piece, and no human power can make any separation.—Those who argue that the miseries of hell will mend the disposition of impenitent sinners, and prepare them for a release, should consider this proverb carefully: and they should remember, that the new creating power of God's grace is alone effectual to produce this change; and that the torments of hell are never in scripture mentioned among the appointed means of grace. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xxiii. 34, 35. 2 Chr. xxviii. 22, 23. Is. i. 5, 6. Jer. v. 3—6, v. 3. Rev. xvi. 8, 9.)

V. 23—27. These verses recommend the advantages of private life; and shew that diligence in rural employments, and the plenty which is obtained by it, are more conducive to true happiness, than the unstable and uneasy, though splendid possessions of wealth and authority. Riches are very precarious, and kingdoms are often transferred from one family to another. But he who has an estate or farm in the country, and diligently attends to it, will see his provisions springing out of the earth to repay his toil, and sensibly coming from the hand of God. He will have suitable and sufficient food and raiment, for himself, his family, and domesticks: and though it be homely and frugal, it will be wholesome and comfortable; and at-

tended with little care, risk, or temptation. And he who is thus provided for, and has a contented mind, needs not, and will not, envy the king on his throne, being far safer and happier than he. (Notes, xxiii. 4, 5. xxx. 7—9. Job. xxxi. 16—23. 1 Tim. vi. 6—10, vv. 6—8. 17—19.)

The hay, &c. (25) Notes, Ps. civ. 14, 15. Am. vii. 1—3. It is evident, that the Israelites mowed grass for the cattle: but it is generally thought, that they did not make it into hay, to preserve it. The word here, however, means grass.—The goats, &c. (26) 'With the price of thy goats thou mayest purchase a field, for the sowing of corn, to make thee bread.' Bp. Patrick.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—12.

In this uncertain world we "know not what a day may bring forth." We may be deprived of our limbs, senses, faculties, or lives, or experience the most distressing changes in our circumstances and connexions, before another day be gone. We should never then presume upon to-morrow; or boast what we will be or do hereafter; or postpone any needful work to a future time. Numbers have perished and are about to perish through procrastination; numbers with declining faculties, and drawing near the close of life, have lamented their lost opportunities of usefulness. While "the simple pass on, and are punished" for their neglect of the one thing needful; every prudent man will foresee these and similar evils, and take proper measures to avoid them. And, as life is so short and fleeting; and our present conduct has so intimate a connexion with our eternal condition; it is inconsistent with true wisdom, to spend our time and thoughts in devising needless changes in our outward condition; or to wander from our proper place and business, in pursuit of imaginary advantages. Rather let us seek to God to give us a contented mind, in the situation which he has assigned us, and a heart to delight in our present duty: that having chosen him for our Portion, and being humbly sensible how much our comforts exceed our deservings, and applying ourselves diligently to the business of our station, we may be able to exclude all roving desires. In order to this, counsel, and even rebuke, is often necessary; even as medicines and surgical operations, though nauseous and painful, are for our bodies: and they should be considered as the most disinterested and valuable friends, who venture our displeasure, by faithfully seeking our highest and most durable good. Indeed no wise and cordial friend will "suffer sin upon us," by neglecting this needful proof of

CHAP. XXVIII.

Maxims, concerning faith, piety, integrity, charity,

humility, industry, and fidelity ; against oppression, usury, iniquity, hypocrisy, pride, violence, covetousness, bribery, flattery, robbery of parents, and self-confidence, 1—28.

love : in their better judgment they know it to be salutary ; and though it wounds and pains, yet “ faithful are the wounds of a friend ; ” and *afterwards at least*, all sound characters will be better pleased with it, than with the reserved and less cordial affection of those, who would have left them to go on in their errors and sins. They who have such friends as these, (and the pious children of pious parents will generally be so favoured,) should be very careful not to forsake or lose them : and it is much wiser to endeavour by good behaviour to attach those, who may be ready to help us in trouble from genuine affection ; than to apply to rich relations, in whom the tie of blood is seldom so powerful as regard to interest. In every case we should endeavour to win upon the esteem of all around us ; and to shun envy, as much as we can consistently with our duty. It is very easy to create ourselves enemies, and to exasperate them ; but it is more difficult to pacify their wrath, which is often cruel and outrageous in its effects. We ought not indeed to desire the friendship of foolish and wicked men : yet we should be very careful not to provoke them ; for, not being to be won upon by concessions, or convinced by arguments, their wrath will be found more heavy than the sand, or the ponderous rock, and will bear down all before it. But envy is still more malignant, being rendered more vehement by that very wisdom and goodness, which tend to disarm every other species of resentment. We must not, however, cease to act wisely, or to do good, in order to avoid even envy ; but we should shun ostentation and competition : and while we study to behave in such a manner, that strangers, and all impartial persons, may be constrained to applaud our good works ; we should not only not praise ourselves, but not even needlessly mention our services, or seek for commendation. But alas ! high commendations and warm professions of affection, though nothing is done to prove them sincere, are almost universally more welcome than plain-dealing, even when attended by the most indisputable proofs of genuine and cordial friendship. The ointment and perfume, the sweetness of the manner, of the pleasant man, the flatterer, and one not credited as sincere, outweighs in the scales of human intercourse, the solid bullion of cordial friendship in an uncouth garb, and of hearty counsel not gracefully imparted. In like manner, how few are able to rise above the fascinating impositions of the world ? Who can help estimating men’s happiness by their wealth and prosperity ? Yet the single indisputable fact, that “ the full soul loatheth the honey-comb, while to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet ; ” is sufficient, even as to present enjoyment, to subvert that whole system, and to make the sated epicure envy the neighbouring healthy but indigent cottager, and the luxury of his homely meals.

V. 13—27.

It becomes a Christian, to shun all indiscreet connexions and engagements ; and especially to stand aloof from those, who run themselves into difficulties by extravagant expenses and vicious indulgences. Indeed few are more la-

vish in praising their imprudent benefactors, or rather the dupes of their artifices, than these unhappy men are, so long as further supplies are hoped for ; but none more severe in their sarcasms and calumnies, when the patience of their friends is exhausted, and they can no longer be imposed on.—But in all cases, we should be very shy of those friends, real or pretended, who are very loud and lavish in their commendations and professions ; remembering that “ the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.” And even when they do not mean ill, their excessive praise is disgraceful to us, if we shew ourselves pleased with it and with them, and it exposes us to envy and hatred. But here a distinction will appear, between the man possessed of superficial endowments, and him who has attained unto solid wisdom and piety. The former, when commendations are bestowed, will grasp for more, and often vainly think of extorting them by his exorbitant demands : and he will aspire after the highest places, and become overbearing, in proportion to his popularity or reputation. But the humble Christian will not crowd sail in such a treacherous gale of favour : he will fear, and provide against a storm : he will be more careful to deserve commendation, than to receive it : he will yield to those, who appear disposed to vie with him, and recede from every pretension which may excite envy or give umbrage. Indeed he will desire to behave in such a manner, as to be a credit and comfort to his friends and family ; and to adorn the gospel, and “ by well-doing to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men : ” but he will not be a zealous candidate for reputation of any kind. It is enough to pass through life, quietly and usefully ; we should therefore watch against those malignant passions in ourselves, as well as against their effects in others. We should pray that we may be, and be very thankful if we are, preserved from the grief and disgrace of domestick contests : and we should seek for patience to bear every affliction, which the Lord may lay upon us, in a proper manner. Whatever our trials may be, by waiting on our great and gracious Master, we shall find solace and support ; and in due time we shall be honoured. In this frame of mind, he who diligently tends his flocks and herds ; or takes care of the fig-tree or olive-yard ; or is faithful as a servant or labourer, and abides in his calling, because it is the will of God ; will be accepted in all he does : he will be a useful and respectable member of the community ; his real wants will be supplied, and incentives to pride, luxury, and excess will be mercifully withheld ; and he will escape manifold snares and temptations to which his superiors are exposed. Nor is it an empty boast, that such a man has a more solid and stable enjoyment of life, than the king upon his throne, or the richest of his subjects : for he has less uncertainty and anxiety, and fewer fears, cares, and enemies and temptations, than they. So very vain are earthly possessions, except as they are employed to do good ! The friendship and esteem also, which men in private stations obtain by good behaviour, are far more desirable, than the encomiums and professions that accompany wealth and power. Piety, integrity, and prudence

THE ^a wicked flee when no man pursueth; but ^b the righteous are bold as a lion.

^b 2 For ^c the transgression of a land many are the princes thereof; ^d but

^a Lev. xxvi. 17. ^b 56. Deut. xxviii. 7. 25. 2 Kings vii. 6, 7. 15. Ps. llii. 5. Is. vii. 2. Jer. xx. 4. ^c Ex. xi. 8. Ps. xxvii. 1, 2. xlvii. 2, 3. cxii. 7. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. Dan. iii. 16—18. vi. 10, 11. Acts iv. 13. xiv. 3. 1 Thes. ii. 2. ^d 1 Kings xv. 25. 28. xvi. 8—29. 2 Kings xv. 8—31. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 1—12. Is. iii. 1—7. Hos. xiii. 11. d Gen. xlv. 5—8. 2 Chr. xxxii. 20—26. Job xxii. 28—30. Ec. ix. 15. Is. lviii. 12. Dan. iv. 27.

produce reciprocal and sincere affection. Friends, thus united, sharpen one another in every good work; they are cordial, pleasant, and experimental counsellors to each other; they share each other's comforts, and soften each other's sorrows, by tender sympathy. But we might as reasonably expect to fill hell and destruction, till they could hold no more, as to satisfy the heart of man with created good; when nothing but the enjoyment of God himself for ever, can fill the capacities and desires of our rational nature. (*Note, Ec. i. 2.*)—Happy then are they, and only they, who trust in him and love him! But there always have been numbers, who receive no benefit from the greatest mercies, or from afflictions, however sharp and tedious; and who continue the plague and scandal of all related to them, till they are driven away in their wickedness. As our hearts, by nature, answer to their's exactly; we have the more cause to be thankful, if the Lord has made us to differ by his grace; and we should pity and pray for those who are yet left to themselves. Finally, let us apply ourselves to the instructive study of human nature; by carefully watching our own hearts, and comparing them with the word of God, and the state of the world and the church around us. Thus we shall learn how to answer every one, and behave to every one, as their characters and circumstances require.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXVIII. V. 1. Wicked men often appear very courageous: and when they are heated with wine, or excited by resentment, ambition, or other vehement passions, they face danger with great intrepidity: nay, they may have an habitual mechanical courage, so long as reflection is excluded, and the conscience is stupified through ignorance, error, inattention, or excess. Yet when any thing arouses the consciousness of guilt, and the thoughts of a future reckoning, their courage fails, and they become exceedingly timorous: and many of them experience those terrors which they would be ashamed to acknowledge; especially when they are sick, or in solitude. But the upright Christian, whose sins are pardoned, and whose conscience is at peace, is most bold when most cool and reflecting: a sudden alarm may discompose him exceedingly; but let him have time for recollection, faith, and prayer, and his courage gathers strength: and the feeblest true believer will not be *finally* terrified from his duty, by the frown of a tyrant, or the menace of a fiery furnace, as the examples of the martyrs abundantly prove. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Deut. xxviii. 25. Ps. xi. 1—3. xxvii. 1—3. llii. 5. Is. vii. 2. Dan. iii. 16—18. vi. 10, 11. Acts iv. 5—12. vii. 54—60.*)—*Are bold, &c.*] “Will confide:” The lion in his own strength; the righteous, in the Lord, as their Strength and Helper.

* by a man of understanding and knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged.

3 A ^e poor man that oppresseth the poor is like a sweeping rain ^f which leaveth no food.

4 They ^g that forsake the law praise

xxiv. 2—4. Rom. i. 32. 1 John iv. 5.

* Or, by men of understanding and wisdom shall they likewise be prolonged.

e Matt. xviii. 28—30.

f Heb. without food.

g 1 Sam. xxiii. 19.

—21. Ps. x. 3.

xlix. 18. Jer. v.

30, 31. Mal. iii.

15. Acts xii. 22.

V. 2. ‘The state of the commonwealth is oftentimes ‘changed.’ Either there are many rival princes, whose discordant claims desolate the land by civil wars; or they quickly succeed one another, being cut off by traitors and usurpers, or removed before any thing can be brought to an establishment. Compare the history of Israel, after the revolt of the ten tribes, with that of Judah under the princes of David’s line: and read the history of Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jotham, Hezekiah, and Josiah, as the best comment on the latter part of the verse. (*P. O. 2 Sam. xxiv. 1—9.—Notes, 1 Kings xvi. 21, 22. 2 Kings xv. xxiv. Is. iii. 1—9. Ez. xxix. 2—5. xxx. 20—26.*)

V. 3. Extravagant spendthrifts, who have reduced themselves to poverty, and involved themselves in debts, often make interest to get into places of trust and authority: and then their oppression, (the result of poverty, rapacity, and profusion,) resembles an inundation, which entirely desolates the country, and leaves the wretched inhabitants not the least subsistence. In various ways indigent persons obtain opportunities of oppressing the poor; and their extortion is more absolute and unfeeling than that of a richer man, who would not think such petty gains worth his notice, as the needy oppressor stoops to. A succession of indigent governors and officers in remote provinces, who know that their time will be short, and are determined to make the most of it; and who deem themselves secure from justice, by the distance of the place, and the power of bribing high, which they purchase by extortion; often give a melancholy comment on this proverb, and a wretched demonstration of the impolicy and iniquity of preferring such men.—‘The parable comprehends in it a profitable instruction, both to princes and to people: to princes, that they commit not the government of provinces, or offices of charge, to indigent and indebted persons; and to the people, that they suffer not their kings to struggle with too much want.’ *Lord Bacon*, quoted by *Bp. Patrick*. (*Note, Matt. xviii. 28—30.*)

V. 4. Wicked men excuse one another’s faults, and extol one another’s supposed virtues, in order to keep themselves in countenance, and their own consciences in peace. But upright men, who want no such apologies, will not make them for others. They would candidly allow of what is good, and make the best of what is dubious: but they cannot call scandalous vices by soft names, or give those men a good character who are evidently wicked; nay, they deem themselves bound to protest against iniquity, and to use all their power to check its progress. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Sam. xv. 26—28. 1 Kings xviii. 17—20. Neh. v. 6—13. xiii. 23—30. Ps. x. 2—11, v. 3. xlix. 13. 18. Is. v. 20. Jer. v. 30, 31. Luke vi. 24—26. Acts xxiv. 1—9, vv. 2—4. 24—27.*)

the wicked; ⁵ but such as keep the law contend with them.

5 ^h Evil men understand not judgment; but they that seek the Lord understand all *things*.

6 ⁱ Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than *he that is perverse in his ways*, though he *be* rich.

7 Whoso ^k keepeth the law is a wise son; ⁱ but he that ^{*} is a companion of riotous *men* shameth his father.

8 He ^m that by usury and [†] unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will ⁿ pity the poor.

9 He that ^o turneth away his ear from hearing the law, ^p even his prayer *shall be* abomination.

g 1 Sam. xv. 14—24. xxii. 14, 15. 1 Kings xviii. 18. xx. 41, 42. xxi. 19, 20. xxii. 19—28. 2 Kings iii. 13, 14. Neh. v. 7, &c. xiii. 8—11. 17—20. 23—26. 28. Matt. iii. 7. xiv. 4. Acts xv. 2. xix. 9. Gal. ii. 3—6. Eph. v. 11. 1 Thes. ii. 2. Jude 3. h xv. 24. xxiv. 7. Ps. xxv. 14. xcii. 6. Jer. iv. 22. Mark iv. 10—13. John vii. 17. 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15. Jam. i. 5. 1 John ii. 20. 27. i 18. xvi. 8. xix. 1. 22. Luke xvi. 19—23. Acts xxiv. 24—27. k ii. 1, &c. iii. 1, &c. 1 24. xix. 26. xxiii. 19—22. xxix. 3. 15. Luke xv. 13. 30. 1 Pet. iv. 3, 4. * Or, feedeth gluttons. m xiii. 22. Job xxvii. 16, 17. Ec. ii. 26. 17. 2 Sam. xii. 6. iv. 3, 4. † Heb. by increase. Lev. xxv. 36, 37. Ez. xviii. 8, 13, 17. o xxi. 13. Is. i. 15, 16. lviii. 7—11. Zech. vii. 11—13. 2 Tim. p xv. 8. Ps. lxvi. 18. cix. 7. Luke xiii. 25—27. n xix.

V. 5. Men's unbridled passions and wicked actions pervert their judgments and cloud their understandings, till they "call evil good and good evil:" so that they are not able to know right from wrong, when their own conduct or interest is concerned. But he who seeks the favour of God, and desires to do his will, will be led into the knowledge of all useful truth. 'They that are true hearted 'to God, and conscionable in their ways, have so much 'light from God's Spirit, that ... they know both what they 'should do, and how they should perform it.' *Bp. Hall.* (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xiv. 6. xv. 24. xxiv. 7. *Ps.* xxv. 14. 1 Cor. ii. 14—16.)

V. 6. (See on *Note*, xix. 1.—*Notes*, 18. xvi. 8. *Ps.* xxxvii. 16, 17. *Luke* xvi. 19—26. *P. O.*) 'A poor man, 'walking in truth, is better than the rich man of a lie,' or, 'a rich liar.' *Sept.* (*Note*, xix. 22.)

V. 7. The young man who obeys God, by obeying his parents in all things lawful, shews his wisdom: but he that spends his time and money in "feeding gluttons," (*Marg.*) or *feasting epicures*, and "in riotous living," does what he can to disgrace his father, as well as to shew his own folly, and reduce himself to abject misery. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 24. ii. 1—11. xix. 26. xxiii. 19—22. xxix. 3. 15. *Luke* xv. 13—16.)

V. 8. (*Notes*, xiii. 22, 23. xix. 17. *Job* xxvii. 13—23, vv. 16, 17. *Ec.* ii. 24—26.) Under the terms *usury and increase*, or unjust gain, all exactions and oppressions are meant. (*Note*, *Ex.* xxii. 25—27.)

V. 9. 'He that refuseth to hearken unto God, and 'obey his law, deceives himself, if he thinks by his prayers 'to please him, and make an amends for his crimes; for 'God will be so far from hearkening unto him, that he 'will abominate such prayers, as tend to nothing but to 'make God a partner with him in his sins.' *Bp. Patrick.* Such prayer is not of faith; for that is grounded on God's word or law, which the wicked condemn. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xv. 8, 9. xxi. 13. *Ps.* lxvi. 18, 19. *Is.* i. 10—15. lviii. 1—4. 8—12. *Matt.* xxiii. 14.)

V. 10. Ungodly men are often very zealous in enticing

10 Whoso ^q causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, ^r he shall fall himself into his own pit; ^s but the upright shall have good *things* in possession.

11 The ^t rich man is wise in ^u his own conceit; but ^v the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out.

12 When ^w righteous *men* do rejoice *there is* great glory; ^y but when the wicked rise, a man is ^z hidden.

13 He ^a that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but ^b whoso confesseth ^c and forsaketh *them* shall have mercy.

q Num. xxxi. 15, 16. 1 Sam. xxvii. 19. Acts xiii. 9—10. Rom. xvi. 17, 18. 2 Cor. xi. 3, 4. 13—15. Gal. i. 8, 9. ii. 4. iii. 1—4. 2 Pet. ii. 18—20. Rev. ii. 14. r xxvi. 27. Ps. vii. 15, 16. ix. 15. Ec. x. 8. s x. 3. xv. 6. xxi. 20. Deut. vii. 12—14. Ps. xxxvii. 71, 25, 26. Matt. vi. 33. t xviii. 11. xxiii. 4. Is. x. 13, 14. Ez. xxviii. 3—6. Luke xvi. 13, 14. 1 Cor. iii. 18, 19. 1 Tim. vi. 17. u Heb. his eyes. xxvi. 16. Is. v. 21. Rom. xi. 25. xii. 16. v xviii. 17. xix. 1. Job xxxii. 9. Ec. ix. 15—17. w 28. xi. 10. xxix. 2. 1 Chr. xv. 25—28. xvi. 7, &c. xxix. 20—22. 2 Chr. vii. 10. xxx. 22—27. Esth. viii. 15—17. Job xxix. 11—20. Luke xix. 37, 38. y 1 Sam. xxiv. 11. 1 Kings xvii. 3, &c. xviii. 13. xix. 3. Ec. x. 16. Jer. xxxvi. 26. Heb. xi. 37, 38. z x. 12. xvii. 9. Gen. iii. 12, 13. iv. 9. 1 Sam. xv. 13. 24. Job xxxi. 33. Ps. xxxii. 3—5. Jer. ii. 22, 23. Matt. xxii. 25—28. a Lev. xxvi. 40—42. 1 Kings viii. 47—49. Job xxxiii. 27. Ps. li. 1—L. 10. Jer. iii. 12, 13. Dan. ix. 20—23. Luke xv. 18—24. 1 John i. 8—10. b Ex. x. 16, 17. 1 Sam. xv. 30. Matt. iii. 6—10. xxvii. 4, 5. Acts xxvi. 20.

such as profess religion into sin and error. Thus they aim to keep themselves in countenance; they shew their enmity to the truth, and find an occasion of treating it with ridicule and contempt; and in short, they are the factors of Satan, and inspired with his disposition. But their success is their misery, and will ensure their more aggravated condemnation: while such as are *upright in heart* will either withstand their temptations, or be recovered from the snare; and so "inherit good," even eternal good. (*Marg. Ref.—See on Note*, xxvi. 23—27, v. 27.)

V. 11. Rich men are so much complimented and flattered, and are so much accustomed to have every thing their own way, that they are very apt to conceit themselves as much superior to others in understanding as in affluence: and this is especially the case with such as have risen from low stations to great riches; who are far most prone to be purse-proud. But wise and pious men readily discern their true character through this external glare: and they will not make them their idols, oracles, or examples; nor pay any court to them. (*Notes*, xviii. 10, 11. 17. xxiii. 4, 5. *Ps.* xv. 4. *Ec.* ix. 13—18. *Luke* xvi. 14, 15. 1 *Tim.* vi. 17—19. *Jam.* i. 9—11. ii. 5—7.)

V. 12. When wise and righteous men are countenanced and preferred, it is greatly to the honour of the prince, and presages glorious times. But when wicked men rise to authority, the lives, estates, and liberties of men are endangered; and good men especially seek safety in obscurity and retirement. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 28. xi. 10, 11. xxix. 2. *Esth.* viii. 15—17. x. 1—3. *Ps.* lxxv. 3. ci. 6—8. *Is.* xxxii. 1—8.)

V. 13. The man who denies, justifies, or excuses his crimes, or bestows pains and artifice to conceal them, through pride, impenitence, or hypocrisy, will continue under condemnation, be tempted to further guilt and mischief, and cannot possess any durable prosperity. (*Notes*, *Gen.* iii. 8—13. iv. 9—12. xxxvii. 19—32. 1 *Sam.* xv. 18—28. 2 *Sam.* xi. 7—17. *Job* xxxi. 33, 34. *Ps.* xxxii. 3—5.) But he who condemns himself, and humbly confesses his sins, in true repentance and faith, and does works meet for

c xxiii. 17. Ps. ii. 11. cxii. 1. Is. xvi. 2. Jer. xxxii. 40. Rom. xi. 20. Heb. iv. 1. 1 Pet. i. 17. d xxix. 1. Ex. vii. 22, 23. xiv. 23. &c. Job ix. 4. Rom. ii. 4, 5. e xx. 2. Hos. v. 14. 1 Pet. v. 8. f xvii. 12. 2 Kings ii. 24. Hos. xiii. 8. g Ex. i. 14—16. 22. 1 Sam. xxii. 17—19. 2 Kings xv. 16. xxi. 16. Esth. iii. 6—10. Matt. ii. 16. h 1 Kings xii. 10. 11. 14. Neh. v. 15. Ec. iv. 1. Is. iii. 12. Am. iv. 1. i Ex. xviii. 21. Is. xxxiii. 15, 16. Jer. xxii. 15—17. k Gen. ix. 6. Ex. xxi. 14. Num. xxxv. 14, &c. 1 Kings xxi. 19. 23. 2 Kings ix. 26. 2 Chr. xxiv. 21—25. Matt. xxvii. 4, 5. Acts xxviii. 4.

14 ^c Happy is the man that feareth alway; ^d but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief.

15 ^e As ^f a roaring lion, ^g and a ranging bear; ^h so is a wicked ruler over the poor people.

16 The ⁱ prince that wanteth understanding is also a great oppressor; ^j but he that hateth covetousness shall prolong his days.

17 A ^k man that doeth violence to

repentance, shall find mercy from God, however aggravated his transgressions have been. (*Marg. Ref. a, b.—Notes, Lev. xxvi. 40—42. Ps. li. 1—3. Jer. iii. 12—15. 1 John i. 8—10.*)

V. 14. (*Note, 1.*) Strength of faith and grace gives the zealous Christian deliverance, both from the dread of final misery, and from the fear of his fellow creatures. But in proportion as he rises, in these respects, superior to enfeebling, distressing, and tormenting terrors; he learns more and more to reverence the majesty and glory of God; to fear even his fatherly rebukes and chastisements; to distrust his own heart; to watch against sin and temptation; to fear the effects of his own sinful passions; to walk circumspectly, as in a perilous way; and to dread, as the greatest of evils, whatever would dishonour God, and disgrace the gospel.—In these things, “happy is the man that feareth always:” this will render his dependence simple, his prayers fervent, his conscience tender, his peace stable, his hope lively, and his conduct consistent. But the man, who is presumptuous and self-confident, and who hardens his heart against fears of every kind, shall fall into mischief. (*Notes, xxiii. 17, 18. xxix. 1. Job ix. 4—13, v. 4. Is. lxvi. 1, 2. Jer. xxxi. 39—41. Rom. xi. 16—21. Heb. iv. 1, 2. 1 Pet. i. 17—21, v. 17.*)

V. 15, 16. A prince, who is intoxicated with power, and a slave to rapacity, resentment, ambition, or sensual lusts; and who uses his power to oppress the poor, whom he ought especially to protect; shews himself to be as impolitick and foolish as he is wicked. He becomes terrible to his defenceless subjects, as a roaring lion and ranging bear to the helpless cattle. He uses his reason merely to devise mischief, and his power to effect it; and in other respects he degrades himself to the level of those ravenous beasts, which act as impelled by instinct or appetite. And he will generally be hated as a common enemy, and slain without hesitation when opportunity offers. (*Marg. Ref. e—h.—Notes, xvii. 12. xx. 2. Ex. i. 11—17. 1 Sam. xxii. 17—19. Matt. ii. 16—18.*) Whereas an upright and prudent prince, who is superior to covetousness, and other selfish passions, may hope to reign long and happily, having his throne erected in the affections of his subjects. (*Marg. Ref. i.*)—The original word for *ranging* (רָכַץ) is elsewhere translated *empty*, (*Is. xxix. 8.*) and is supposed here to mean *hungry*; as indeed wild beasts seldom range abroad, but when hungry: and the Septuagint translate the word, rendered *understanding* (ἐννοια), *revenues*. On these grounds, therefore, some interpret the latter verse

the blood of *any* person, shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.

18 Whoso ^l walketh uprightly shall be saved; ^m but *he that is perverse in his ways* shall fall at once.

19 He ⁿ that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread; ^o but he that followeth after vain *persons* shall have poverty enough.

20 A ^p faithful man shall abound with blessings; ^q but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be ^r innocent.

21. xxiii. 4. 2 Kings v. 20—27. 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

* Or, unpunished. xvii. 5. marg.

of *needy princes* being great oppressors. But the original cannot bear this construction, without a needless conjectural amendment.—‘A prince that wants understanding, and is a great oppressor, shall shorten his days: but he that hates covetousness shall prolong his days.’ *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 17. He, who wilfully takes away the life of man, may flee whither he will, but he cannot escape the vengeance of God, or even the horrors of his accusing conscience. No one ought to conceal him, or attempt to rescue him from punishment: his life is forfeited; and if he elude the justice of man, he will only the more surely rush into the pit of destruction.—The original word for *doeth violence* (פָּשַׁע), is generally rendered *an oppressor*: and this proverb may very properly be connected with the preceding. ‘If a prince, in his exactions on the poor people, proceed to shed innocent blood, (as Ahab oppressed and murdered Naboth,) though he may seem out of the reach of human laws; he shall perish miserably by the judgment of God, and none shall attempt or be able to prevent it.’ (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. ix. 5, 6. Num. xxxv. 31—34. 2 Sam. xiii. 22—29, vv. 28, 29. xviii. 14. 1 Kings ii. 5, 6. 28—34. xxi. 8—14. xxii. 19—35. 2 Kings ix. 30—37.*)

V. 18. (*Note, Ps. cxxv. 4, 5.*) ‘There is no such way to be safe as to be honest and sincere in all a man’s words and actions: for he that endeavours to preserve himself by fraud and deceit, though he can wind and turn, and hath several shifts he thinks to save himself by, yet in one or other of them he shall perish.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 6. x. 9. 25. xi. 3—6. Ps. xxv. 21. lxxiii. 18—22. 1 Thes. v. 1—3. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3.*)

V. 19. (*See on Note, xii. 11.*) ‘He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread; and he that followeth after vain *persons*, shall be satisfied with poverty.’ The one shall have bread enough; and the other poverty enough. The word is the same in both clauses of the verse.

V. 20. ‘He that is true to his word, and just in all his dealings, shall have abundance of blessings from God, and be well spoken of by men: but he whose eager desires make him heap up wealth, by right or by wrong, brings such guilt on himself, as makes him execrable unto both.’ *Bp. Patrick.* Faithfulness may also include the due improvement of a man’s talents: and the good wishes and fervent prayers of those whom he thus benefits, may be numbered among his many blessings. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 22. xiii. 11. xx. 6. 21. 2 Kings v. 20*)

xxvii. 5. xxiv. 28. Ex. xxiii. 2. 8. Ex. xiii. 19. Hos. iv. 18. Mic. iii. 5. vii. 3. Rom. xvi. 18. 2 Pet. ii. 8. 20. Heb. hath an evil eye, hasteth to be rich. xxiii. 6. Matt. xx. 15. Mark vii. 22. Gen. xiii. 10—13. xix. 17. Job xx. 18—22. xxvii. 16, 17. xxvii. 5, 6. 2 Sam. xii. 7. 1 Kings i. 23. 32—40. Ps. cxli. 5. Matt. xviii. 15. Gal. ii. 11. 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.

21 To have respect of persons is not good; for, 'for a piece of bread that man will transgress.

22 He 'that 'hasteth to be rich hath 'an evil eye, 'and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

23 He 'that rebuketh a man, afterwards shall find more favour, than he that flattereth with the tongue.

24 Whoso 'robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, *It is no transgression*; 'the same is the companion of 'a destroyer.

25 He 'that is of a proud heart, stirreth up strife; but 'he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be 'made fat.

26 He 'that trusteth in his own heart is a fool; 'but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

z xix. 26. Judg. xvii. 2. Matt. xv. 4—6. a 7. xiii. 20. xviii. 9. † Heb. a man destroying. b x. 12. xiii. 10. xv. 18. xxi. 24. xxii. 10. xxix. 22, 23. c Ps. lxxxiv. 12. Jer. xvii. 7, 8. 1 Tim. vi. 6. d xi. 25. xiii. 4. xv. 30. Is. lviii. 11. e iii. 5. 2 Kings viii. 13. Jer. xvii. 9. Mark vii. 21—23. xiv. 27—31. Rom. viii. 7. f Job xxviii. 28. 2 Tim. iii. 15. Jam. i. 5. iii. 13—18.

—27. Job xxix. 12—17, v. 13. Ps. cxii. 4—9. 2 Cor. ix. 12—15. 1 Tim. vi. 6—10, vv. 9, 10. 17—19.)—*Innocent.*] "Unpunished." Marg. God will punish him, if man do not.

V. 21. 'All persons do not give bribes: but there is 'hardly any cause, wherein somewhat may not be found, 'that may incline the mind of a judge, if respect of persons lead him. For one man shall be respected as his 'countryman, another as an ill-tongued man, another as 'a rich man, another as a favourite, another as commended 'by a friend; to conclude, all is full of iniquity where respect of persons bears sway: and for a very slight matter, as it were for a bit of bread, judgment is perverted.' Lord Bacon, quoted by Bp. Patrick.—The same is at least equally true and important in the case of ministers. If, instead of the glory of God and the salvation of souls, they are influenced by respect of persons, desire of favour and popularity, or love to filthy lucre; they will be drawn aside from the line of duty by numberless considerations: and none can say to what meanness and baseness they may at length stoop. (Notes, xviii. 5. xxiv. 23—25. Ex. xxiii. 1—9. Ez. xiii. 17—23, v. 19. Hos. iv. 15—19, v. 18. Mic. iii. 5—7. vii. 1—4. Rom. xvi. 17—20, v. 18.)

V. 22. The avaricious man covets all he sees, grudges all that goes beside him, and all that he and his family expend, and envies every one that is more prosperous than himself. He is not aware how precarious his ill-gotten possessions are; or how soon poverty may come upon him, and he may need help from others, though now so unwilling to bestow it on them. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Note 20.—See on Notes, iii. 7—10.)

V. 23. Even wise and pious men have so much remaining in them of self-love and pride, that the most prudent and needful rebukes are apt to create a transient displeasure in their minds. Yet upon reflection most men will have a better opinion of a faithful reprove, than of a soothing flatterer, and will shew him more favour. Those, who have the most frequently and faithfully made the trial, will have the fullest experimental evidence of the truth of this maxim. (Notes, xxvii. 5, 6. 2 Sam. xii. 7—12. 1 Kings iv. 5, 6, v. 5.)

V. 24. Young people often consider themselves as, in some sense, owners of their parents' substance, and scruple not to appropriate whatever they can lay hands on. Thus they "rob their parents, and say, it is no transgression:" whereas it is a robbery that adds ingratitude, disrespect, and disobedience, to injustice; and which, by iniquitously procuring the means, initiates numbers into those expen-

sive courses, by which they at length are led to join the more infamous depredators and murderers, and so they rush forward to destruction temporal and eternal. (Notes, 7. xiii. 20. xviii. 9. xix. 26. Judg. xvii. 2—4. Matt. xv. 3—6. Luke xv. 11—16.)

V. 25. The words, rendered "a proud heart," signify *large in mind*; and the ambitious, who are actuated by vast desires and expectations of power, honour, and pre-eminence, and who are the great disturbers of mankind in publick and private life, seem especially intended.—'A man of a 'proud and insolent spirit, of ambitious and vast desires, 'is never quiet; but as he lives in perpetual quarrels, so 'hath no satisfaction in what he enjoys; nay, many times 'wastes it all in suits and contentions: but he, who confiding in the good Providence of the Almighty, hath a 'humble and contented mind, lives peaceably with others, 'and comfortably within himself; nay, thrives many times, 'and abounds in plenty of all good things.' Bp. Patrick. This largeness of mind, differs widely from Solomon's largeness of heart, or very great capacity: even as a humble, contented mind differs from a weak capacity, or a base and grovelling spirit. (Notes, x. 12. xiii. 10. xv. 17, 18. xvii. 19. xxi. 24. xxii. 10. Is. lviii. 8—12, v. 11. Jer. xvii. 5—8.)

V. 26. When a man has such confidence in his own good understanding, intentions, and dispositions, that he fears no deception; and is fully satisfied that he shall act up to the purposes which he has formed under conviction, or in sickness and danger; or trusts to his own resolutions, and sincerity or faithfulness, for perseverance in the ways of God; he proves himself to be ignorant and foolish. He does not consider how differently he will be affected, when in health and safety, and under temptations, than he was in contrary circumstances; he trusts the worst of all deceivers, which has cheated him a thousand times; (Note, Jer. xvii. 9, 10;) and he might as well expect that the sea would be always calm, or the waters always frozen, because they are sometimes so. But he who walks wisely, or circumspectly, distrusts himself, trusts in the Lord, shuns temptation, and prays continually to be upheld by the grace of God; and thus he will be delivered from those snares, in which the other is entangled. A man's confidence in his own capacity and ability, for success in any undertaking, is implied in the general interpretation of trusting his own heart: but the inspired writer's strong and decided language, no doubt was intended to convey a more general and spiritual instruction. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, iii. 5, 6. 2 Kings viii. 12, 13. Job xxviii. 23—28, v. 28. Matt. xxvi. 30—35. 69—75.)

g xix. 17. xxii. 9. Deut. xv. 10. Ps. xli. 1—3. cxii. 5—9. 2 Cor. ix. 6—11. Heb. xiii. 16. h Is. i. 15. i xi. 26. xxiv. 24.

27 He ^g that giveth unto the poor shall not lack; but he that ^h hideth his eyes ⁱ shall have many a curse.

28 When ^k the wicked rise, men ^k 12. xxix. 2. ^l hide themselves; but when ^m they perish, the righteous increase. ¹ Job xxiv. 4. in Esth. viii. 17. Acts xii. 23, 24.

V. 27. The selfish man not only refuses to look out for objects of compassion, but he “hides his eyes,” and turns away from those that force themselves on his attention. Yet he thus exposes himself to the ill wishes of great numbers, and brings himself under the curse of God, in every thing he does or possesses. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xi. 24—26. xix. 17. xxii. 9. Ps. xli. 1—3. cxii. 5—9. 2 Cor. ix. 6—15.)

V. 28. (See on Note, 12.) ‘In the places of the impious, the righteous groan: but by their destruction the righteous are multiplied.’ *Sept.* ‘Some are imprisoned and sent into obscurity, by the unjust prosecution of the wicked; and others obscure themselves, and groan under those oppressions, till there be a turn of affairs, ... by the fall of those wicked persons and the preferment of better; which invites virtuous men to appear again, and by the countenance they then receive, to propagate piety among the people. ... There is no blessing we should pray for so earnestly as this, especially when the days are evil.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes*, *Esth.* viii. 15—17. *Acts* xii. 20—24.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—17.

Wicked men are often hypocrites in courage, and conceal an aching and trembling heart under the affectation of great composure, or noisy mirth. But if, at some times, they are ready to tremble at the shaking of a leaf, and “to flee when no man pursueth;” how will their hands be strong, or their hearts endure, when the almighty Judge shall pursue them with his dreadful vengeance? This terror will be unspeakably more insupportable, than the dread of them has been to their inferiors and vassals. And yet some of them, who have risen to authority, have been more cruel and terrible than the most savage beasts; and to their own subjects especially, as if ambitious to let all the world know that they wanted understanding, as much as equity! Many of them have been inhuman oppressors and sanguinary persecutors, who have cut off by cruel deaths numbers of their people, and driven the wisest and best of them into exile or obscurity; constraining them to hide themselves, that they might escape with their lives, and not do violence to their consciences; and employing their scanty ingenuity to render others miserable, and themselves odious and execrated. When nations provoke the Lord by their transgressions, he sends them many such tyrants, as competitors or successors to each other; who, by their fierce contests and implacable resentments, their bloody executions and greedy extortions, are more fatal than earthquakes, pestilences, or the beasts of the field; and who themselves seem to be made only to be taken and destroyed, as nuisances to society. But when the Lord has blessings in store for any people, he raises up “a man of understanding,” who loves justice and hates covetousness, to rule over them; and who thus both prolongs his own days, and the peaceful estate of the land. Under a ruler of this character, the righteous rejoice and increase, and great honour and prosperity may be expected. For

such rulers then we ought to pray; and having obtained our requests we cannot be too thankful: while every one, according to the duties of his station, should endeavour to check the progress of impiety, and promote national reformation, that we may not forfeit these valuable blessings. But the rich are not the only, nor the most grievous oppressors: in various ways the poor are more hateful and intolerable. Necessitous and unprincipled men often intrude into the magistracy, or into offices connected with the collection, or the expenditure, of the publick treasure; and when it comes in their way, squeeze the poor without mercy or shame. It is however evident, that numbers are not at all aware of their guilt and danger; but are either insensible through ignorance, or presumptuous through a “form of godliness.” Though they “turn away their ears from hearing the law,” yet they contend for the doctrines of the gospel: they hope to be saved from hell by grace and faith, though they are not saved from sin, and this present evil world. They also attend on ordinances, and make many and long prayers, though they neglect justice, truth, and mercy: but such prayers are an abomination to the Lord; for they never heartily pray to be delivered from hardness and blindness of heart, hypocrisy, covetousness, and the love of the world, or to have the law of God written in their hearts. Yet alas! there are such numbers who agree in forsaking the law, and in excusing and commending each other; and they meet with so many teachers of their own stamp, that they keep themselves and one another in heart and countenance: and they verily conclude, that all else in religion is needlessly strict and scrupulous. So that when such as regard the whole word of God, conscientiously keeping the commandments, and walking uprightly, as well as believing the promises, and trusting the mercy of God through Christ for salvation, attempt to contend with them, and argue, that “without holiness no man shall see the Lord;” they treat all their warnings with supercilious contempt, as the result of ignorance, bigotry, and a narrow mind. Especially those who are rich, or grow rich in this course, become “wise in their own conceits;” so that “there is more hope of a fool than of them.” And they despise the poor, especially when, being men of understanding, they search them out, and detect their hypocrisy and delusion. For “evil men understand not judgment:” their lusts blind them, and God sends them strong delusions to believe a lie: so that they mistake hardness of heart, vain confidence, and carnal security, for gracious assurance and holy boldness. While the established believer, trusting in the Lord, and walking in the path of duty, fears no enemy or danger, but dreads always lest he should be deceived by his own heart, to dishonour God and commit iniquity; these self-deceivers treat all tenderness of conscience, and all jealousy of themselves, as want or weakness of faith, or remains of a self-righteous spirit: and thus they harden their hearts against fears of every kind, till they fall into mischief. But true piety begins and proceeds in deep humility. “The poor in spirit” do not palliate or cover their sins; but they humbly

CHAP. XXIX.

Miscellaneous maxims, concerning a man being hardened against reproof; and of good government, wisdom, and righteousness; against flattery, profligacy, injustice, scornfulness, loquacity, rashness, indulging children, improperly treating servants, pride, and the

confess and forsake them, hoping thus to find mercy. They are not “wise in their own conceits;” but seek to the Lord to be their Teacher, and are glad to be set right by the poorest man, who can point out any mistake, into which they have fallen: and this proves their best security against delusion, and the best method of obtaining well-grounded assurance. They neither refuse to learn and obey the commands of God; nor yet trust in their imperfect services. They do not live in conscious iniquity, and then cloke it with “a form of godliness.” They aim to walk uprightly; yet they dare not trust in their own deceitful hearts, but continually seek to the Lord to uphold them, and to preserve them from temptation, or to render them victorious over it. They may be seduced by plausible deceivers, “to go astray in an evil way;” and even diffidence of themselves, and their unsuspecting candour will sometimes thus expose them: but on reflection and examination, they recover themselves from the snare. They learn to beware of covetousness, and prefer poverty with uprightness, to being rich and perverse: being aware that those who by injury and unjust gain, increase their substance, have no other advantage but the toil and anxiety of gathering wealth, for the use of those “that will pity the “poor.” Yet, by the blessing of God, they know no want, but are often able to assist their relatives and friends: while such as affect to despise them, are the disgrace and ruin of those whom they are most bound to comfort, and become themselves, even in this world, abject and miserable: nay, some of this character, both in high and low life, pursuing their ambitious, rapacious, and debauched courses, are led to do violence to the lives of their neighbours, and so hasten their deserved, ignominious, and almost unpitied destruction.

V. 18—28.

In every rank and state of life, upright conduct is immensely the most safe and advantageous; though the crafty and designing are sanguine in promising themselves and each other the most brilliant successes. But the upright not only shun injustice and violence: they also learn faithfulness; and “a faithful man shall abound with blessings.” They have mercy on the poor, according to the Lord’s mercy to them: and, giving to them without grudging, they shall not lack, but shall have good things in possession. For instead of following after vain persons, and growing poor by profuseness; they are frugal, and industrious in tilling the land, or in other honest labour; and thus “have plenty of bread,” and are therewith content. When young persons enter upon such a pious and prudent medium, they become the credit and comfort of their parents. But alas! many prefer being the companions of vicious men, to their shame and grief: their excesses tempt them to rob their parents, and waste their substance; then they

fear of man; and of the goodness and sovereignty of the Lord, 1—27.

*** HE** ^a that being often reprov^d hardeneth *his* neck, ^c shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.

3—5. xxvi. 3—5. xxxv. 13—16. Zech. i. 3—6. Matt. xxvi. 21—25. John vi. 70, 71. xiii. 10, 11, 18, 26. Acts i. 18. 25. b 2 Chr. xxxvi. 13. Neh. ix. 29. Is. xlvi. 4. Jer. xvii. 23. c vi. 15. xxviii. 18 Is. xxx. 13, 14. Zech. vii. 11—14. 1 Thes. v. 3

* Heb. *A man of reproofs.*
a i. 24—31. 1 Sam. ii. 25. 1 Kings xvii. 1. xviii. 18. xx. 42. xxi. 20—23. xxii. 29—23. 28. 34—37. 2 Chr. xxv. 16. xxxiii. 10. xxxvi. 15—17. Jer. xxv.

often associate with robbers and destroyers; they spend their lives in fear and horror, and sometimes end them in ignominy.—Nor should it pass unnoticed, how frequently we are cautioned against covetousness. “He that hasteth “to be rich shall not be innocent.” Some, as magistrates, having respect of persons, often become so mean, as to sell their iniquitous services, and commit the most atrocious crimes, at the lowest price. Others, as ministers, for the sake of filthy lucre betray their trust, shew “respect of persons,” “forsake the law, praise the “wicked,” flatter with their tongues, “cause the righteous “to go astray in their evil way,” and murder the souls of men. In every situation, the avaricious is sure to have “an evil eye,” to envy such as are more prosperous, to grudge what goes beside him; to use unjust or unmerciful ways of increasing his substance: and, instead of giving liberally to the poor, (the best security against want,) to “hide his eyes” and harden his heart, that their misery and complaints may not prevail with him to lessen his idolized hoard. But what will be the end of these covetous practices, and of these “children of a curse, who go astray “in the way of Balaam, loving the wages of unrighteousness?” Alas! they know not what poverty will come upon them here: and eternal poverty, without one drop of water to cool the tongue, will be their portion, if they die impenitent: while they will have many a curse for their unmercifulness and rapacity.—Others growing “proud in “heart,” and ambitious of distinctions even in the church, stir up strifes, and become fierce disputers about forms and notions. Instead of walking circumspectly, in a path bestrewed with snares, and beset with enemies; they confide in the traitor in their own bosom, and walk on heedlessly, till they fall at once, and there is no remedy. From these snares may the Lord deliver us! Let us watch and pray against temptation: let us not be high-minded, but fear: let us examine ourselves, and beg of God to examine us; and to teach us so to seek him, that we may “understand all things” pertaining to our hope and to our walk. Let us learn to value the faithful reprover, and encourage and imitate his faithfulness; and to shun the fascinating poison of the flatterer, determined neither to listen to his words, nor to learn his ways. And may the Lord give us and our’s a believing, upright heart, and a peaceful conscience; that we may have confidence in him, and be “bold as a lion” through the trials of life, at the approach of death, and in the prospect of the day of judgment: and let us never forget to pray, that this nation, and all nations, may be governed by such rulers, as encourage every honest attempt to increase the number of the righteous.

NOTES

CHAP. XXIX. V. 1. “A man of reproofs,” (*marg.*)

^d xi. 10. xxviii. 12. 28. Esth. viii. 15. Ps. lxxii. 1—7. Is. xxxiii. 1. 2. Jer. xxiii. 5. 6. Rev. xi. 15. * Or, increased. ^e Esth. iii. 15. Ec. x. 5. Matt. ii. 3. 16. ^f x. 1. xv. 20. xxiii. 15. 24, 25. xxvii. 11. Luke i. 13—17. ^g v. 8—10. vi. 26. xxi. 17. 20. xxviii. 7. 19. Luke xv. 30. ^h 14. xvi. 12. xx. 8. 1 Sam. xiii. 13. 2 Sam. viii. 15. 1 Kings ii. 12. Ps. lxxxix. 14. xcix. 4. Is. ix. 7. xlix. 8.

2 When ^d the righteous are ^e in authority, the people rejoice; but ^f when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.

3 Whoso ^f loveth wisdom rejoiceth his father; but ^g he that keepeth company with harlots, spendeth *his* substance.

4 The ^h king by judgment establisheth the land; but ⁱ he that receiveth gifts overthroweth it.

5 A man ⁱ that flattereth his neighbour, [†] Heb. a man of oblations. 2 Kings xv. 18—20. Jer. xxii. 13—17. Dan. xi. 20. Mic. vii. 3. i vii. 5. 21. xx. 19. xxvi. 24, 25. 28. 2 Sam. xiv. 17, &c. Job xvii. 5. Ps. v. 9. xii. 2. 1 Thes. ii. 5.

bour, ^k spreadeth a net for his feet. ^k i. 17. Lam. i. 13. Hos. v. 1. Luke xx. 20, 21. Rom. xvi. 18. 1 v. 22. xi. 5, 6. xii. 13. Job xviii. 7—10. Ps. xi. 6. Is. viii. 14, 15. 2 Tim. ii. 26. ^m Ps. xcvi. 11. cxviii. 15. cxxxii. 16. Rom. v. 2. 3. Jam. i. 8. 1 Pet. i. 8. 1 John i. 4. ⁿ Job xxix. 16. xxxi. 13. 21. Ps. xxxi. 7. xli. 1. Gal. vi. 1. ^o xxi. 13. 1 Sam. xxv. 9—11. Jer. v. 28. xxii. 15—17. Ez. xxii. 7. 29—31. Mic. iii. 1—4.

6 In ^l the transgression of an evil man *there is* a snare; ^m but the righteous doth sing and rejoice.

7 The righteous ⁿ considereth the cause of the poor; ^o *but* the wicked regardeth not to know *it*.

8 ^p Scornful men ^q bring a city into a snare; but ^r wise *men* turn away wrath.

9 *If* ^r a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, *there is* no rest.

p xi. 11. Is. xxviii. 14—22. Matt. xxvii. 39—43. John ix. 40, 41. xi. 47—50. 1 Thes. ii. 15, 16. [†] Or, set a city on fire. Jam. iii. 5, 6. q Ex. xxxii. 10—14. Num. xvi. 48. xxv. 11. Deut. ix. 18—20. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17. Jer. xv. 1. Ez. xxii. 30. Aina vii. 2—6. Jam. v. 15—18. r xxvi. 4. Ec. x. 13. Matt. vii. 6. xi. 17—19.

whom men have often warned and counselled, and whom God has repeatedly corrected, but without producing any abiding amendment; who still continues obstinate and rebellious, as the oxen that will not submit to the yoke, but stiffen their necks against it; will unexpectedly be overtaken by divine judgments, from which there can be no escape or deliverance. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, i. 24—31. vi. 12—15, v. 15. 1 Sam. ii. 23—25. 1 Kings xxii. 28. 32—35. Zech. vii. 8—13. 1 Thes. v. 1—3.)

V. 2. This is ‘a tacit admonition unto princes to be good, by describing the happiness which a nation then enjoys,’ *Bp. Patrick*. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—See on Notes*, xi. 10, 11. xxviii. 12. 28.)

V. 3. *Marg. Ref.—See on Notes*, xxiii. 24—28. xxviii. 7. 19.—*Keepeth company, &c.*] “Feedeth harlots.” *Old Version.—Luke xv. 30.*

V. 4. (*Marg. Ref. h.—Notes*, 14. xvi. 12, 13. xx. 8. 28.) “A man of oblations.” *Marg.* ‘The word... always signifies, throughout the whole Bible, the heave-offerings which were offered to God; which would make one think, that... a man of heave-offerings signifies here, a prince that is sacrilegious. ... Or, if they will not take it in that strict sense, it denotes one that will suffer himself to be pacified by gifts, and bribed to wink at the most enormous crimes: ... or, that is so unjust, as to find fault, perhaps with the most innocent persons, on purpose that they may appease him, offering him a part of their estate to save all the rest.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—May not “the man of oblations” be a prince, who acts as if he were a deity, or had no superior, but possessed power to dispense even with the divine laws, and to pardon the crimes which God required him to punish; provided the criminals would make atonement to him by large oblations?

V. 5. Flatterers often aim to inveigle men, by their deceitful commendations, to consent to some proposal which entangles them in difficulties, or to seduce them into sinful compliances. But if they have no such intentions, their encomiums and professions tend to put men off their guard, and to betray them into some foolish and prejudicial conduct, which brings them into great trouble and distress, if they be not finally ruined by it. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xx. 19. xxvi. 24—27. xxvii. 14. 2 Sam. xiv. 18—20. xv. Matt. xxii. 15—22, vv. 15, 16. Rom. xvi. 17—20, v. 18.)

V. 6. The designing villain is often ensnared by his own transgression, and ruined by the consequences of

his own iniquitous conduct; which causes the righteous to rejoice in praising and adoring the just judgments of God, as well as in giving thanks for their own preservation, and for having been led in the paths of peace and safety. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, v. 20—23, v. 22. xi. 5, 6. xii. 13. Job xviii. 5—21, vv. 7—10. Ps. ix. 15, 16. xi. 6. lviii. 10, 11. Rev. xviii. 20—24. xix. 1—6.)

V. 7. This has a special reference to the conduct of righteous magistrates, who bestow pains to examine into the causes of the poor, as being most exposed to oppression, and least able to redress themselves: while wicked and selfish magistrates disregard those by whom nothing is to be gained, and from whom they fear nothing. (*Note, Luke xviii. 1—8, vv. 2—4.*) ‘They are obliged in conscience to search into the truth of things; not to be sparing of their pains, ... to find out the bottom of a business; which he that refuses to do, nay, perhaps rejects the complaint of the poor, or beats them off with big words; or out of the hardness of his heart, or the love of ease, or fear of great men, or any other respect, will not give them audience, or not consider and redress their grievance; Solomon pronounces him a wicked ... person.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—The maxim, however, is equally applicable to the compassionate attention of pious men to the distresses of the poor; and the unfeeling disregard to them, which is so generally shewn by the wicked, nay, sometimes by such as would be thought religious. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xxi. 13. xxxi. 8, 9. Job xxix. 12—17 xxxi. 16—23. Ps. xli. 1—3. lxxxii. 2—4. Jer. v. 26—29.)

V. 8. ‘Men of scorn, (as it is in the Hebrew,) signify such as mock at religion, and at all things that are serious.’ *Bp. Patrick*. Persons of this description, more than any other kind of wicked or foolish men, seem framed for the ruin of nations; especially when they possess influence or authority: for they lead the people further and further into wickedness and impiety, and ripen communities for divine judgments; and then by their selfish, rash, or infatuated schemes, they concur in bringing those judgments upon them. On the contrary, the wise and pious avert the wrath of God, by their prayers and zealous endeavours to promote religion, and to counteract the tendency of such pernicious measures. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xi. 10, 11. xiv. 6. xix. 25. 28, 29. xxi. 11. 24. Is. xxviii. 14, 15. 17—22. Jer. xxxvi. 20—25. John xi. 47—53. Jam. iii. 3—6.)

V. 9. If a wise man inadvertently engage in any sort

b Is. ix. 6, 7. Luke
i. 32, 33. Heb. i.
8, 9.

c 17. 21. xxii. 6.
15. xxiii. 13, 14.
Heb. xii. 10, 11.
d x. 1. 5. xvii. 21.
25. 1 Kings i. 6.

f Ps. xxxvii. 34.
36. lviii. 10. xci.
8. xcii. 9. 11.
cxii. 8. Rev. xv.
4. cxiii. 20.

g 15. xiii. 24. xix.
18. xxiii. 13, 14.
h 1 Sam. iii. 1.
Hos. iv. 6. Am.
viii. 11, 12 Matt.

† Or, *is made naked.* 2 Chr. xxviii. 19.

V. 14. The king who, in truth and righteousness, uses his authority in defending the poor and needy from oppression and wrong, takes the best method of establishing his throne during his own life, and of perpetuating the regal authority in his family to future generations.—This is especially selected as the character of a good king; because in this he most resembles and imitates the “King of kings” and Lord of lords.” (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xvi. 12, 13. xx. 28. xxv. 4, 5. xxviii. 15, 16. *Ps.* lxxii. 4—7. *Is.* ix. 6, 7. xxxii. 1, 2.)

V. 15. *His mother, &c.*] The mother is supposed to have the immediate care of the child, during those tender years in which correction is most seasonable and salutary. But mothers are apt to be over-indulgent; and when children are left to themselves, to contract bad habits, and to grow obstinate in vice, they become a disgrace to them. (See on *Notes*, x. 1. xiii. 24. xxii. 15. xxiii. 13, 14.)

V. 16. (See on *Note*, 2.) When wicked men live together in great numbers, they corrupt and embolden each other in wickedness; they whet each other's ingenuity, and grow more shameless and artful in their crimes. Hence it is that populous cities are almost always more full of daring impiety and iniquity, than country-villages.—
 'When the wicked grow numerous by growing great (2),
 '... wickedness increases by having authority on its side:
 'but let not the righteous hereby be discouraged; for the
 'wicked men are, the shorter is their reign; and they
 'that preserve their virtue shall have the pleasure to behold
 'their downfall.' *Bp. Patrick. (Notes, Ps. xxxvii. 34—36.*
liv. 7. lviii. 10, 11. xcii. 11. Rev. xv. 1—4, v. 4. xviii. 20.)

V. 17. The love of ease, and fear of being discomposed or put out of temper, induce many to neglect the correction of their children: but this little interruption of their *rest*, if submitted to as a self-denying duty, and in dependence on the aid and blessing of God, generally prevents more durable and distressing disquietude, even that of witnessing or hearing of their evil courses when grown up; and makes way for much peace and comfort, when the correction is the blessed means of their becoming worthy and useful persons. (*Marg. Ref.—See on Note, 15.*)

V. 18. Where the light of Revelation has not reached, the people live in ignorance and ungodliness, and perish in

19 A ^k servant will not be corrected by words; for ^l though he understand, he will not answer.

20 ^m Seest thou a man *that is* hasty in his ^{*} words? *there is* ⁿ more hope of a fool than of him.

21 He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child, shall have him become *his* son at the length.

22 An ^o angry man stirreth up strife, and ^p a furious man aboundeth in transgression.

23 A ^q man's pride shall bring him

low; but ^r honour shall uphold the humble in spirit.

24 Whoso is ^s partner with a thief ^t hateth his own soul: ^u he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth *it* not.

25 The ^x fear of man bringeth a snare; but ^y whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be ^z safe.

26 Many ¹ seek the ² ruler's favour; ³ but *every* man's judgment *cometh* from the LORD.

⁴ xix. 12, 13. Gal. ii. 11—13. 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17. ⁵ y xvi. 20. xviii. 10. xxx. 5. 1 Chr. v. 20. Ps. cxviii. 8. cxxv. 1. Dan. iii. 28. vi. 23. 1 Pet. i. 21. ⁶ z xix. 6. ⁷ Heb. face of a ruler. ⁸ a xvi. 7. xix. 21. xxi. 1. Gen. xliii. 14. Ezra vii. 27, 28. Neh. i. 11. Esth. iv. 16. Ps. xx. 9. Is. xlv. 9—11. Dan. iv. 35.

their sins. The Bible and faithful teachers are therefore inestimable mercies: yet men should not deceive themselves, by being "hearers only, and not doers of the word;" for "he that keepeth the law, happy is he." At the same time this maxim points out those who have no scriptural instruction, as the objects of deep compassion; and inculcates the duty of sending missions, forwarding every design for the instruction of the ignorant, and praying for an increase of faithful labourers, in every part of the church and of the world. (Notes, xix. 16. 1 Sam. iii. 1. 2 Chr. xv. 1—7. xvii. 7—9. xxviii. 19. Ps. xix. 7—11. Hos. iv. 6. Am. viii. 11—14. Matt. ix. 36—38. Rom. x. 12—17. 1 Thes. ii. 13—16. Jam. i. 22—25.)

V. 19. 'An obstinate servant.' Sept. 'He that is of ^{*} a servile and rebellious nature.'—The servants were generally in those days the property of their masters, who had, under certain restrictions, the power of correcting them: and many would be found, who could not be governed by lenient measures, but would grow more perverse, negligent, sullen, and refractory, under reproofs: so that, in some cases, the most humane master might be constrained to use more rigorous methods, and be justified in using them, as far as he kept within the limits of the law of God. (Notes, xxvi. 3. Deut. xxv. 2, 3.)

V. 20. (Note, xxvi. 12.) When a man is so full of self-conceit and presumption, that he will neither take counsel nor warning, but will rashly speak whatever pride, vanity, or passion may suggest; when he is forward to speak before his superiors, or before he has taken time to consider the subject; when he is rash and dogmatical, and disputatious, upon the most difficult subjects, or the deepest mysteries, without due reverence or reflection; there is more hope of the most ignorant and profligate, than of him. (See on Note, 11. Ec. v. 1—3.)

V. 21. When a servant, born in a man's house, was treated with indulgent fondness, and not inured to labour or obedience, because he happened to be a comely or witty child; it would tend to make him unfit for his station, and negligent in his business: thus he would become useless and uncomfortable, insolent and ungovernable, and expect to be treated like a child of the family.—Good usage, as a servant, does not by any means imply that indulgence which would ruin a child.

V. 22. See on Notes, xv. 17, 18. xvii. 19.

V. 23. Marg. Ref.—See on Notes, xv. 33. xviii. 12.

V. 24. The man, who is a partner in any fraud or

theft, or receives stolen goods, is not only as bad as the thief; but being likely to be called upon as a witness, and to be put upon his oath to declare all he knows, he will probably perjure himself rather than discover his accomplices; and so bring wrath upon his soul on another account. When the Israelites were put upon their oath, the judge adjured them in the name and presence of God, to declare the truth, as they would escape his awful curse. (Notes, i. 10—19. viii. 36. xxx. 7—9, v. 9. Lev. v. 1. Judg. xvii. 2—4. Ps. l. 16—21.)

V. 25, 26. The fear of man, in a variety of ways, proves an ensnaring temptation. Numbers, fearing reproach, are ashamed of Christ and his cause. In persecution many, through fear of man, apostatize; and others neglect their bounden duties, and forsake the ordinances of God. Some, having committed one crime, from the fear of man add others and still greater, to cover or conceal it. (Note, xxviii. 13.) Even Christians, from fear of their brethren who differ from them, are tempted to dissemble, and draw others into dissimulation: and ministers, from the fear of censure or unpopularity, too often consult the inclinations of the people, and of some leading men, or powerful friend, more than the sacred oracles, or the edification of their hearers in general. They "shun to declare the whole counsel of God," take to themselves the merit of being prudent, and censure their more faithful brethren. Nay, masters of families are often so afraid even of their servants and children, that, having long neglected family-worship, they dare not set about it, even when convinced that it is their duty. But no enumeration can reach the tenth of the cases, in which the fear of man, proving stronger than the fear of God, draws in persons of almost every character, to commit sin, or neglect duty: yet confidence in God preserves the established believer from this temptation, or enables him to overcome it, and secures him in every situation.—But this temptation would in many cases lose much of its force, were it well considered, that "while many seek the ruler's favour, every man's judgment is of the LORD." 'What God hath appointed, that shall come to him.' (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, xvi. 33. xxi. 30. Gen. xii. 11—16. Ex. xxxii. 21—24. 1 Sam. xv. 24, 25. Matt. x. 27, 28. xxvi. 47—56, v. 56. 69—75. John iii. 1, 2. xii. 42, 43. Gal. ii. 11—16, v. 12, 13.)—*Shall be safe.* (25) "Shall be set on high." Marg. Notes, Ps. lxix. 29. xci. 14—16. Hab. iii. 17—19, v. 19

b xxiv. 9. Ps. cxix. 115. cxxxix. 21. Zech. xi. 8. John vii. 7. xv. 17—19. 23. 1 John iii. 13. 27 An ^b unjust man is an abomination to the just; and *he that* is upright

in the way, is abomination to the wicked.

V. 27. There is not only a contrariety of character, but a mutual antipathy, between the righteous and the wicked, proportioned to the degree of their holiness or wickedness. They are *an abomination* to each other. But while the wicked hate the persons, as well as the characters and company of the righteous; the righteous abhor the conduct, yet pity and pray for the persons of the wicked. (Notes, Ps. cxxxix. 19—22. Zech. xi. 7—9. John vii. 3—10, v. 7. xv. 17—25. 1 John iii. 11—15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—14.

It is an unspeakable advantage to any people, when the righteous are invested with authority; and for this blessing we all are bound to pray, or to bless the Lord: but the advancement of the wicked, however eminent for genius, capacity, and splendid achievements, should be deprecated or deplored, as a publick calamity, as one of the heaviest judgments inflicted on nations by an offended God. The magistrate, whether “the king as supreme,” or one in authority under him, if he rule in judgment, establishes the land: but rulers, who are influenced by bribes, or by lies, ruin the state, and corrupt the mass of the people, by their pestilential influence, example, and the fatal effects of their own misconduct.—We cannot but be aware, that scornful men, whose hearts are hardened in profane mockery of God and religion, will despise remarks of this kind: yet, let them look well to it; for while they bring cities and nations into a snare, “the devil takes them captive at his will.”—They will, no doubt, not only despise the words of God’s ministers; but secretly hate, and perhaps ridicule, those princes, who faithfully judge and protect the poor. But the King of Zion, whose “throne is established for ever,” will preserve and bless those who copy his example, and frown into destruction all those who are enemies to them and to him. Indeed the upright Christian, in every situation, must expect to be hated by the blood-thirsty, the fraudulent, and such as perjure themselves for gain: but they have the affectionate prayers of the righteous in their behalf, who seek the preservation of their lives, and the salvation of their souls. Whilst various means are used to repress iniquity, and wicked men are warned and corrected that they may be reclaimed; there are still great numbers, who, having been “often reprov’d,” so harden themselves in obstinate wickedness, and in contemptuous or stubborn defiance of all authority, that they must be cut off by condign punishment, for an example to others. The word of God likewise “warns us all to flee from the wrath to come,” to the hope set before us in Jesus Christ. Yet many, who are thus repeatedly reprov’d and invited, sin against the light, and against their own consciences, and grow more daring and impudent in wickedness; till they suddenly perish, “and that without remedy.” For “in the transgression of the wicked there is a snare,” as birds are caught in a net; and when the snare is drawn, they can by no means disentangle themselves.—The flatterer also, as Satan’s coadjutor, spreads his net for our feet. The pride of our heart first disposes us to flatter ourselves, and to admire our own fancied excellences, and to excuse our

crimes as foibles: but being sometimes scarcely able to keep up this good opinion of ourselves, when we are conscious of so much evil, we are apt to look out for other witnesses to confirm us in it; and we are prepared to pay them in kind, or in some other way, for this favourable testimony. This disposition of the heart prepares us for flattery: and some will persuade men to conclude their state good, though they have no scriptural evidence of it. Some magnify the merits of a man’s generous virtues and noble mind, and represent heaven as his just reward; and extenuate the evil of the grossest crimes, as mere trifles, for which none, but uncharitable fanaticks, can suppose that God will condemn them to everlasting punishment. Thus men are caught in the net, and live upon tolerable terms with their consciences, and grow secure in presumptuous wickedness; till too late they find that there is a hell, and that there is no getting out of it. These, and such like flatterers, often spread their nets from pulpits: they “speak smooth things, and prophesy deceit;” and “the people love to have it so,” especially the rich and great: the sermon is ‘very comfortable,’ the hearers are well pleased with themselves and with the preacher; they flatter him in return, spread a net for his feet, and reward him with more substantial emoluments, till Satan takes the whole company in his snare. Even when flattery does not proceed so far, it feeds a man’s vanity, makes him venture on employments for which he is unqualified; leads him into temptations, exposes him to reproofs and corrections; and precludes his progress and improvement.—“He that loveth wisdom, while he rejoiceth his father,” if living, not only shuns the company and intimacy of profligate men and women, but takes care not to engage in any contest with foolish and unprincipled persons: knowing, that whatever means are used, or however their profane scorn or indignant rage may predominate; there can be no comfort in litigations with them, and no credit in victory, though much disgrace if baffled in them. “Whilst the fool uttereth all his mind,” however it may injure or exasperate others, or expose himself; the wise man will keep it in till afterwards, and will be careful not to be rash and hasty in his words; especially not to decide presumptuously concerning the deep things of God, which is an arrogance of the most provoking nature. The true believer also will seek the salvation of those who hate him, or even thirst for his blood: and he will not only be kind to the poor, but bear with the deceitful, as his heavenly Father causes his sun to shine and his rain to descend upon them. Far from being induced by avarice to associate with thieves and cheats; he will be indifferent about worldly interests, and take pleasure in considering the cause of the poor, and in relieving their distress, which the wicked disregard and increase. Thus in one view we may perceive, that when rulers are wicked, and hearken to flattery and lies, all their servants are wicked also: then the ungodly are multiplied, and transgression increases; and the righteous are had in abomination, while they grieve over and abhor the iniquity which they witness, but cannot prevent. But while scorers thus bring the city into a snare, the despised remnant of the righteous often turn away the wrath of God, and ward off national judgments.

CHAP. XXX.

The title, 1. Agur's confession of sin and ignorance; his enquiry after God, and his caution about the word of God; and his prayer to be delivered from vanity and lies, and from the temptations of wealth and of poverty, 2—9. A caution against accusing servants; and concerning four sorts of wicked persons, 10—14. Four things insatiable, 15, 16. The punishment of those who mock their parents, 17. Four things won-

derful, and not to be traced out, 18—20. Four things exceedingly troublesome, 21—23. Four things small, but wise, 24—28. Four things comely in going, 29—31. A counsel for men to check themselves, when conscious of being wrong, and to avoid forcing wrath and strife, 32, 33.

THE words of Agur the son of Jakeh,
^a *even* the prophecy: the man spake a xxxi. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 9—21.
 unto Ithiel, even unto Ithiel and Ucal:

For, however men may deceive themselves, the wise and righteous alone have present satisfaction, and are permanently useful, and they alone shall have everlasting honour and felicity.

V. 15—27.

Fallen man is so prone to evil, that from the earliest youth there will be very many things in his conduct to be blamed; and as the faculties unfold, his sinful propensities gather strength, and produce their effects more and more. Our aim therefore should be, by every proper means, to counteract this tendency of corrupt nature: and thus it may be said with propriety, that "the rod and the reproof give wisdom." For rebukes and corrections, properly administered, check the luxuriant growth of evil dispositions, and inure the will and passions to subjection. But when a child is left to himself, and humoured in his wayward inclinations, he daily grows more self-willed and untractable, and his passions demand still further gratifications; till, in the inexperienced season of youth, by keeping company with harlots, or running into other excesses, he both wastes the substance of his parents, and brings a reproach upon them for improperly educating him. If we then would have our children yield satisfaction to our hearts, we must give them proper correction and instruction. Indulgence, as well as severity, is an extreme, which must in general be avoided. While servants and inferiors should be treated with great humanity and equity; it is a real injury to them to bring them up delicately, to disuse them from labour, and to habituate them to a mode of living unsuitable to their station: for this tends to render them wretched, when constrained to return to their former occupations, or tempts them sinfully to desert them. So that an over-fondness should not be indulged towards any individual; at least unless the person means to provide for him, according to that way of living to which he is thus accustomed. Indeed, this counteracts its own end; and instead of rendering those, who are thus peculiarly favoured, more attentive and obliging, it naturally serves to make them imperious, assuming, and untractable; and thus uneasy to those who have spoiled them, and unfit for every other person. Indeed, such perverseness is in men, that it is found impossible to persist in that gentleness which is in itself desirable. There are too many, who grow heedless and indolent, when only spoken to with mildness; and sullen and refractory, when reprov'd with sharpness: so that though they understand, they will not answer, but will do every thing contrary to what is desired. This same perverseness, carried to a greater excess, renders prisons and other punishments necessary, because numbers cannot otherwise be dealt with. Both masters and servants, however, may be thankful, that the one is delivered from the

trouble and the temptation, and the other from the oppression, which results from the power of punishment being entrusted to private persons: and in our circumstances, we *may* so behave to our servants, that discharging them from our families may be a sufficient punishment for ordinary misdemeanors; and in grosser offences, the civil magistrate may be applied to.—While we should be thankful, that we inhabit "the valley of vision," and have abundant means of instruction; and while we pity, and pray for, and try to help as we are able, such as are not so highly favoured; let us not forget, that if we neglect the great salvation of the gospel, or profess to value it, when we refuse to obey any of God's commandments, we shall perish with deeper aggravation, than even the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah.—We have, therefore, greater reason to watch against the treachery of our hearts; and especially against every kind of pride and self-sufficiency. For this, above all other things, tends to bring a man low: but honour, and He who is the true Fountain of honour, upholds the humble in spirit.—Again, "as the fear of man bringeth a snare;" we should be instant in prayer, that we be not thus entangled. This we shall easily be, if we forget that every man's judgment and the determination of his lot, "cometh of the LORD." From forgetfulness in this respect, it arises that "many seek the ruler's favour," and fear his frown; instead of humbly trusting in God, who has all hearts in his hand. Nay, we are prone to dread the reproach or contempt of the poor and mean: so that many dare not profess what they believe to be true, nor seek truth where they sometimes think it might be found; nor perform their known duty, and relinquish the vanities of the world; nor act up to their own judgment and consciences; for fear of being talked about, pointed at, derided, reviled, hated, or persecuted, or of losing the favour of this or the other friend. Thus they are ashamed to own Christ now; and if they persist in this course, he will be ashamed of them at the day of judgment. But he who trusts in the Lord, will be saved. Depending on his mercy, grace, and providence, he will boldly keep his commandments, and in so doing find true happiness, and a sure refuge. We must also remember, that "the friendship of the world is enmity with God;" (*Note, Jam. iv. 4—6, v. 4*;) and that the wicked abhor the righteous: we should then lay our account with the enmity of the ungodly, and never court their friendship: yet, we should do them all the good we can; and while angry men stir up strife and abound in transgression, we should persist in "following after peace" and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

NOTES.

CHAP. XXX. V. 1. (*Note, xxxi. 1.*) These last two

^b Job xli. 3—6. ² Surely ^b I *am* more ^c brutish than *any* man, and have not the understanding of a man.

^c v. 12. Ps. xcii. 6. ³ I ^d neither learned wisdom, ^e nor ^f have the knowledge of ^f the holy.

^d Am. vii. 14, 15. ⁴ ^g Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? ^h who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth?

^e Job xi. 7—9. ^f Heb. *know*. ^g Deut. xxx. 12. ^h Job xxxviii. 4, &c. Ps. civ. 2, &c.

ⁱ what is his name, ^k and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?

⁵ Every ^l word of God is ^m pure: he is a ⁿ Shield unto them that put their trust in him.

⁶ ^o Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, ^p and thou be found a liar.

⁷ ¶ Two ^q things ^r have I required of thee; ^s deny me *them* not before I die:

ⁱ Ex. iii. 13—15. ^k Gen. xxxii. 29. ^l Judg. xiii. 18. ^m Ps. ii. 7. ⁿ Is. vii. 14. ^o ix. 6. ^p Jer. xxiii. 6. ^q Matt. i. 21—23. ^r xi. 27. ^s Luke x. 22. ^t Heb. *purified*. ^u Gen. xv. 1. ^v Ps. lxxxiv. 11. ^w xci. 2. ^x cxv. 9—11. ^y cxliv. 2. ^z Deut. iv. 2. ^{aa} xii. 32. ^{ab} Rev. xxii. 18, 19. ^{ac} Job xiii. 7—9. ^{ad} 1 Cor. xv. 15. ^{ae} 1 Kings iii. 5—9. ^{af} 2 Kings ii. 9. ^{ag} Ps. xxvii. 4. ^{ah} Luke x. 42. ^{ai} Heb. *withhold not from me*. ^{aj} Ps. xxi. 2.

chapters form an appendix to the book of Proverbs, annexed to it probably by the men of Hezekiah. It may be supposed that the names of Agur, and Jakeh his father, were well known in Israel at that time. The expression, "The prophecy," or "the burden," seems to imply, that these instructions were communicated to the church, as a divine revelation; and their claim has been very long allowed of. Agur "spake unto Ithiel, and unto Ucal." The word Ithiel signifies "God with me," and Ucal "a mighty one;" (literally *I shall be able*;) and some have thought that they referred rather to the subject of Agur's prophecy, than to the persons whom he addressed. But it is the more common opinion, that they were Agur's disciples or pupils; who had proposed some questions to him, which he answered as follows.—The notion, that Solomon was meant under the name Agur, though held by some of the fathers, is now generally given up.

V. 2, 3. Agur, though consulted by others in the great concerns of God, and his truth and will, was far from deeming himself competent to instruct them: nay, his acquaintance with his own heart, his conflict with his evil propensities, and his frequent deep thoughts upon the mysteries of religion, which he could not properly explore or apprehend, made him ready to think, that "surely he was more brutish than any man, and had not the understanding of a man." He had learned a little of his own ignorance: but he could make no pretensions to proficiency in wisdom, in the knowledge of the Holy One, and of those holy things which relate to him.—The last clause may be rendered interrogatively, "Shall I know the knowledge of holy things?" Perhaps he meant, that neither his natural endowments, nor any advantages of education, tended to qualify him for a teacher. If then he was enabled to communicate any useful instruction, the whole honour of it belonged to God alone. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Job xlii. 1—6. Ps. lxxiii. 18—22. Is. vi. 5. Matt. xi. 25—27. 1 Cor. iii. 18—23, v. 18.*)

V. 4. This may refer to the preceding verses. Man's study and investigation cannot find out God; nor can he comprehend him in his narrow mind. No one has ascended into heaven, to obtain information on these mysterious subjects; nor has any descended from heaven, to bring intelligence concerning them. None could emulate, or even comprehend, the works of him, "who hath gathered the wind in his fists, &c." If there were, or ever had been such a person, who was he? and who could claim his descent from him? Thus the enquiry is generally interpreted. Yet it seems to me a prophetic intimation of

him, who "came down from heaven," to be our Instructor and Saviour, and then "ascended into heaven" to be our Advocate; who, as One with the Father, created and upholds all things; who was known in some measure to the ancient church, as JEHOVAH, I AM; and as the only begotten Son of God; (*Note, Ps. ii. 7—9, v. 7;*) and from whom alone the knowledge of God can be obtained. The name of the great Creator, as manifested through his Son, seems to be enquired after: and who is that wise and happy man that has obtained this knowledge? (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. xxxii. 29, 30. Ex. iii. 14, 15. Deut. xxx. 11—14. Job xxxviii. 8—11. Is. vii. 14. ix. 6, 7. xl. 12—17. Matt. xi. 27. John i. 18. iii. 12, 13. Rom. x. 5—11.*)

V. 5, 6. (*Note, Ps. xii. 5, 6.*) The understanding of divine truth is not to be obtained by curious speculations, but by regarding the word of God, which is "sure, and maketh wise the simple:" (*Note, Ps. xix. 7—11, v. 7:*) and nothing must be added to it, under pretence of infallibility, authority of fathers and councils, traditions of the elders, reasonings of philosophers, or dreams of enthusiasts. In this manner heresies, and false religions of various kinds, are introduced and supported. But those who palm their own inventions upon mankind, as of equal authority with the word of God, will be found liars of the worst kind, both deceivers and deceived; and may expect to be severely punished for their temerity or presumption. This caution is worthy of their notice, who are continually wanting to alter, and amend, (as they call it,) the text of the scriptures by conjectural criticism; which generally adds a new clause to God's word, instead of the old one that is expunged, either as unintelligible, or as inconsistent with the critick's favourite system. Paraphrasts should also be cautious, what words they insert to make out the meaning of difficult passages, and to render them consistent with their favourite schemes. And great humility and modesty are requisite, in order to explain and apply the scriptures, especially the more mysterious and controverted passages; lest we should seem to add any thing to the words of God, as of equal authority with them: and so be found guilty of forging scripture, and counterfeiting the name of God; saying, "Thus saith the LORD; albeit he hath not spoken." Agur's counsel, on this subject, exactly coincides with the command of Moses, and with the caution of the apostle John, that is, of the whole scripture from the beginning to the end. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Deut. iv. 2. Rev. xxii. 18—21, vv. 18, 19.*)

V. 7—9. Agur's mind was fixed upon the Lord, though he did not immediately mention him. He especially de-

q xxi. 6. xxii. 8. xxi. 5. Ps. lxii. 9, 10. cxix. 29. 37. Ec. i. 2. Is. v. 18. lix. 4. Jon. ii. 8. Acts xiv. 15. r Gen. xxviii. 20. xlviii. 15, 16. Ex. xvi. 15. 18. 21, 22. 29. 35. Matt. vi. 11. 33. Luke xi. 3. 1 Tim. vi. 6—8. * Heb. of my allowance. 2 Kings xxv. 30. Jer. xxxvii. 21. lii. 34. s Deut. vi. 10—12. viii. 10—14. 17. xxxi. 20. xxxii. 15. Neh. ix. 25. 26. Job xxxi. 24—28. Jer. ii. 31. Ez. xvi. 14, 15. 49, 50. Dan. iv. 17. 30. Hos. xiii. 6. Acts xii. 22, 23. † Heb. belie thee. t Ex. v. 2. 2 Chr. xxxii. 15—17. u vi. 30, 31. Ps. cxxv. 3. x xxix. 24. Ex. xx. 7. Lev. v. 1. Matt. xxvii. 72, 74. ‡ Heb. Hurt not with thy tongue. y xxiv. 23. Deut. xxiii. 15. 1 Sam. xxii. 9, 10. xxiv. 9. xxvi. 19. xxx. 15. 2 Sam. xvi. 1—4. xix. 26, 27. Dan. iii. 8, &c. vi. 13, 24. Rom. xiv. 4. z xi. 26. xxiv. 24. xxviii. 27. Deut. xv. 9. 2 Chr. xxiv. 22—24. a 12—14. Matt. iii. 7. 1 Pet. ii. 9. b 17. xx. 20. Lev. xx. 9. Deut. xxi. 20, 21. xxvii. 16. Matt. xv. 4—6. Mark vii. 10—13.

curseth their father, and ^c doth not bless their mother.

12 *There is a generation ^d that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is ^e not washed from their filthiness.*

13 *There is a generation, ^f oh, how lofty are their eyes ^g and their eye-lids are lifted up.*

14 *There is a generation, ^h whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw-teeth as knives, ⁱ to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men.*

g Job xxix. 17. Ps. iii. 7. lvii. 4. lviii. 6. Dan. vii. 5—7. Rev. ix. 8. xxviii. 3. Ps. x. 8, 9. xii. 5. xiv. 4. Ec. iv. 1. Is. xxxii. 7. Am. ii. 7. iv. 1. ii. 1, 2. iii. 1—5. Hab. iii. 14. Zeph. iii. 3. Matt. xxiii. 14. Jam. v. 1—4.

sired, with much earnestness, two things to be granted him before, or *until*, his death, as the context seems to imply. The one relates directly to spiritual blessings: “Remove far from me vanity and lies;” that is, “Deliver me entirely from guilt and sin; from idolatry, error, delusion, and temptation, “the word of a lie;” and from having the vanities of the world for my portion.” (*Marg. Ref. q.—Notes, 1 Kings iii. 9—14. 2 Kings ii. 9, 10.*)—The other relates to temporal things, yet in subserviency to heavenly. Agur prayed against both poverty and riches: not so much because of the hardships of the one, and the anxious encumbrances of the other; as because of the temptations to which they would severally expose him. If he lived in great affluence, he feared lest he should grow self-indulgent and forgetful of God; and so at length be induced to deny his over-ruling providence, his authority, or even his existence, saying, like Pharaoh, “Who is the LORD?” On the other hand, if he were reduced to extreme poverty, he feared lest he should be tempted to dishonesty, and then to perjury, in order to prevent detection and punishment; (*Note, xxix. 24;*) or, as some interpret it, to murmur against God, and through impatience to speak impious words of him. He therefore wisely prayed for a mediocrity, that he might be kept at a distance from these temptations: he asked “food convenient for him;” “daily bread,” suited to his station, his family, and his real good.—There is a remarkable coincidence between this prayer and several clauses of the Lord’s prayer. (*Marg. Ref. r—u.—Notes, Gen. xxviii. 20—22. xlviii. 15. Ex. v. 2. xxii. 7—15. Deut. vi. 12. Dan. v. 18—24. Matt. vi. 11. Phil. iv. 10—13.*)

V. 10. “Hurt not a servant to his master with thy tongue.” *Marg.* “Do not abuse any poor slave, whose condition is wretched enough. ... Rather excuse than aggravate his fault to his master, who perhaps is too rigorous: and be sure never to load him with unjust accusations; lest being wronged by thee, and not knowing how to right himself, he appeal to the Lord, and pray him to punish thee; and thou, being found guilty, feel the heavy effects of his vengeance.” *Bp. Patrick.*—By accusing a servant to his master, (even without direct slander,) in an officious manner, and a trivial concern, great injustice may be done to his character and future comfort, and a strong temptation thrown in his way to commit sin, by

yielding to anger, and uttering grievous imprecations. This is, no doubt, peculiarly the case in respect of *slaves*; but not exclusively: and if a man have not a substantial reason for speaking disadvantageously of another, especially of an inferior to his superior, he has always a good reason for being silent. The lenient side is generally best: and intermeddling in other men’s family-concerns, especially to make mischief, is always odious and contemptible. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Deut. xxiii. 15, 16. 1 Sam. xxii. 7—10. xxvi. 17—19.*)

V. 11—14. Commentators generally suppose all the several parts of this chapter, to be the answers of Agur to the questions of Ithiel and Ucal; and that these verses especially point out four odious, but too common characters, whom he cautioned them to stand aloof from. These are called *generations*, because they are found through successive ages, as if descended from those predecessors whom they resemble; or because they associate together, as if they belonged to the same family. (*Marg. Ref. a.*) They are branded as hateful and dangerous persons, whose crimes must be detested, whose company must be shunned, and of whom all should beware.—In every age there are monsters of ingratitude, who, instead of requiting and praying for their parents, curse them, wish them dead, or otherwise insult and despise them; either from resentment of rebukes, contempt of authority, impatience of restraint, or avarice of their substance. (*Marg. Ref. b, c.—Notes, 17, xx. 20. Lev. xx. 9. Matt. xv. 3—6.*)—There are also from age to age a multitude of people, who, by one pretence or another, persuade themselves that they are holy persons, the favourites of God, and the heirs of heaven; whose hearts are yet full of the prevailing pollution of iniquity, and who practise much secret wickedness, and so are filthy in the sight of their heart-searching Judge. (*Marg. Ref. d, e.*—See on *Note, xiv. 12.*)—Another company is found, in every age, who are full of self-importance: whose haughtiness and arrogance are conspicuous in their looks, who are purse-proud, or vain of their birth, rank, accomplishments, or decorations; and who, in a stately manner, show their supercilious contempt of all around them. (*Marg. Ref. f.—Notes, vi. 17—19. xxi. 4.*)—There have also been at all times a number of rapacious and cruel extortioners, who devour the poor and needy, to increase their wealth, or to support the expense of their riotous

15 The ¹horse-leech hath two daughters, *crying*, ^k Give, give. ¹ There are three *things* that are never satisfied, *yea*, four *things* say not, ^{*} *It is enough*:
 16 ^m The grave, and the barren womb; the earth *that* is not filled with water; and the fire *that* saith not, *It is enough*.

17 The ⁿ eye *that* mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, ^o the ravens of the [†] valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it.

18 There be three *things* which are too wonderful for me; *yea*, four which I know not:

19 The ^q way of an eagle in the air;

living. These, being worse than any savage beasts that are known of, must be described as monsters, which may be imagined, but never yet were seen; "whose teeth are swords, and their jaw-teeth knives." (*Marg. Ref.* g, h. —*Notes*, xxviii. 3. *Job* xxix. 12—17, v. 17. *Ps.* lvii. 4. lviii. 6—9, v. 6.)—The expression, "washed from their filthiness," (12) is peculiarly emphatical: and strongly implies, that there is a loathsome filthiness in human nature; and that none are pure in the sight of God, but those who are washed from it, "by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost:" for depravity of nature and heart, rather than crimes actually committed, seems intended; though both may be implied. (*Note*, 1 *Cor.* vi. 9—11.)

V. 15, 16. The horse-leech, or blood-sucker, gorges blood, and having emptied itself craves more; and sometimes even sucks till it bursts.—'The leech hath two forks in her tongue, which here he calleth her two daughters; whereby she sucketh the blood and is never satiate: even so are the covetous extortioners insatiable.' (14)—The two daughters of the horse-leech, however, may mean, the insatiable love of money, and the insatiable love of those pleasures that money purchases: or *covetousness*, whether to hoard or spend; and *blood-thirstiness*, which powerful and cruel oppressors and rapacious warriors exercise, who are not satisfied, but thirst for more, after all they have shed. Or they may denote in general, the insatiable nature of man's sinful propensities, and unbridled appetites, which always grow more craving by indulgence. (*Marg. Ref.*) The same kind of expression is used in several places; (*Marg. Ref.* 1;) and the emblems, though striking, need no comment. (*Notes*, xxvii. 20. *Ec.* iv. 7, 8. v. 9—12. *Is.* lvi. 9—12, v. 11. *Hos.* iv. 16—19, v. 18. *Hab.* ii. 5—8, v. 5.)

V. 17. The man who derides his parents, because of the infirmities of old age, and despises their authority, especially that of his mother, will expose himself to the severest judgments of God, in this world and in the next. Many of this vile character have come to an untimely end; and have been gibbeted, or left unburied, till the ravens or eagles have picked out their eyes, or devoured their

the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the [†] midst of the [†] sea; [†] and the way of a man with a ^r maid.

20 Such is ^s the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.

21 ¶ For three *things* the earth is disquieted, and for four *which* it cannot bear.

22 For ^t a servant when he reigneth; and ^u a fool when he is filled with meat;

23 For ^x an odious woman when she is married; and ^y an hand-maid that is heir to her mistress.

flesh: and all of the same description may expect a similar or equally dreadful doom. (11. *Notes*, *Ex.* xxi. 15—17. *Lev.* xix. 3. *Deut.* xxi. 18—21. 2 *Sam.* xviii. 9—18.)

V. 18—20. The path of the eagle through the air, that of the serpent on the rock, and that of the ship through the sea, cannot be traced, nor does any one exactly follow another in the same course. Thus artful men insinuate themselves into the affections of young women, and seduce them to their ruin, by an almost infinity of stratagems, which can never be all unravelled: the ways likewise by which the affections of virgins are won by suitors, when honourable marriage is intended, may be included. Thus also the adulterous wife uses much ingenuity to impose on her husband, to shun detection, and to escape shame and punishment, by schemes and devices which cannot all be enumerated. Every new crime, intended or committed, gives rise to some new artifice; as the ship in some degree deviates every time from the course which it steered before. The object of a seducer is to prevail over his prey, and that of the adulteress, to conceal her guilt: and the whole extent of their subtlety and ingenuity is employed to effect those purposes. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 21—23. The following events create much disturbance in the world, and should therefore be avoided, or prevented as much as possible. When men of low extraction and base spirit obtain authority, they are apt to be imperious, tyrannical, rapacious, and cruel; they grow intoxicated by their sudden elevation, jealous of every one as if harbouring designs against them, impatient of controul, fierce in their resentment, and exorbitant in their exactions: and thus nations are disquieted, embroiled in wars, burdened with excessive taxes, or shocked with bloody executions. (*Notes*, xix. 10. xxviii. 3. *Ec.* x. 5—7. *Is.* iii. 1—9, vv. 4, 5.) When foolish and violent men eat and drink to excess, their impertinence, scurrility, impiety, contentiousness, or obscenity, render them a vexation and an insupportable burden, to every company into which they find admission. (*Notes*, 1 *Sam.* xxv. 35—38. xxx. 16—19. 1 *Kings* xx. 16—18. *Dan.* v. 5—9. *Hos.* vii. 5—7.) When a woman of a contentious disposition, and prone to odious vices, is married; her folly and wickedness will be the dis-

24 ¶ There be four *things which are*
z Job xii. 7. ^z little upon the earth, but they are
* Heb. wise made ^{*} exceeding wise:

25 The ^a ants are a people not
 strong; yet they prepare their meat in
 the summer:

26 The ^b conies are but a feeble folk;
 yet make they their houses in the
 rocks:

27 The ^c locusts have no king; yet
 go they forth all of them [†] by bands:

28 The spider taketh hold with her
 hands, and is in kings' palaces.

29 ¶ There be three *things* which go
 well, yea, four are comely in going:

30 A lion, ^d which is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away
 for any;

31 A ^e greyhound; an he-goat also; [†] and a king ^e against whom *there is no*
 rising up.

32 ¶ If ^f thou hast done foolishly in ^f lifting up thyself, or if thou hast
 thought evil, ^g lay thine hand upon thy mouth.

33 Surely the churning of milk bring-
 eth forth butter, and the wringing of
 the nose bringeth forth blood: ^h so ^h the forcing of wrath bringeth forth
 strife.

quietude of her husband and his family; and he will probably repent of his improper choice, even if he had a large dowry with her. (Notes, xix. 13. xxi. 9. 19. xxvii. 15, 16.) And when a female servant succeeds to the substance of her mistress, or rather supplants her in the affections of her husband, and influences him to divorce his wife, and then to marry her; when this has been the case, or even if she succeeds a deceased mistress, as married to her husband, she will frequently disquiet the family by her insolence or rapacity, and by appropriating all that she can to herself and her connexions; to the injury of those to whom it more properly belongs.

V. 24—28. The instinctive wisdom of these four animals is mentioned as an instruction to the reader, who should learn to estimate men, not by their external greatness or magnificence, but by their wisdom. The ants are wise in diligently providing against the winter: (Note, vi. 6—11:) the conies, (or mountain-mice, as some think,) in forming refuges to themselves against the weather, and from their pursuers: (Note, Ps. civ. 17, 18:) the locusts in their regular and unanimous movements, as if they did every thing by consent, and for the common good: (Notes, Joel ii. 4, 5. 7—9. 18—20:) and the spider, in her ingenuity and assiduity in forming her webs against the walls, as if she took hold of them with hands; in renewing her work when repeatedly destroyed; and in seeking and waiting for her prey with patient attention, wherever it is to be found; for which purpose she even enters into kings' palaces, whose greatness and delicacy cannot exclude so mean and unwelcome a guest. 'From all these four, some have 'noted, that an abridgment may be made of all that is 'necessary for the conservation of a kingdom in good estate: where first, care must be taken for provision of 'food; ... then for secure and commodious dwelling; ... 'then that there be concord and agreement; ... and lastly, 'that ... industry and ingenious arts be encouraged.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 29—31. The four here mentioned are remarkable for the comeliness or propriety of their going. The lion, who conscious of his strength and courage, marches on, and does not alter his pace, or quit his path, for those who meet or pursue him. The greyhound, (some think the war-horse was meant, marg.) who is ready for his course, and performs it with great celerity and activity. The he-

goat, that goes before the flock, as one careful about them, and attentive to their safety. And the king, who adverts to the dignity of his own character, and represses with vigour such as venture to rise up against him. 'Especially when he reigns in the heart of his people, and 'marches at the head of an unanimous, victorious army, 'whom none dare rise up to oppose.' Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Note, xx. 2.)

V. 32, 33. The mention of the "king, against whom "there is no rising up" seems to have suggested this concluding caution. If any one had foolishly taken too much upon himself in the presence of the king, or had entertained thoughts of insurrection, or had harboured resentment, or given offence; his wisest course would be to keep silence from all rash or provoking words, and even from excuses, and from charging the blame on others; and to appear sorry and humbled for what had passed. For as, in common affairs, causes produce their known effects and the churning of the milk or cream is observed to produce butter, and the violent wringing of the nose to bring forth blood; so, it has always been observed, that the forcing of wrath, by contemptuous or virulent words or actions, occasions the most mischievous and implacable contentions. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, xv. 17, 18. xvii. 14. xxvi. 20, 21. xxviii. 25. Ec. vii. 8. viii. 3—5.)—Lay thine hand. (32) Marg. Ref. g. Job xl. 3—5, v. 4. Rom. iii. 19, 20.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5.

In proportion as we become acquainted with God and ourselves, with his perfections and commandments and our own hearts and actions, we shall be sensible of our sinfulness, ignorance, and weakness. And the experienced and considerate believer, knowing far more of himself than he does of others, can sometimes scarcely suppose it possible, that there should be such evils in *their* hearts as he finds in his own; or that *they* should be as insensible, forgetful, or unteachable, as *he* knows himself to be. On these occasions he will readily say, "Surely I am more brutish than "any man, and have not the understanding of a man." The wisdom or knowledge of fallen man is not his own; he has not learned it of himself, but has received it from God; and by increasing knowledge, men attain deeper convictions of the immense disproportion which there is

CHAP. XXXI.

King Lemuel instructed by his mother to avoid

between the little which they do understand, and that boundless extent of being with which they have no acquaintance. They perceive also the indistinctness and inaccuracy of their knowledge; they are continually detecting themselves in mistakes; and even the errors of others, who were on many accounts their superiors, convince them, that "here they see through a glass darkly," and "have not learned wisdom, and have not attained to the knowledge of the holy." The sublimity and immensity of such subjects, compared with man's capacities, his present confined opportunities, his short space for making observations and gaining experience, convince the humble Christian, "that such knowledge is too wonderful for him; it is high, he cannot attain unto it." So that ignorance and want of thought are the true causes of men's dogmatical self-confidence, and conceit of their own knowledge. For who has explored or comprehended the works of him that "hath established all the ends of the earth?" Who can fathom the deep mysteries of the divine nature, or find out "the Almighty to perfection?" Who can "know the Son, but the Father, or the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him?" He indeed came down from heaven to declare to men the name and character of JEHOVAH: and now, ascended into heaven, he has opened the way of acceptance and access to all believers. Happy then is he, who "counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ," and of the Father through the Son. This knowledge is communicated by his word, which is pure and infallible, in which there is no dross, no error, no deficiency, no redundancy. May we believe his testimony, embrace his invitations, plead his promises, observe his directions, and keep his commandments; and then we shall be wise unto salvation, and at length "know even as we are known:" and in the meantime, we shall trust in him, and he will be "a Shield" unto us from all our enemies round about. But let us not want to be wise above what is written, or to add man's vain reasonings and presumptuous inventions to the truths of God; lest he reprove us, and we be found liars and deceivers. For the desire of knowledge is as capable of exorbitance, as any other inclination of our fallen nature, and is productive of the most dreadful effects; whilst men, proud of their own wisdom, prefer their own conjectures to the infallible testimony of God, or "speak perverse things to draw away disciples after them," who "will utterly perish in their own delusions." Against such perils, faith in the promises of God, and fervent prayer, form our only security.

V. 6—9.

In coming to his mercy-seat, we should always consider the near approach of death, and its eternal consequences. Then the time of prayer will be over: we should therefore be the more earnest to obtain our requests *before* we die, and to be preserved from sin and temptation *till* we die. We should be particular, as well as urgent in our supplications: yet all the variety of them may be reduced to two

whoredom and drunkenness; and to use his wealth and authority for the relief and protection of the poor and oppressed, 1—9: and concerning the character and value of the virtuous woman, 10—31.

heads; 'Things needful for the soul, and things needful for this present life.' But the former should have the decided preference; and the latter should be sought in entire subserviency to them. If we be "far removed from vanity and lies;" if interested in the pardoning love of God, we have him as our Portion; if we be preserved from delusions and overwhelming temptations; if we walk with God, and live in communion with him, and can commit our souls into his hands at death, and have an entrance into "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:" then we shall have "all that we ask or think," in all our varied prayers and supplications, as far as they relate to ourselves. It does not indeed behove us to be so explicit in respect of temporal things: but when we suppose one situation to be more exempt from temptation than another, we may properly pray for it. Should the Lord please to prove us with deep poverty, we ought not to murmur, and we may expect grace sufficient to resist the powerful temptations of such a condition. But if we know the deceitfulness of our own hearts; and consider what it would be to suffer hunger, cold, and the want of all things; we shall perceive, that temptations to impatience, coveting, and dishonesty, would have a mighty force in them; and we cannot tell, but we might be led from smaller to greater transgressions, till we arrived at such degrees of guilt as we now shudder to think of. We may, in this view, therefore, in humble submission, pray to be preserved from poverty, and to be fed with food convenient for us. On the other hand, when we consider how affluence tends to pride, indolence, self-indulgence, and a worldly mind; how those, who are fed to the full and surrounded by abundance, are prone to abuse the gift and forget the Giver, and refuse obedience to him: we cannot pray to be made rich without contradicting the petition, which our Lord himself has taught us, "Lead us not into temptation." (*Note, Matt. vi. 13.*) We are indeed commonly apt to think, that we should be able to behave properly, and to do much good, if we were made richer: but this only proves the pride and folly of our hearts. For it is the hardest thing in the world to act wisely in great prosperity: and the greatest triumph of grace seems to be in the conversion of very rich people; and in preserving them humble, spiritual, dead to the world, devoted to God, and good stewards of the unrighteous Mammon, in the midst of all their incentives to the contrary vices. So that it will ever be found a wise prayer, though but seldom offered: "Give me not riches, lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD?" The more advanced Christian will sincerely and frequently present it: every true believer can fervently pray, 'LORD, let me never have more riches, than thou shalt enable me to use to thy glory.' And we all ought to be thankful, and doubtless many of us are so, if we enjoy that mediocrity, which we are here taught by the Holy Spirit to consider as the safest and happiest condition in life. But how contrary is this, to the almost universal eagerness of men after riches! In fact, the wisdom of God, and the wisdom of

a xxx. 1.

b i. 8. vi. 20, 2 Tim. i. 5. iii. 15.

THE words of king Lemuel, ^a the prophecy that ^b his mother taught him.

the world, are diametrically opposite; and alas! there is but a scanty measure of divine wisdom even among the majority of Christians.

V. 10—33.

It is no small attainment in heavenly wisdom, habitually and diligently to attend on the duties of our own station; and never to intermeddle with other men's concerns, unless to do them good. It is base to create any one needless uneasiness: but it is peculiarly cruel wantonly to increase the sufferings of the needy, the helpless, or the oppressed; and thus also to tempt them to sin, and to imprecate divine vengeance on their calumniators. We need not, however, *wonder*, that we see around us, numbers living in the grossest iniquities; as there always have been "a generation" of such, "the seed of the serpent" and "the children of the wicked one." But we should mourn over them, pray for them, and protest against them. Doubtless those who curse, and deride, and despise their parents, will bring upon themselves both temporal and eternal destruction, except they repent of this their most aggravated wickedness: and let it be especially noted, that he who "doth not bless his mother" (11), or pray for his parents, is joined with those who curse them. Neither will Pharisaical or Antinomian self-deceivers, "who are pure in their own eyes, but are not cleansed from their filthiness;" or the proud and haughty, who exalt themselves, and look down with contempt on their neighbours; or cruel extortioners and oppressors, escape the vengeance of God. Let the generation of God's children manifest a contrary spirit, in every respect. Let such as have parents and superior relations, behave with submission and respect to them, continually blessing and praying for them and doing what they can to requite them; yea, let us "all be subject one to another," in the several relations of life, "and be clothed with humility."—In the consciousness of our remaining defilement, let us seek daily to be more and more cleansed from our filthiness; and yet to be more abased in our own eyes, and more gentle, affable, and lowly in our deportment among men: and instead of devouring the poor and needy, let us study to protect, relieve, and comfort them, to the extent of our ability. In order to this, we must beware of covetousness and profuseness, which, like the two daughters of the horse-leech, evermore "cry, Give, give," but never have any thing to spare or give away: and we must learn to habituate every one of our inclinations to brook denial; otherwise no emblem in nature will adequately illustrate their insatiable cravings.—While we behold, with grief and wonder, the subtlety and wicked ingenuity with which the ungodly seduce, debauch, deceive, and ruin one another and themselves; let us guard against their snares; and consider the capacities of our minds as given us, that we may employ all our contrivances and sagacity in devising how to do good. But let the ingenious and successful workers of iniquity, who manage to escape the detection of man, remember that they cannot elude the all-seeing eye of God, or escape his dreadful judgment.—The miseries of the world arise in great measure from

2 What, my son? and what, ^c the son of my womb? and what, ^d the son of my vows?
 c Is. xlix. 15. d 1 Sam. i. 11. 28.

the ill behaviour of men, in those stations to which they are called. This, however, is often owing to the wickedness and folly of those concerned, who advance mean and worthless upstarts to authority, and put it in their power to be the plague of whole nations. The erroneous choice also and treatment of companions, and the wrong motives which influence men in marrying, or in respect of the marriage of their children, or in disposing of their property, fill society and domestick life with great disquietude. But let every one mortify in himself those odious dispositions, and avoid that evil conduct, which in many cases almost renders life insupportable: for who would choose to be a curse to society, and to all connected with him and even to remote posterity?—Let us also look around, and avail ourselves of every hint suggested to us even by the animal tribes. We may learn foresight, industry, and perseverance from the ant; from the conies, to provide security against approaching dangers; from the locusts, to be contented in our proper station, and to do all things in harmony and peace; and from the spider, to employ our ingenuity and patient assiduity wherever we are, not in useless trifles, but in those things which pertain to our sustenance and well-being. And the sermons of these despicable insects will condemn numbers for their improvidence and sloth, their sin and folly. The Christian may also learn from the lion to be bold in the path of duty, and not to turn aside for any man; from the greyhound or horse, to be ever ready and active, and cheerful in running the race set before him; from the he-goat, to be the guide, overseer, and example of his family, and to take proper care of them; and from the king, not to act inconsistently with the dignity of his character, nor to suffer any of his passions to rebel and prevail against him.—But alas! how often have we risen up against God our King! We have done foolishly, in thus lifting up ourselves and in thinking evil against him. Let us then "lay our hands upon our mouths," and abase ourselves before him; and not farther provoke his wrath, by our impenitent and persevering wickedness. Having found peace with him, let us "follow peace with all men:" and let us always remember the connexion between the means and the end. For, as in the ordinary concerns of life, some means generally produce desirable effects, while others terminate in pain and trouble; so, no spiritual blessings can be obtained by those who neglect the appointed means, nor are they ever sincerely used in vain: and if men will waste their time on those books, diversions, and vanities, which are the means of soothing the conscience and hardening the heart, *surely* the end will be answered, and the wrath of God will be the dreadful consequence.

NOTES.

CHAP. XXXI. V. 1. Some think that Solomon was meant under the name of Lemuel, and that Bathsheba called him by this name. But others, with greater probability, suppose Lemuel to have been some neighbouring prince, whose mother perhaps was a pious Israelite. (Notes, i. 8. vi. 20, 21. Acts xvi. 1—3. 2 Tim. i. 3—5, v. 5. iii. 14—17. P. O. 10—17.) Indeed the use of Chaldean

^c v. 9—11. vii. 26, 27. Deut. xvii. 17. Neh. xii. 26. **3** Give not ^a thy strength unto women, nor thy ways ^f to that which destroyeth kings.

^g Lev. x. 9, 10. 1 Kings xx. 12. 16—20. Esth. iii. 15. Ec. x. 17. Is. xxviii. 7, 8. Dan. v. 2—4. Hos. iv. 11, 12. vii. 3—5. Hab. ii. 5. Mark vi. 21—23. **4** *It is not ^s for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes strong drink;*

^{*} Heb. alter. [†] Heb. all the sons of affliction. **5** Lest they drink, and forget the law, and ^{*} pervert the judgment of [†] any of the afflicted.

^h Ps. civ. 15. 1 Tim. v. 23. ^t Heb. bitter of soul. 1 Sam. i. 10. xxx. 6. 2 Kings iv. 27. **6** Give ^h strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be ^a of heavy hearts.

7 Let him ⁱ drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.

8 ^k Open thy mouth for the dumb, in the cause of all ⁱ such as are appointed to destruction.

9 Open thy mouth, ⁱ judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

10 ¶ Who ^m can find a virtuous woman? for ⁿ her price is far above rubies.

3. 15, 16. xxiii. 5. Dan. iv. 27. Am. v. 11, 12. Zech. vii. 9. ix. 9. John vii. 24. Heb. i. 9. Rev. xix. 11. m xii. 4. xviii. 22. xix. 14. Ruth iii. 11. Ec. vii. 28. Cant. vi. 8. 9. Eph. v. 25—33. n iii. 15. viii. 11. xx. 15.

i Eph. v. 18. k xxiv. 7. 11, 12. 1 Sam. xix. 4—7. xx. 32. xxii. 14, 15. Esth. iv. 13—16. Job xxix. 9—17. Ps. lxxxii. 3, 4. Jer. xxvi. 16—19. 24. xxxviii. 7—10. John vii. 51. Heb. the sons of destruction. Ps. lxxxix. 11. Marg. xvi. 12. x. 8. Lev. xix. 15. Deut. i. 16. xvi. 18—20. 2 Sam. viii. 15. Ps. lviii. 1, 2. lxxii. 1, 2. Is. i. 17. 23. xi. 4. xxxii. 1, 2. Jer. v. 28. xxii.

words, in this chapter, and in no other part of the book, affords a cogent argument that it was written by another hand, and probably at a later period, than the Proverbs of Solomon: but it is not certain, whether it was added to this book by the men of Hezekiah, or after the captivity. However, Lemuel retained the early instructions of his mother, and published them for the benefit of others: and, as they were allowed to be “a prophecy,” or given by inspiration of God, they were at length inserted at the close of this book. (*Note*, xxx. 1.)

V. 2. Perhaps Lemuel’s mother observed in his conduct strong indications of a propensity to those evils, against which she warned him; and this excited her grief and anxious concern, and caused her thus to expostulate with him: as if she had said, ‘What, my son, shall I have no other recompence for my pain and sorrow, and my care of thy education? no other answer to my prayers and vows, than to see thee enslaved to ruinous lusts, and become a scourge to thy people?’ Or the verse may be considered as an animated call to him to attend to her instructions, which sprang from the tenderness of maternal affection:—‘What shall I say, my son, the most effectually to impress thy mind? Shall I plead with thee the anguish I have endured for thee; or my early dedication of thee to the Lord, with vows and prayers; or my tender solicitude about thy future welfare?’ (*Marg. Ref.*) The Chaldee word (ܒܪ) for son, which is not used elsewhere in this book, and only once in the Hebrew scriptures, (*Ps.* ii. 12. *Heb.*) induces some learned men to think, that Lemuel was king, in some region of Syria or Chaldea.

V. 3. The company of licentious women tends to enfeeble both body and mind, and to unfit men for the duties of their station. If then Lemuel should yield to this temptation, he would be disqualified for the duties of a king. His time and thoughts, which ought to be otherwise employed, would be thus engrossed; and he would gradually be drawn aside into those ways of indolence, indulgence, and negligence; and led to make those sacrifices of the interests of his kingdom and the affections of his people, to please some favourite concubine; which have in unnumbered instances proved destructive to princes, who otherwise had the prospect of reigning happily. (*Notes*, v. 3—14. 20—23. vii. 6—23. 1 Kings xi. 1—8. xii. 4.)

V. 4—7. Kings and magistrates should be more scrupulously temperate than other men, in proportion to the importance of their offices: for if they cloud their understanding with wine, they will be apt to forget or mistake

the statutes by which they should judge, or be induced by designing men to commit injustice. This is the more aggravated, because the poor and afflicted are chiefly injured: their cause may be deemed worthy of little notice; nay, perhaps decided against them, and even their lives sacrificed to oblige some powerful oppressor, who is the companion of the ruler in his revels. On the contrary, strong drink should be administered as a cordial to those, who are ready to faint through weakness or weariness; and to cheer the spirits of the dejected, that they may be raised above the depressing sense of their poverty and misery.—Some think, that “by him that is ready to perish,” the condemned criminals are meant, to whom it was customary to give a draught of wine, or other strong drink, when led to execution. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes*, Lev. x. 8—11. Esth. iii. 8—15. Ps. civ. 14, 15. Ec. x. 16—19. Is. xxviii. 7, 8. Dan. v. 1—4. Hos. iv. 7—11, v. 11. vii. 5—7. Am. vi. 3—8. Hab. ii. 15—17. Matt. xiv. 5—11. Eph. v. 15—20, vv. 18—20.)

V. 8, 9. Magistrates ought to be the counsellors and protectors of the oppressed; of the poor and needy, who cannot fee advocates; and of all who are unable or afraid to plead their own cause. They should quash malicious prosecutions, decide in favour of the injured party, and detect and expose the oppressor; and thus deliver the poor and needy, who were “appointed to destruction,” and judge righteously without respect of persons. And if kings do not, or cannot, personally administer justice in this manner; they should be the more circumspect, in appointing those who act as their representatives in these important concerns. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes*, xx. 8. xxiv. 11, 12. Deut. xvi. 18, 19. 1 Sam. xix. 4—7. Esth. iv. 13—17. Job xxix. 7—17. Ps. lxxii. 1—7. 12—14. lxxxii. 2—4.)—‘If thou seest a man in danger to lose his right, because he is not able to make it out; and through fear, or ignorance, or want of elocution, cannot speak for himself: keep not silence, but undertake his defence; especially if it be the cause of strangers, who understand not the laws; and perhaps are in danger to suffer some great damage in their bodies, credits, or estates.’ *Bp. Patrick*.

V. 10. This description of a virtuous woman forms a kind of poem, containing twenty-two verses, of which each in succession begins with a different letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It seems to have been composed by the mother of Lemuel, and intended to direct him in the choice of a wife: but it contains many important lessons to various descriptions of persons in every age. The interrogation

o 2 Kings iv. 9, 10. 22, 23. 1 Pet. iii. 1—7.
 p 1 Sam. xxv. 18—27. 26, 27.
 q Gen. xviii. 6—8. xxiv. 13, 14. 18—20. xxix. 9, 10. Ex. ii. 16. Ruth ii. 2, 3. 23. Is. iii. 16—24. xxxii. 9—11. Acts ix. 39, 40. 1 Thes. iv. 11. 2 Thes. iii. 10—12. 1 Tim. v. 10. 14. Tit. ii. 5.
 r 24. 1 Kings ix. 26—28. 2 Chr. ix. 10. 21. Ez. xxvii. 3, &c.
 s Josh. iii. 1. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 15. Ps. cxix. 147, 148. Ec. ix. 10. Mark i. 35. Rom. xii. 11.
 t Matt. xxiv. 45. Luke xii. 42.
 u Josh. xv. 18. Cant. viii. 12. Matt. xiii. 44.
 * Heb. *taketh*.
 x 1 Kings xviii. 46. 2 Kings iv. 29. Job xxxviii. 3. Luke xii. 35. Eph. vi. 10, 14. 1 Pet. i. 13.
 y Gen. xlix. 24. Is. xlv. 12. Hos. vi. 15.
 † Heb. *tasteth*.
 z Gen. xxxi. 40. Ps. cxxvii. 2. Matt. xxv. 3—10. 1 Thes. ii. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 7—9.
 a Ex. xxxv. 25, 26. b i. 24. Rom. x. 21.
 † Heb. *spreadeth*.
 c xix. 17. xxii. 9. Job xxxi. 16—20. Ps. xli. 1. xxii. 9. Ec. xi. 1, 2. Mark xiv. 7. Acts ix. 39—41. xx. 34, 35. Eph. iv. 28. Heb. xiii. 16.

11 The °heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.
 12 She °will do him good, and not evil all the days of her life.
 13 She seeketh wool and flax, and °worketh willingly with her hands.
 14 She °is like the merchants' ships, she bringeth her food from afar.
 15 She °riseth also while it is yet night, °and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.
 16 She °considereth a field, and °buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.
 17 She °girdeth her loins with strength, and °strengtheneth her arms.
 18 She °perceiveth that her merchandize is good: °her candle goeth not out by night.
 19 She °layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.
 20 °She °stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, °she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.

21 She is not °afraid of the snow for her household; for all her household are clothed with °scarlet.

22 She maketh herself °coverings of tapestry; her °clothing is silk and purple.

23 Her °husband is known °in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.

24 She °maketh fine linen, and selleth it: and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

25 °Strength and honour are her °clothing; °and she shall rejoice in time to come.

26 She °openeth her mouth with wisdom; and °in her tongue is the law of kindness.

27 She °looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

28 Her °children arise up, and call her blessed; °her husband also, and he praiseth her.

29 Many daughters have °done virtuously, but °thou excellest them all.

p 1. 1 Kings ii. 19. Ps. cxvi. 16. 2 Tim. i. 5. iii. 15—17. q Cant. vii. 1—9. Is. lxii. 4, 5. marg. | Or, gotten riches. r Cant. vi. 8, 9. Eph. v. 27.

d xxv. 20
 § Or, double garments. Gen. xlv. 22.
 e vii. 16.
 f Gen. xli. 42. marg. Esth. v. 1. viii. 15. Ps. xlv. 13, 14. Ez. xvi. 10—13. 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.
 g xii. 4.
 h xxiv. 7. Deut. xvi. 18. xxi. 19. Ruth iv. 1, 2. Job xxix. 7.
 i 13. 19. 1 Kings x. 28. Ez. xxvii. 16. Luke xvi. 19.
 k Job xxix. 14. xl. 10. Ps. cxxxii. 9. 16. Is. lxi. 10. Rom. xiii. 14. Eph. iv. 24. 1 Tim. ii. 10. 1 Pet. v. 5, 6.
 l Ps. xcvi. 11, 12. Is. lxi. 13, 14. Matt. xxv. 20, 21.
 m 8, 9. Judg. xiii. 23. 1 Sam. xxv. 24—31. 2 Sam. xx. 16—22. 2 Kings xxii. 15—20. Esth. iv. 4. v. 8. vii. 3—6. viii. 3—6. Luke i. 38. 42—56. Acts xviii. 26. Eph. iv. 28. Col. iv. 5, 6.
 n xii. 18. xvi. 24. xxv. 15. Gen. xxiv. 18—20. Cant. ii. 14. iv. 11. Mal. ii. 6. Acts xvi. 15. 1 Pet. iii. 1, 4, 5, 8, 9.
 o xiv. 1. 1 Thes. iv. 11. 2 Thes. iii. 6—12. 1 Tim. v. 10, 13. 14. Tit. ii. 4, 5.
 p 1. 1 Kings ii. 19. Ps. cxvi. 16. 2 Tim. i. 5. iii. 15—17. q Cant. vii. 1—9. Is. lxii. 4, 5. marg. | Or, gotten riches. r Cant. vi. 8, 9. Eph. v. 27.

implies both the scarceness of such virtuous women, and the happiness of him who had found one for his wife. (Notes, xii. 4. xviii. 22. xix. 14. Ec. vii. 23—28, v. 28.) The word (חַיִּיל), rendered *virtuous*, may imply both health and mental endowments, as well as the good dispositions and conduct of the person described. 'The word signifies °both strength, (or rather courage,) and riches, and virtue. '... And in the description of fitting persons for the magistry, Jethro in general saith they should be *anschee chajil*, (Ex. xviii. 21,) which we translate *able men*; and then °follows more particularly wherein their ability should °consist, "Such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness:" I take therefore the word to include a great °fear of God (mentioned afterwards, v. 30,) which is so °powerful, as to endue one with courage to do well, when °piety is contemned, nay, laughed at and abused.' Bp. Patrick.—The same word is used when Boaz says to Ruth, "All the city of my people do know that thou art a virtuous woman;" (Ruth iii. 11;) where the context seems to fix the meaning: for her unblemished character, her piety and virtue must be especially intended.—The character is drawn with reference to the usages of those days; but the general outlines are equally suitable to every age and nation. Perhaps it was no more than an ideal picture of feminine excellence; and living characters were to be estimated according to the degree in which they resembled it.—Above rubies.] Marg. Ref. n.

V. 11. The husband of such a wife, would so entirely confide in her conjugal fidelity and in her prudent management, that he could have no jealousy of her, but would

trust all his domestick concerns to her without reserve. (Notes, 2 Kings iv. 8—10. 23. 1 Pet. iii. 1—7.) And every thing being conducted with economy, he would not be tempted to unjust methods of getting gain; as they often are whose affairs are deranged, and whose substance is wasted, by an extravagant woman.

V. 12. 'She will not only endeavour to answer his love, °with an equal affection, but to provoke and excite it by °pleasing him in every thing; and avoiding whatsoever is °ungrateful to him; nay, by deserving well of him, and °studying to promote the interest of him and his family, °and to maintain his honour and reputation: and that not °only by fits, and in a good humour, but all the days of °her life; even after he is dead, if she survive him.' Bp. Patrick.

V. 13—29. Though we are led to conceive of this "virtuous woman," as of one in a superior station, and such a wife as Lemuel would be happy in finding; yet she is described as peculiarly industrious, and as taking pleasure even in manual labour; rising early to superintend her household, that all might have their provisions in due time, in order to their attendance on their several employments. Her wool, flax, spindle, and distaff are mentioned to her honour; while the delicacy and ornaments of the daughters of Zion, are by the prophet recorded to their shame. (Notes, Is. iii. 16—26.) By her diligence and good management, this "virtuous woman" is represented, as able to provide every thing in abundance, of the best quality, and at the best market; and thus, like the merchants' °ships, bringing her food from far." The gains of her

vi. 25. xi. 22. 30 *Favour is deceitful, and beauty
2 Sam. xlv. 25. is vain; but † a woman that feareth the
Esth. i. 11, 12. LORD, † she shall be praised.
Ez. xvi. 15. Jam.
i. 11. 1 Pet. i.
24.
† i. 7. viii. 13. Ex. i. 17. 21. Ps. cxiv. 11 Luk. 6. 46—50. 1 Pet. iii. 4, 5. u Rom.
ii. 29. 1 Cor. iv. 5. 1 Pet. i. 7. iii. 4

industry enable her to purchase fields and plant vineyards : and in doing this also she manages her affairs with prudence and consideration. She does not shrink from labour ; but as exercise gives her strength, so she readily exerts it in any profitable employment. She takes care that all she has to dispose of be completed in the best manner ; and that all which she buys be good of the kind : and though she arose early, yet *tasting* the pleasure and profit of industry, she is not in haste to retire to rest, but spends the evening after it is dark in useful occupations ; nay, the whole, or a great part of the night, when the case requires it. Yet her diligence springs not from covetousness : but she desires to have enough, and to spare for the poor ; while her charity is maintained by her industry and frugality. Her family are prepared for the inclemency of the winter, by having *double garments*, (*marg.*) or changes of raiment ; clothes in plenty, and suitable to their stations : her own clothing is good, and becoming her rank, but of her own manufacturing : and her husband is known among the assembled elders, by his decent and respectable appearance, and by his cheerful aspect : and besides all this plenty, she disposes of many valuable articles to the merchants. Thus her health and vigour of mind are preserved ; her reputation is established ; and her life is spent in so useful a manner, that she will be enabled in time to come to reflect upon it with comfort. Her conversation also is prudent and pious, cheerful and friendly : kindness dictates, and wisdom directs, all she says ; she speaks according to the divine law, which requires love and gentleness : and she neither wastes her own time in idleness, nor allows any of her household to do so ; nor yet to want any thing which is good for them. Her children, well educated and provided for, grow up to be a credit to her, and repay her attention by their commendations of her, and their prayers for her : and her husband, with heartfelt satisfaction, expatiates in her praises, saying with gladness of heart, “ Many daughters ” of Adam and Abraham “ have “ done virtuously ; but thou excellest them all.” (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.*)—The word rendered *virtuously* is the same as is used above (10).—*Shall rejoice in time to come.* (25). ליום אחרון : *dies postremus, the last day, or latter day.* (*Note, Job xix. 23—27, v. 25.*) A future state and the day of judgment seem to be intended.

V. 30, 31. The favour and flattering attention shewn to young women, on account of external embellishments, or polite accomplishments, or of their wit, gaiety, rank, or wealth ; with all the lavish commendations and professions of love made to them ; are deceitful, and will soon turn into neglect and disgust, if they do not possess more solid excellences. And “ beauty,” though so much admired and extolled, is a mere fading vanity : it adds nothing to present happiness ; it often covers and augments the deformity of a worthless mind ; it exposes the possessor to numberless snares, and proves a dangerous temptation to others : and it soon fades, and leaves nothing but the pride and folly which it fostered, without any foundation for esteem and durable affection : and those, who marry a

31 Give her * of the fruit of her † hands ; † and let her own works praise her in the gates.
xvi. 1—4. 6. 12. 1 Tim. v. 25. Heb. vi. 10. Rev. xiv. 13.

worthless woman *on this account*, will surely experience how *vain* it is. But a woman who fears God, and conscientiously attends to the duties of her station, will grow into the esteem and affection of her husband, and acquire merited and durable respect and commendation. Every one ought to behave to her, according to the good effects of her conduct to her relations and the community : and she is worthy to be noticed with commendation even in the publick assemblies of the state, as one whose good works render her peculiarly a useful member of society : and should every tongue be silent, her own conduct will sufficiently manifest her worth, and establish her reputation with all competent judges. ‘ Thus is shut up this ‘ looking-glass for ladies, which they are desired to open, ‘ and dress themselves by : and if they do so, “ their “ adorning will be found to praise, and honour, and “ glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” ’ *Henry.* (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, xi. 22. 2 Sam. xiv. 25—27. Esth. i. 10—12. Ps. cxlvii. 10, 11. Ec. xii. 11—14. 1 Pet. iii. 1—7. Rev. xiv. 12, 13, v. 13.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS
V. 1—9.

The affectionate instructions and counsels of prudent and pious mothers may be as useful to the minds of their children, as their tender care of them, in their infancy, is to their bodies. And when we consider, that those who occupy the most important stations in the community, often receive the first impressions from their mothers, which are generally most durable ; we shall perceive how much the interest of mankind is connected with the due performance of the maternal duty ; and of what importance it is that women be so educated, as to be qualified for such a charge.—Those children, who are early devoted unto God in baptism, and by fervent prayers, and who have been educated accordingly, may be exhorted and persuaded *upon that ground*, in accession to their obligations to the affection and authority of a tender parent ; and it behoves them to consider, what return they will make to such kind friends, and what use of their salutary admonitions. Those, who have the prospect of succeeding to high authority, should be educated and cautioned with proportionably the greater care, because their conduct will have so extensive an effect upon others ; and they should especially be warned against those vices, to which they will certainly be most tempted. Such noble and royal youths are sure to have abundance of flatterers ; who will persuade them that *their* rank authorizes them to indulge their passions, and that *they* are not to be restricted like their inferiors. It is therefore well for them when they have affectionate and prudent monitors to inculcate other lessons. For such princes, as have “ given their strength to women ” and wine ; and have inflamed their passions, vitiated their judgments, and enfeebled both body and mind by excesses ; have not only forgotten the law, perverted judgment, and become tyrants and oppressors ; but they have gone into those ways, which have terminated in their own ruin : and

history abounds with instances of this kind, which are set up as beacons, to warn others to shun the rocks on which they split. On the other hand, those who have studied the welfare of their people, and have used their authority to protect the innocent and to defend the oppressed, have best secured their own interest, establishment, and reputation. But if exact temperance and impartial rectitude become kings, and judges, they are equally requisite for the ministers of religion: for if they forget the law of God, or pervert his truth, the consequences will be still more dreadful to themselves and others. The many awful instances there have been of promising men, who have been disgraced and ruined by women and wine, should warn every one, who bears the sacred character, to avoid all approaches to these evils, and all appearance of them. Every creature of God is good; and strong drink, though wretchedly abused, has its use: but instead of wasting it in excess, those who can afford it should dispense it to the diseased and the wretched, that by the moderate use of it they may be refreshed and relieved: "let them drink and forget their poverty, and remember their misery no more." By the same rule, commendation and consolatory topicks should be used as cordials to the dejected and tempted. But when they are administered to the confident and self-sufficient, they operate as wine on those who are already in a measure intoxicated. And by parity of reason, since magistrates should plead as counsellors for such as cannot plead for themselves; we should all use the gifts we possess, for the benefit of others, to supply their deficiencies, and to preserve them from oppression, deception, or destruction.

V. 10—31

As we have repeatedly in this book been warned against the seductions of bad women, there is a peculiar propriety, in its concluding with the character and commendations of the virtuous woman, for the confutation of such as indiscriminately censure the sex, and speak against marriage, though it is God's own institution. In the fallen state of human nature, it is no wonder, that but few, either men or women, are in any good measure what they ought to be; and various causes concur in rendering women what they ought not to be. But it is of immense importance, that a standard should be fixed, by which all, who regard the word of God, may estimate the intrinsic value of the female character. Some there are to be found, who in a good degree answer to this description: yea, "many daughters have done virtuously;" every one of them is far more valuable than rubies; and happy is he, to whom the Lord gives such a prize, in a wife. While his heart safely trusts in her, she will do him good, in every sense, as long as she lives; and conduce to his comfort, interest, credit, and safety from snares and temptations. But when we carefully consider this standard of feminine excellency, in which conjugal fidelity, economy, industry, cheerful attention to household affairs, and to the good government of servants, and education of children, with a regard to the

interests of her husband, are united with charity, piety, wisdom, and the fear of God; in which avarice and extravagance are equally avoided, and the due distance is preserved between penuriousness and waste, between ostentation and slovenly neglect; and in which no mention is made of time spent in those vain amusements and decorations, which seem the only business of multitudes who can in any way get time and money for them; but the whole life is employed, and the thoughts and conversation occupied, about the duties to be performed to God and man: I say, when this character is well considered, and contrasted with the admired and accomplished females around us; the mind must be impressed with surprise, and led to many interesting enquiries. Numbers in the different ranks of life may be found any where, except in their own families, or in the house of God: they are adorned with every thing, except wisdom and grace: they affect to know many things, but would not even be thought to understand those, which are the proper duties of their station. Nay, they leave even their own offspring to the care of *mercenaries*, that they may be totally disengaged, and at liberty for vanity and dissipation! But which of the two characters is most amiable, rational, or useful? Which is the best fitted for the important duties of a wife and mother? Indeed the matter admits not of a question. At first glance we perceive how much ancient simplicity excelled modern refinement; and still more clearly, how far the wisdom of God's word surpasses the devices of men! We cannot but lament, that the too general modern education of females is such, as seems intended to form them useless triflers, fit only to be gazed upon, or made subservient to amusement and pleasure. And how can they, who spend the whole night in dissipation, the morning in sleep, and the evening in dressing, "rejoice in time to come," when they review a life so wretchedly wasted? When they grow old, it cannot be expected, that the children, whom they neglected for the sake of the most trivial pursuits, will "arise up and call them blessed:" and in general the hearts of their husbands can by no means trust in them; they are a grief and trouble to them all their days; and they are frequently the only persons from whom they receive no commendation. And what the end of a life thus spent will be, if also thus ended, needs not be told: then at least it will be found, that "favour was deceitful, and beauty vain." But "a woman that feareth the LORD," will then receive due commendation, and according to the fruit of her hands it will be given her; and her own works will praise her in the gates. Of this "honour, which cometh from God," every one ought to be ambitious: and according to this standard we all ought to regulate our judgments. With this before their eyes, let pious parents educate their children, especially their daughters; let godly men make choice of wives, and value them accordingly: and this description let all women daily study, who desire to be durably beloved and respected, and to fill up their station in the community in a useful and honourable manner.

THE BOOK

OF

ECCLESIASTES.

THE name of this book is taken from the Septuagint, and is a Greek word signifying a *preacher*, or one who narangues a publick congregation. The Hebrew name (הקדש) may either mean, the person who assembles the people, or he who addresses them when assembled.—The book is generally ascribed to Solomon: and it can scarcely be doubted, that the tradition of the Jews is well grounded; namely, that Solomon wrote it, when brought to deep repentance for the atrocious crimes, into which he had been seduced by his idolatrous wives and concubines.—Certain it is, either that Solomon was the writer; or that some other person wrote it, as assuming his character: for many things in it are so peculiarly appropriate to Solomon, that no other man who ever lived could truly speak them. (i. 12. 16. ii. 4—10. vii. 25—28. xii. 9.) But it would be very absurd to suppose, that any *inspired* writer would use a feigned name and character.—‘Grotius finds some words in this book, that are not to be met withal, but in Daniel and Ezra, and the Chaldee interpreters; which makes it probable, he thinks, that it was written after their captivity in Babylon. But supposing Solomon to write here as a penitent, after he had frequented the company of many outlandish women, (of whom we read, 1 *Kings* xi. 1, 2;) it need not seem strange to us that he had learned the use of many of their words.... Besides, in other books of scripture there are words, for the signification of which we are fain to have resort unto other languages, and particularly the Arabick: ... and yet, for all that, might be pure Hebrew, according to the language which was then spoken.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—The nature of this book, which is properly a *sermon* on a special occasion, precludes the expectation of prophecies in it: nor is there any express quotation from it or reference to it, in the other scriptures, especially in the New Testament, as far as I can recollect or discover: yet, it is indisputable, that it formed a part of the sacred Canon in the time of our Lord; and the instruction it contains, when well understood, appears entirely to coincide with the writings both of the prophets and apostles.—Detached passages indeed, have been considered as containing unscriptural doctrine, and even such as leads to scepticism and licentiousness; and no doubt superficial and carnally-minded men may “wrest them, as they do the other scriptures, to their own destruction:” but they all admit of a sound and useful interpretation, when accurately investigated, and when the general scope of the book is attended to. ‘The tendency of this book is excellent, when rightly understood: and Solomon speaks in it with great clearness of the revealed truths of a future state, and universal judgment.’ *Gray’s Key*.—It is evidently an enquiry after the *chief good*, or what can make man happy: an enquiry which the most learned, sagacious, and ingenious pagan philosophers often made, but never could solve. Yet the inspired preacher has satisfactorily and finally settled it, not merely by authority or argument, but by the result of his own experiments. A more unexceptionable decision cannot be conceived, whether Solomon’s greatness and prosperity, his wisdom and knowledge, or his advantages for making these experiments, and his assiduity in them, be considered.—He had evidently two objects in view. First, to shew where happiness could not be found; and secondly, where it might. ‘Whatsoever is vain and perishing cannot make men happy. But all men’s designs in this world are vain and perishing: therefore they cannot, by prosecuting such designs, make themselves happy.... That which can make a man’s mind quiet, still, and calm, both in life and death; that alone can make him happy. Now this the fear of the Lord can do for him, and this alone: therefore this, and nothing else, will make him a happy man.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—The first six chapters are principally employed on the former part of the argument; in which is shewn the vanity of knowledge and wisdom, (apart from true religion,) of mirth and pleasure, of magnificence, prosperity, power, and wealth: yet some counsels are here interspersed, tending to shew how the vanity, or at least the vexation, of each may be abated; and also intimations are afforded, that wisdom is far preferable to all other acquisitions, and that a cheerful use of providential blessings is much better than covetousness.—In the second part, from the end of the sixth chapter, the general object of the writer is gradually unfolded; and many important cautions and instructions are given, how to make the best of things as we find them, how to live comfortably and usefully in this evil world, and how to derive benefit from the changing events of life.—Here indeed, the royal Preacher sometimes pauses, to shew the vanity of the several things, of which he has occasion to discourse: yet, this part is chiefly employed in teaching us, where and how to seek present comfort and final happiness. In respect of outward things, the sacred writer inculcates a cheerful, liberal, and charitable use of them; without expecting to derive from them any permanent or satisfactory delight. Yet he counsels us to take the transient pleasure, which agreeable circumstances can afford, as far as consists with the fear of God, or true religion; to be patient under unavoidable evils; not to aim

at perilous, arduous, or impracticable changes; to fill up the station allotted us, in a peaceable, equitable, and prudent manner; to be contented, meek, and affectionate; to do good abundantly, and to persevere in so doing for the pleasure arising from it, and in expectation of a gracious recompence. These general rules are interspersed with warnings and counsels to princes and great men; and to subjects in respect of their rulers: nor can it be doubted, that a great part of the vexation of human life is occasioned by the misconduct of men in these particulars.—But the conclusion of the whole matter is this, “Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole of man:” ‘thus habitually prepare for death and judgment, which will surely and speedily arrive.’ In fact, it is evident, that Solomon shews the vanity and vexation of all those things, from which idolatrous and apostate men seek happiness, in order to recommend the substantial blessing of true religion: and that, however some parts of his doctrine militate against the traditions of men, or the impositions of Antichrist; none of them, when fairly interpreted, and compared with the context, will be found inconsistent with the doctrines and precepts of Christ and his apostles, but coincident with them, in all the grand outlines of truth and duty.

B. C. 975.

CHAP. I.

The writer and subject of the book, 1, 2. The vanity of earthly things illustrated by the shortness of life; the restless motions of the sun, wind, and waters; the correspondent toil of man; and the want of satisfaction, and of novelty, experienced in every thing, 3—11. The writer shews his royal authority, his pursuit of wisdom, and the vexation that be found in it,

^a Ez. viii 27. xii. 8
—10. Neh. vi.
7. Ps. xl. 9. Is.
lxi. 1. Jon. iii. 2.
2 Pet. ii. 5.
^b 12. 1 Kings xi.
42, 43. 2 Chr. ix.
30. x. 17—19.

THE words of ^a the Preacher, the son of David, ^b king of Jerusalem.

NOTES.

CHAP. I. V. 1. The word, rendered “Preacher,” has a feminine termination, though it is used both with a masculine and a feminine verb: but the connexion, in several places, confines the meaning of it to the *speaker*, and not the *discourse*. In its general meaning it signifies *one who gathereth*; that is, one that collects the people together into a congregation, in order to instruct them.—As Solomon, in the preceding book, spake in the name of *Wisdom*, (which is feminine in the original,) it seems most obvious to consider him, as speaking in the same or a similar character; if the feminine termination of the original word be at all regarded. (*Note, Prov. i. 20.*) The name of Solomon indeed is not mentioned in the book: but no other son of David reigned in Jerusalem over Israel (12): Solomon’s successors were called kings of Judah, as distinguished from the kings of Israel, or of the revolted ten tribes; and many things in the book can suit none but Solomon.—‘These are the words of him, who thought the ‘name of a preacher, or publick instructor of God’s people, ... no less honourable than that of the son of king ‘David, whom he succeeded in his throne.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—‘Solomon is here called a preacher, or one that assembles the people, because of his teaching the true knowledge of God; and how men ought to pass their life in ‘this transitory world.’

V. 2. This abrupt proposal of his subject shews how full Solomon’s heart was, and how desirous to impress the reader forcibly with it. He does not say, All things are *vain*: but that they are *vanity* in the abstract; yea, *vanity of vanities*, one complex vanity, constituted of numberless

2 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, ^c vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

3 What ^d profit hath a man of all his labour, which he taketh ^e under the sun?

4 *One* ^f generation passeth away, and *another* generation cometh; ^g but the earth abideth for ever.

5 The ^h sun also ariseth, and the

B. C. 975.
^c ii. 11. 15. 17. 19.
21. 23. 26. iii.
19. iv. 4. 8.
16. v. 10. vi. 11.
xi. 8. 10. xii. 8.
Ps. xxxix. 5, 6.
lxii. 9, 10. cxliv.
4. Rom. viii. 20.
ii. 22. iii. 9. v.
16. Prov. xxiii.
4, 5. Is. lv. 2.
Hab. ii. 13. ‘8.
Matt. xvi. 26.
Mark viii. 36.
37. John vi. 27.
^e ii. 11. 19. iv. 3.
7. v. 18. vi. 12.
vii. 11. viii. 15—
17. ix. 3. 6. 13.
^f vi. 12. Gen. v. 3
—31. xi. 10—32. xxxvi. 9, &c. xlvii. 9. Ex. i. 6. 7. vi. 16, &c. Ps. lxxxix. 47, 48. xc. 9, 10.
Zech. i. 5. ^g Ps. cii. 24—28. civ. 5. cxix. 90, 91. Matt. xxiv. 35. 2 Pet. iii. 10—13.
^h Gen. viii. 22. Ps. xix. 4—6. lxxxix. 36, 37. civ. 19—23. Jer. xxxiii. 20.

vanities: and this he repeats, to shew the certainty of it, and his assurance that the whole is unmixed vanity, and nothing else. All created good, abstracted from its connexion with the love and service of God, is unsuitable and insufficient to make us happy, or to do any thing effectual towards it: every enjoyment is unsatisfactory, uncertain, and transient; and there is nothing permanent or stable to be found. As God created them, all things were good, and suitable for the end which he intended: but as apostate man perverts and idolizes them, puts them out of their place, and expects that from them which is not in them, they prove empty, and vanish in disappointment and vexation.—‘He condemneth the opinions of all men, who set ‘felicity in any thing but God alone; seeing that in this ‘world all things are as vanity and nothing.’ (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, xii. 8—14. Ps. xxxix. 5, 6. lxii. 8—10. lxxxix. 46—48. xc. 3—11. cxliv. 3, 4. Rom. viii. 18—23.)

V. 3. “In all labour there is profit,” whilst earthly things are subordinated to heavenly: but when a man disturbs that order, no solid good accrues to him from all his care and toil. The ambitious, the covetous, the sensual, nay the *studious*, labour for a bubble, a shadow, a chimera, which soon vanishes and leaves them in darkness and despair. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, ii. 18—23 v. 13—17. Prov. xxiii. 4, 5. Is. lv. 1—3. Matt. xvi. 24—28, v. 26.)—*Under the sun.*] *Marg. Ref. e.*

V. 4—11. The earth indeed, and its productions and affairs, abide nearly the same through successive ages; but it is continually shifting its inhabitants: and what are they the better for all they possessed on earth, when swept away to make room for another generation? (*Marg. Ref. f, g.*—*Notes*, vi. 11, 12. P. O. Gen. v. *Note*, Ps. cii. 25—28.)

¹ Josh. x. 13, 14. sun goeth down, ¹ and ^{*} hasteth to his place where he arose.

⁶ The ^k wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north: it whirleth about continually; and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.

⁷ All ¹ the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea *is* not full: unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they [†] return again.

⁸ All things *are* ^m full of labour; ⁿ man cannot utter *it*: ^o the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.

⁹ The thing ^p that hath been, it is *that* which shall be; and that which is done, *is* that which shall be done: ^q and *there is* no new thing under the sun.

¹⁰ Is there *any* thing whereof it may be said, See, this *is* new? ^r it hath been already of old time, which was before us.

¹¹ *There is* no remembrance of former things; neither shall there be *any* remembrance of things that are to come, with *those* that shall come after.

The swift approach of death is alone sufficient to prove the vanity of a portion in this world. But the incessant motion of the sun, which notwithstanding is but where he was yesterday, or last year, at this time; the shifting of the wind from one point to another, and then back again; and the speedy current of the rivers to join the ocean, which yet is not filled with them, but returns them in various ways to water the earth, to feed the springs, and to supply the rivers; are so many emblems of man's restless state in this world, and lessons to him to spend his span of life in doing the will of his Creator, and in serving his generation. (*Marg. Ref.* h—l.—*Notes*, Gen. i. 9. Ps. civ. 6—12. John iii. 7, 8.) All things here are full of toil and labour, which man cannot describe, explain, or account for: and after all his labours, he is no nearer finding rest than the sun, the wind, or the current of the river; but is hastening to the dust whence he set out: and then his soul will find no rest, if he have not sought it in and from God. Nay, the eye, though wearied and worn out with seeing, and the ear with hearing, are not satisfied: every thing satiates the senses and appetites, and palls them with sameness and tedious repetition; and yet leaves them dissatisfied and craving. (*Marg. Ref.* m—o.—*Notes*, iv. 7, 8. v. 9—12. Prov. xxx. 15, 16.) Thus men go on from age to age: we find the world the same as our ancestors did, and shall leave it the same to our posterity; and all the new inventions and discoveries, that men boast of, are unreal or immaterial. Many things are deemed new through ignorance; men not being aware, that the same

¹² ¶ I ^t the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem:

¹³ And ^u I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: ^x this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man, [†] to be exercised therewith.

¹⁴ I have ^y seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

¹⁵ *That which is* ^z crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is [†] wanting cannot be numbered.

¹⁶ I ^a communed with mine own heart, saying, ^b Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all *they* that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had ^c great experience of wisdom and knowledge.

¹⁷ And ^d I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: ^e I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.

¹⁸ For ^f in much wisdom *is* much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.

truths were known, the same errors contended for, the same objects pursued, and the same plans adopted, in former ages, as at present. The learned often know this to be the case: and probably it would be found to be so in still more things, if the records of antiquity had not been lost or mutilated. In particular, he who is but moderately acquainted with ecclesiastical history, will scarcely find one modification of religious opinion, amidst the endless variety of modern days, which may not be matched with something of the same kind in ancient times. Upon the whole, it is the same scene over and over again: so that there is scarcely any thing, of which it may be said, "See, this is new:" but "it hath been already" in old times, though there may be no remembrance of former things: and thus in like manner, many modern inventions and conclusions will hereafter be exploded and forgotten. It is, however, certain that nothing new has been discovered, which can prevent the world from being that same vain, vexatious place, that it was in former ages. (*Marg. Ref.* q—v.)

V. 12—18. After this exordium, the preacher proceeds to a more particular account of himself and his subject. Being "king over Israel in Jerusalem," (*Note*, 1,) he desired wisdom and knowledge, in order to a proper discharge of his high and important trust: (*Note*, 1 Kings iii. 8—14:) and he applied himself heartily, and with all the powers of his capacious understanding, to learn every thing which had "been done under heaven," as far as it was discoverable by him. For God has so ordered it, that even

CHAP. II

Solomon shews, from his own experiments and reflections, the vanity and vexation of mirth, pleasure, riches, and magnificence, 1—11; of wisdom and

knowledge must be acquired with painful and wearisome labour by the sons of men; which, however, tends to exercise and employ their minds in a salutary manner, and serves to *humble* them, as some render the words. (13. *marg.*) Or the clause may mean, that Solomon searched out the nature and causes of that “sore labour and travail,” with which God exercises the children of men. The result of this enquiry however was, that when he had considered “all the works done under the sun,” he found them to be, not only “vanity,” but “vexation of spirit:” anxious cares and insipid pleasures ending in bitter disappointments. For no human power, sagacity, or industry can rectify the crookedness of men’s dispositions and behaviour, or even his own; or exempt worldly enjoyments from vanity; or supply, or even number up, those things which are wanting to felicity. (*Marg. Ref. t—z.*) Concerning these subjects Solomon “spake with his own heart.” (*Note, Ps. 3—5, v. 4.*) He pondered them in his mind with serious attention: and, considering that he had both riches, authority, capacity, and leisure, he was determined to examine critically the different pursuits, from which men expected happiness. (*Notes, 1 Kings iv. 29—34. x. 24—27.*) In the first place he purposed to examine the difference between the enjoyments of such as sought knowledge, and studied the rules of prudence and natural wisdom; and the pleasures of those who lived at their ease, and minded nothing but sensual mirth and indulgence; which was generally deemed to be “madness and folly,” and yet had many advocates. But he found the very investigation of the subject to be vexatious; and he was convinced, that there was no solid satisfaction on either side. For even the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom only made distressing discoveries to him of man’s wickedness and misery: so that the more he knew, the more he saw cause to lament and mourn over; and at the same time the increase of knowledge rendered the mind more susceptible of painful feelings, and aggravated the guilt of him who continued impenitent. (*Marg. Ref. a—e.—Note, ii. 12—17.*)—We must remember, that the wisdom which comes from God, and leads to him, and which is “the whole of man,” is excepted from the general charge of vanity. And all other wisdom and knowledge, abstracted from their connexion with it, and subserviency to it, are indeed vain and vexatious. (*Note, xii. 11—14.*)—*Much grief, &c.* (18) ‘A sharp anger mingled with scorn, to find either our persons and counsels contemned, or our projects and well laid designs defeated. Such as was in Ahithophel, whose penetrating wit made his rage the greater, to see his judicious advice rejected, and the whole conspiracy utterly disappointed.’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Notes, 2 Sam. xvii. 7—14. 23.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

None are more capable of shewing the evil and misery of sin, than those who have been very guilty, and then

knowledge, though far preferable to folly, 12—17; of the most successful labours of man; except as the things of the world are used in a proper manner, according to the will of God, and by his special gift, 18—26.

become deeply penitent: and they generally are very desirous to warn their fellow sinners, and to call them also to repentance. In like manner, none are so well qualified to preach the vanity of worldly things, as those who have had an opportunity of giving them a full trial, and then renounce them all for the comforts of true religion: and if kings, whose examples prove them to be in earnest in religion, would discourse on this topic to their subjects, they would be the most unexceptionable of all preachers; nor would it be any degradation to their characters; nay, in the judgment of angels, who “rejoice over one sinner that repenteth,” they would then appear more truly honourable, than when heading victorious armies, haranguing assembled senates or nobles, or seated on the throne of judgment. For to the calm reflection of a believer, who has run the circuit of earthly good, and is brought back from his wanderings; and then from the verge of the eternal world looks round upon the crowds, which throng the court, the city, the change, the theatre; what does it all appear but vanity? imperial sceptres, high-sounding titles, flattering panegyrics, renowned achievements, are as mere a vanity, as the rest of the shadowy possessions and enjoyments of life. The whole is “vanity of vanities,” the vainest of vanities, and nothing more. If this world, in its present state, were all, it would be of little value: but what shall we say, when for the sake of such shadows, eternal happiness is forfeited, and eternal misery ensured! “What profit then have” ungodly “men of all their labour, which they take under the sun?” As far as this world is concerned, we are sensible, that all former generations have laboured only for a grave. The present race of men are treading in their steps; soon the same observations will be made over us: and if we have our good things on earth, it had been “good for us that we had never been born.” If indeed, like the sun, we rejoice to run our course of duty, and make haste to fill up our measure of services to our generation, according to the will of God, and then seek our rest in him; the shortness of human life and the vanity of the world will be no loss to us. But if we seek our happiness, and attempt to take up our rest on earth, where “all things are full of labour;” we shall at last be but where we set out: all our toil and inquietude will be in vain, and we must then go and give an account of ourselves to God our Creator and Judge. We cannot alter this state of things, which is the effect of man’s apostasy, and of the wrath of God against his sins: our wisdom therefore consists in accommodating ourselves to it; and in ceasing to expect satisfaction here, where every short-lived enjoyment either palls and nauseates through excess, or grows insipid through repetition. For no discovery has yet been made of any new source of pleasure or happiness, which is exempt from vanity and vexation: after all our boasted improvements, the world is the same discontented, disappointed place, that men complained of in former ages; and it will be the same when we are gone, and forgotten, like those “former things of which there is no remembrance.”

I ^a SAID in mine heart, ^b Go to now, ^c I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also is vanity.

2 I said of laughter, ^d *It is mad*; and of mirth, What doeth it?

3 I ^e sought in mine heart to ^f give myself unto wine, (^g yet acquainting my heart with wisdom,) ^h and to lay hold on folly, ⁱ till I might see what *was* that good for the sons of men,

a 15. i. 16. 17. iii. 17. 18. Ps. x. 6. xv. i. xxvii. 8. xxx. 6, 7. Luke xii. 19.
b Gen. xi. 3, 4, 7. 2 Kings v. 5. Is. v. 5. Jam. iv. 13. v. 1.
c xi. 9. Is. i. 5. Luke xvi. 19, 23. Jam. v. 5. Rev. xviii. 7, 8.
d vii. 2-6. Prov. xiv. 13. Is. xxii. 12, 13. Am. vi. 3-6. 1 Pet. iv. 2-4.
e i. 17. 1 Sam. xxv. 36.
f Heb. draw my flesh with wine.
g Prov. xxxi. 4, 5. Eph. v. 18. h vi. 12, xii. 13.

V. 12-18.

It behoves all men, as well as kings and preachers, to apply their hearts, and the abilities which God has given them, to find out that wisdom and knowledge, which is connected with their duties in the community. Yet, in the present state of things, even this is "a sore labour and travail:" and the more we read, hear, or observe, of all the works that are done under the sun, the more evil and misery we become acquainted with. We discover calamities which we cannot relieve, errors which we cannot rectify, and vices which we cannot reform: besides those crooks in our own lot which we cannot straighten, and those obliquities in our dispositions, and manifold defect in our own characters, which we feel ourselves unable fully to remove. "Communing with our own hearts" on these subjects will serve the more deeply to convince us, that neither wealth, nor authority, nor wisdom, even if they exceeded those of Solomon, could alter these things. And it is *madness and folly* to expect that satisfaction from "madness and folly," which wisdom and learning fail to confer on their disciples. Yet, that libertines and epicures might have no plea left them; and that no man might be enticed by them to make the perilous experiment, in order to a decision of the question; we have it here made by Solomon, and to the greatest advantage; and, as might have been expected, he found it "vexation of spirit." At the same time he excludes the wise and learned from their boastings also: seeing, with all his unparalleled wisdom and knowledge, he assures us, "that in much wisdom is much grief, and that he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." Let us then learn to hate and fear sin, the cause of all this vanity and misery; to value Jesus Christ, by whom we may return to God and happiness; to despise and renounce this vain world; and to seek our rest in the knowledge, love, and service of God our Saviour.

NOTES.

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. Solomon, having found knowledge, and learning with all its discoveries, and the wisdom of this world with the reputation derived from it, to be labour, sorrow, and disappointment; deliberately proceeded to make trial of mirth and pleasure, in order to find out the happiest course of life. We may now, therefore, imagine him surrounded with the most witty, gay, and dissi-

which they should do under the heaven [†] all the days of their life.

4 I ⁱ made me great works; ^k I build-ed me houses; ^l I planted me vine-yards;

5 I made ^m me gardens and orchards, and ⁿ I planted trees in them of all *kind* of fruits;

6 I made me ^o pools of water, ^p to water therewith the wood that bring-eth forth trees;

† Heb. the number of the days of their life. Gen. xlvii. 9. Job xiv. 14. Ps. xc. 2-12.
i Gen. xi. 4. 2 Sam. xviii. 18. Dan. iv. 30.
k Deut. viii. 12-14. 1 Kings vii. 1, 2. 8-12. ix. 1. 15-19. x. 19, 20. 2 Chr. viii. 1-6. 11. Ps. xlii. 11.
l 1 Chr. xxvii. 27. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10. Cant. i. 14. vii. 12. viii. 11, 12. Is. v. 1.
m Cant. iv. 12-16. v. 1. vi. 2.
n Gen. ii. 8, 9. Luke xvii. 27-29.
o Neh. ii. 14. Cant. vii. 4.

pated of his courtiers and subjects; and endeavouring to relax his mind, and dissipate his cares, by feasting, and mirth, and jollity. But he soon found this also to be vanity. Upon reflection, he "said of laughter, It is mad." For a rational creature to indulge in excessive and dissipated mirth was a voluntary insanity, which rendered him for the time devoid of reason, and the object of pity or contempt; which betrayed him into many foolish actions, and entailed on him most painful consequences. And what at last could this noisy, flashy joy do towards making a man happy? For on trial it was found to be little more than the affectation, or hypocrisy, of pleasure: a forced appearance of gladness concealing an aching heart, and increasing its anguish and remorse when it subsided. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 3. vii. 2-6. xi. 9, 10. *Prov.* xiv. 13. *Luke* xvi. 19-23.)—*I said in my heart, Go to now.* (1) *Marg. Ref.* a, b.

V. 3. The royal preacher next devised to make a critical experiment of the pleasures of wine, which have been so much celebrated by licentious poets. He therefore determined to indulge himself in that respect, and to see what this animal gratification could do for him. Yet he acquainted himself with "wisdom:" either he devoted the former part of the day to study and business, and then indulged himself in the evening; or he conducted the experiment with wisdom, and did not disorder himself by running into great excesses; or he endeavoured to take his knowledge and wisdom along with him, (so to speak,) that he might estimate the degree of satisfaction to be found in drinking: thus attempting to lay hold on *folly* in a wise manner, and for a wise end; namely, that he might discover, which of the pursuits of men was worthy of the decided preference, and ought for that reason to be adhered to all the days of man's life on earth. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes*, iii. 18-21. *Prov.* xx. 1. xxiii. 29. 35. xxxi. 4-7. *Luke* xxi. 34-36, v. 34. *Rom.* xiii. 11-14, v. 13. *Eph.* v. 15-20, v. 18. 1 *Pet.* iv. 3-5.)

V. 4-6. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 1 *Kings* vii. 2-12. *Cant.* vii. 4. viii. 11, 12.) These great works constituted his next experiment in pursuit of happiness; or in seeking after the CHIEF GOOD, about which the different sects, or individuals, of heathen philosophers maintained almost three hundred different opinions.

The wood, &c. (6) Or, To water the nurseries and plantations, in which all sorts of trees were raised. These Solomon, doubtless at very great expense, contrived to water in dry seasons, from pools, which at the same time

7 I got *me* ^a servants and maidens, and had ^r servants born in my house; ^r also I had great possessions of great and small cattle, above all that were in Jerusalem before me.

8 I gathered me also ^a silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces; I gat me ^u men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as [†] musical instruments, and that of all sorts.

9 So ^{*} I was great and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me.

10 And ^y whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them: I withheld not my heart from any joy; for ^z my heart rejoiced in all my labour, and this was my portion of all my labour.

11 Then ^a I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, ^b behold, all *was* vanity and vexation of spirit, and *there was* no profit under the sun.

12 ¶ And ^c I turned myself to be-

hold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what *can* the man *do* that cometh after the king? [†] *even* that which hath been already done.

13 Then ^d I saw [†] that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as ^e light excelleth darkness.

14 The ^f wise man's eyes *are* in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that ^g one event happeneth to them all.

15 Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth ^h even to me; ⁱ and why was I then more wise? ^j Then I said in my heart, that this also *is* vanity.

16 For ^k *there is* no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever; seeing that which now *is*, in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And ^l how dieth the wise *man*? as the fool.

17 Therefore ^m I hated life because the ⁿ work that is wrought under the sun *is* grievous unto me: ^o for all *is* vanity and vexation of spirit.

completion: but this was all! When they were finished the novelty was over, the sameness made them vain, his cares and disappointments rendered them vexatious, and all his improvements entirely failed of affording him satisfaction. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 18—23. i. 2, 3. xii. 11—14.)

All that were before me in Jerusalem.] There had been no king of Israel in Jerusalem, except David, before Solomon: but first Absalom, and then Adonijah, had affected a splendour and magnificence far beyond David; yet immensely inferior to those of Solomon. (*Notes*, 2 Sam. xv. 1—6, v. 1. 1 Kings 5, 6.)

V. 12—17. In search of his grand object, Solomon next recurred to his design of comparing wisdom and knowledge with madness and folly, in order to discover which could do the most towards rendering man happy. (*Note*, i. 12—18, v. 17.) He was sure that no one could repeat the experiment to better advantage than he had made it: whether learning, wisdom, mirth, pleasure, magnificence, riches, or any other object were proposed; none could do more than repeat what the most renowned and prosperous king of Israel had done before him. Upon this deliberate survey, he found indeed that knowledge and prudence in affairs were preferable to ignorance and folly, even “as light excelleth darkness.” (*Marg.*) For the wise man goes about his work, as one whose eyes are open and fitted for their use, and who can distinguish the surrounding objects, and those at a distance: but the fool blunders on, as if he were blind or in the dark, and is continually doing mischief, and running into trouble. Yet “one event hap-

4-9. i. 13. iv. 18 ¶ Yea, ^pI hated all my labour which I had ^{*}taken under the sun; because ^qI should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.

19 And ^rwho knoweth whether he shall be a wise *man* or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself ^{*}wise under the sun. This is also vanity.

20 Therefore I went about ^tto cause my heart to despair of all the labour, which I took under the sun.

21 For there is a man, ^uwhose labour is in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he [†]leave it for his portion. This also is vanity and a great evil.

22 For what ^vhath man of all his labour, ^yand of the vexation of his

heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?

23 For ^zall his days *are* sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, ^ahis heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.

24 *There is* ^bnothing better for a man, *than* that he should eat and drink, and *that* he should ^{*}make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, ^cthat it *was* from the hand of God.

25 For ^dwho can eat, or who else can hasten *hereunto*, more than I?

26 For *God* giveth to a man, that is good ^ein his sight, ^{*}wisdom, and knowledge, and joy; but ^fto the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to *him that is* good before God. This also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

“peneth to them all.” The wise cannot find solid happiness any more than the fool. As to the troubles and anxieties of life, and pain, sickness, and death, no wisdom or learning can ward them off: so that Solomon himself, in respect of the most important temporal concerns, was upon a level with his meanest subject; his wisdom and knowledge were in this view a mere vanity, and his labour in pursuing them seemed altogether lost. He observed also that when a wise man died, he was commonly forgotten or neglected, with his maxims, devices, and performances. So that if it were asked, “How dieth the wise man?” it may be answered, “As the fool.” These reflections rendered him weary of life and of all its employments; as he found every thing to be “vanity and vexation.”—We suppose this to have been Solomon’s experience, while he was seeking satisfaction in the world, and before he began to return back to God and his service. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 18—23. iii. 18—21. 2 *Sam.* xvii. 23. *Ps.* xlix. 10. lxxxix. 46—48. cxlvi. 3—5.)

V. 18—23. Solomon next considered what would become of his wealth, buildings, and other works and improvements, after his decease. He had indeed a son to succeed him in his kingdom; but who knew whether he would prove a wise man or a fool? He seems to have perceived, that Rehoboam was not likely to inherit his wisdom, or to preserve that prosperity in which he left his kingdom. Yet having rule over all his labour, in which he had shewed his diligence and wisdom; his successor would have it in his power to overturn the whole. This reflection so disquieted his mind, that he desired to bring himself to despair, of deriving good from all his labours about those things, “which are under the sun:” seeing, that having bestowed great pains, to establish the affairs of his kingdom in wisdom, knowledge, and equity; his successor, who entered upon it without any labour of his own, might destroy all by his neglect or imprudence. This, Solomon saw to be a great evil in the affairs of men, which could

not be rectified; by means of which, the incessant labour and care of man, by day and night, only produce proportionable sorrow and vexation.—“And yet, such is our folly, there is no end of our cares: for we see many a man whose life is nothing but a mere drudgery; who never is at leisure to enjoy any thing that he hath, but still engaged in one troublesome employment or other to get more: which he follows so eagerly, as if it were his business to disquiet and vex himself. ... Being not content with his daily toils, unless he rack his mind also with cares in the night.” *Bp. Patrick*.—“I went about to make mine heart abhor all the labour, wherein I had travailed under the sun;” that I might seek the true felicity which is in God. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, iv. 7, 8. v. 13—17. 1 *Kings* xii. *Ps.* xxxix. 6. *Luke* xii. 15—21, v. 20. xvi. 27—31.)

V. 24—26. The result of these experiments of the preacher was this, that instead of ceaseless cares about getting and hoarding; nothing could be found under the sun, which deserved to be preferred to a cheerful and liberal use of the fruits of a man’s labours. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. b—d.—Notes*, iii. 12—15. 22. v. 18—20, ix. 7—9. xi. 9, 10.) Yet even this was the gift of God; and without dependence on him, a man must be disappointed even here: for who could bestow more attention to it than he had done, or have more advantages for it, than he had possessed? and yet he missed of the comfort of his prosperity, when he was wandering from God and his duty. But when a man is “good before God,” and does that which he approves, he gives him true wisdom, knowledge, and joy; a peaceful conscience, a contented and thankful mind, a joyful hope, and solid satisfaction in the knowledge and love of him: and by teaching him to conduct his labours, and to use his good things, in a pious, charitable, temperate, and sober manner, he enables him to rejoice in all the works of his hands, and in the abundance of good conferred on him. But to the sinner God allots

CHAP. III.

The mutability of human affairs, as resulting from the unsearchable, wise, and everlasting purposes of God, and connected with man's duty and interest, 1—

labour and sorrow, vanity and vexation, in seeking a worldly portion, which yet afterwards comes into better hands. (*Marg. Ref. e, f.—Notes, Esth. viii. 1, 2. Job xxvii. 13—23, vv. 16, 17. Prov. xiii. 22. xxviii. 8.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—17.

The manifold devices of men in order to derive satisfaction from the world, and their incessant changing from one thing to another, resemble the restlessness of a man in a fever; who supposes his uneasiness to arise from his situation, though in fact it is the effect of his disease. If we could make full trial of every thing "under the sun," and should determine to prove our hearts with mirth, and bid them enjoy pleasure in all its seducing forms; we should soon be constrained to say, "Behold, this also is vanity!" The devotees of a gay and festive life are themselves sensible of its emptiness. They cannot but feel, that immoderate laughter is a kind of madness; and "as to mirth, what doeth it?" they know, that frequently in the midst of their tumultuous joys their hearts are uneasy: and that their laughter is commonly succeeded by proportionable languor and dejection, and ends in disappointment, and often occasions them painful reflections in their short intervals of solitude. Nor can the pleasures of wine in the least prevent these evils; nay, they will infallibly aggravate them. Not to repeat what has been said of excessive drinking; (*Notes and P. O. Prov. xxiii. 29—35;*) even those who conduct their pleasures with more prudence and moderation, and pay some regard to health, reputation, and interest, while they "lay hold of folly," will be miserably disappointed, if they expect to find in this indulgence, "that good for the sons of men, which they should do under heaven, all the days of their life." And if men have wealth, taste, and inclination; and can make trial of more expensive pursuits, without injuring their circumstances and families, or defrauding their workmen and creditors as many do, they will find them also vanity and vexation. (*Note and P. O. Jer. xxii. 13—19, vv. 13, 14.*) When the lower orders in society behold the rich and noble making great works, building magnificent houses, laying out gardens, parks, and plantations, forming canals and fish-ponds, and whatever can be devised for luxury and embellishment; when they see them surrounded with a number of servants, possessed of large estates, and abundance of gold and silver, and collecting from every province its peculiar treasure; even all that is most curious, beautiful, and valuable, of statues, pictures, furniture, jewels, and whatever the eye can lust after, with musical instruments, (those delights of the sons of men,) to soothe the ear and charm the mind; and when they see all this confluence of earthly good in the possession of one, who neither runs into ruinous excess, nor yet withholds his heart from any joy, and who amidst all retains a reputation for wisdom, and manages his concerns with discretion: I say, when the poor witness such scenes, they can scarcely

15. The abuse commonly made of power; the future account to be rendered; and the way in which men live and die like beasts, without properly considering their immortal souls, 16—21. Men should rejoice in their present duties and comforts, being unable to know things future, 22.

help mistaking this glare of prosperity for solid happiness; and they will be apt to covet, envy, and complain. But could they feel exactly as the possessor does, probably their envy might be turned into compassion. Thus when strangers take a transient survey of such scenes of magnificence, where every object excites admiration, they are apt to associate the idea of happiness with that of the possessor: when perhaps he is filled with vexation and disappointment, and receives not, during a course of years, half that pleasure from his magnificence which they enjoy in one hour. Indeed while the plans are forming, or the idea of increasing and supereminent greatness and renown floats before the mind; and while improvements are making, and something new every day excites the attention; there is a degree of joy in a man's labour and success, which he has for his fading portion. But when his designs are finished, and he vainly hopes to be repaid for all his trouble, care, and expense; he "looks on all that his hands have wrought, and behold all is vanity and vexation of spirit; so that there is no profit under the sun." And if the richest, wisest, and most prosperous of kings could find nothing but "vanity and vexation," in all his possessions and enjoyments; what can any man do, "that cometh after" him, and determines to repeat the same experiment? We must not indeed place mad mirth, intemperance, and folly, upon a level with the liberal arts, useful learning, and economical or political wisdom. The former are evil in themselves; the others are good, except when misplaced, idolized, and abused. So that even this "wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness." A man's knowledge and prudence, like the eyes in his head, preserve him from many temporal evils, into which he will fall, who "walketh in darkness" and ignorance: and they enable him to be respectable and useful in the community. Yet in the grand concerns, "one event happeneth to them" both; the advantages of wisdom are precarious and transient; and the most sagacious of men, who dies a stranger to Jesus Christ, will perish equally with the most ignorant, and often with peculiar aggravations; so that this is vanity, and worse than vanity. And the imaginary advantage, of being honoured after death, is as uncertain as it is vain. Probably, even Solomon with all his glory, would have long since been forgotten, or his history distorted by fable; if he had not been made partaker of divine wisdom, and placed as king over the people, and honoured as a writer of the sacred Scriptures. And what is this bubble, which so many covet and so few obtain? What good can commendations on earth do the body in the grave, or the soul in hell? And can "the spirits of just men made perfect" at all need them? It would indeed be as well, if there were in no case any remembrance of the wise man, more than of the fool, except as survivors are the better for his wisdom. So that, if this were all, we might be tempted to hate our life, with all the fruitless toil and work that is done under the sun; as "it is all vanity, and vexation of spirit."—But

TO ^a every *thing* ^{there is} a season, and a time to every purpose ^b under the heaven:

2 A ^c time to ^{*} be born, ^d and a time to die; ^e a time to plant, and a time to pluck up *that which is* planted;

3 A ^f time to kill, and ^g a time to heal; ^h a time to break down, and a time to build up;

4 A ⁱ time to weep, and ^k a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

5 A time ^m to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; ⁿ a time to embrace, and a time to [†] refrain from embracing;

^g Num. xxi. 6—9. Is. xxxviii. 5, &c. Jer. xxxiii. 6. Luke ix. 54
^h Is. v. 5, 6. xlv. 26. Jer. xxxi. 28. xlv. 4. Ez. xiii. 14.
ⁱ Neh. viii. 9—12. ix. 1, &c. Ps. xxx. 5. cxxxvi.
^j Is. xlii. 12, 13. Matt. ix. 15. xi. 17. John xvi. 20—22. 2 Cor. vii. 10. Jam.
^k Gen. xxi. 6. Luke i. 13, 14. 58. vi. 21—25. 1 Ex. xv. 20. 2 Sam.
^l Josh. iv. 3—9. x. 27. 2 Sam. xviii. 17, 18. 2 Kings iii. 25. n Ex.
^m vi. 16. 1 Sam. xxi. 4, 5. Cant. ii. 6, 7. Joel ii. 16. 1 Cor. vii. 5. † Heb. be
ⁿ far from.

there is “a good part,” which will neither disappoint our hopes, nor “be taken from us.” May we choose it decidedly, and cleave to it with all our hearts. (*Note, Luke x. 38—42.*)

V. 18—26.

One main pretence of worldly men, in excuse for their eager pursuits of vanity, is, that they are providing for their children: but this can afford a reflecting man no solid satisfaction; nay, indeed it must generally add to the vanity and vexation derived from other sources. For the uncertainty, which there must be, as to what use their children will make of their riches, and whether they will behave wisely or foolishly, when they come to have much in their power; and the fears lest their possessions should do harm and not good, to them and to multitudes by their means; may make a worldly man “hate all his labour under “the sun.” Soon it must all pass into other hands; who perhaps will subvert all his schemes, waste all his treasures, and destroy all those works in which he fancied that he had shewn himself wise: nay, supposing he has laboured in wisdom, knowledge, and equity, to establish beneficial regulations; the man, to whom he leaves it for a portion, perhaps overturns all by his vice and folly, when he is but just laid in his grave. “This is also vanity and “a sore evil;” enough to make a man “cause his heart “to despair of all his labour” about worldly things. For what has he of all his labour and the vexation of his heart, for all his toilsome days and anxious nights, but sorrow and grief? Indeed worldly things were never intended for any thing more or better, than to supply our bodily wants; and our expectation of more from them is the chief cause of this vanity. To eat and drink to the moderate satisfaction of our appetites is so far good; and there is nothing better for man of *earthly* enjoyment. These the animals share to greater advantage; but the rational soul of man requires some better portion. No wonder then, that when he mistakes this for his intended good, he is restless and dissatisfied, and prone to excess: so that he cannot attain

6 A ^o time to [†] get, [†] and a time to lose; a time to keep, [†] and a time to cast away;

7 A ^p time to rend, and a time to sew; a ^q time to keep silence, [†] and a time to speak;

8 A ^r time to love, and ^s a time to hate; ^t a time of war, and a time of peace.

9 What ^u profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?

10 I have ^v seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men, to be exercised in it.

11 He ^w hath made every *thing* beautiful in his time: ^x also he hath

^t Gen. xlv. 18—34. 1 Sam. xix. 4, 5. xxv. 24, &c. Esth. iv. 13, 14. vii. 4. Prov. xxiv. 11, 12. xxxi. 8, 9. Luke xix. 37—40. Acts iv. 20. u Ez. xvi. 8. Eph. iii. 19. v. 25. 28, 29. Tit. ii. 4. x 2 Chr. xix. 2. Luke xiv. 26. y Gen. xiv. 14—17. Josh. viii. 1, &c. xi. 23. 2 Sam. x. 6, &c. 1 Kings v. 4. 2 Chr. xx. 1, &c. 30. z i. 3. ii. 11, 22, 23. v. 16. Prov. xiv. 23. Matt. xvi. 26. a i. 13, 14. ii. 26. Gen. iii. 19. 1 Thes. ii. 9. 2 Thes. iii. 8. b vii. 29. Gen. i. 31. Deut. xxxii. 4. Mark vii. 37. c Matt. xiii. 22. Rom. i. 19, 20. 28.

^o Gen. xxx. 30, &c. xxxi. 18. Ex. xii. 35, 36. Deut. viii. 17. 18. 2 Kings v. 26. viii. 9.

[†] Or, seek. ^p Matt. xvi. 25, 26. xix. 29. Mark viii. 35—37. x. 28—30. Luke ix. 24, 25.

^q xi. 1. 2 Kings vii. 15. Ps. cxli. 9. Is. ii. 20. Jon. i. 5. Acts xxvii. 19, 38. Phil. iii. 7, 8. Heb. x. 34, 35.

^r Gen. xxxvii. 29. 34. 2 Sam. i. 11. iii. 31. 1 Kings xxi. 27. 2 Kings v. 7. vi. 30. Jer. xxxvi. 24. Joel ii. 13. Acts ix. 39.

^s Job ii. 13. Ps. xxxix. 2. Is. xxxvi. 21. Jer. viii. 14. Lam. iii. 28. Am. v. 13. viii. 3. Mic. vii. 5.

to the comfortable use of the creatures, without the special gift of God; even though he had Solomon's wisdom and wealth, and hasted to it as much as he did. In order to attain this, and every other good, we must first seek and labour for those things which are *above*, and not for those “under the sun:” and having found acceptance with God, and being “good in his sight,” we shall receive from him wisdom and knowledge, productive of solid joy. Then we shall not have any cause to hate our life, or our labour, nor to sit down in despondency: but, leaving our children and all our concerns with the Lord, we may cheerfully attend to the duties of our station, pass through life without anxious cares; avoid much of its vanity and vexation, by the exercise of faith, patience, and joyful hope; and “be “always abounding in the work of the Lord, as knowing “that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.” We shall not need to covet wealth or honour; but “having “food and raiment shall learn to be therewith content,” and to use what God gives to his glory, with thankful hearts: and at length shall leave the world in a very different manner, both from the fool, and the worldly-wise man. (*P. O. Luke xii. 13—21.*) So that the vanity and vexation spoken of belongs only to men *as sinners*, and continues with them *as unbelievers*; to the most prudent and prosperous of whom God gives travail, as his portion; so that a man toils and labours to “gather and to heap up;” and the real benefit of all his care and pains, and the sum total of all the enjoyment, even of his life, devolves on “him “that is good before God.” To all others there is “vanity “and vexation;” but “to him that soweth righteousness “shall be a sure reward.”

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—11. Solomon, having stated at the close of the preceding chapter, that a man should use cheerfully and piously the gifts of Providence; (*Note, ii. 24—26;*) here proceeds to shew that he ought not to expect too much from them, seeing they are so fluctuating

^d viii. 17. Job xi. 7. xxxvii. 23. Ps. civ. 24. Matt. xi. 27. Rom. xi. 33.

set the world in their heart ^a so that no man can find out the work that God maketh, from the beginning to the end.

^e 22. ix. 7—9. Deut. xxviii. 63. Is. lxiv. 5. Luke xi. 41. Acts xx. 35. Phil. iv. 4—9. 1 Thes. v. 15, 16. 1 Tim. vi. 18.

12 I know that *there is* no good in them, ^e but for *a man* to rejoice, and to do good in his life.

^f ii. 24. v. 18—20. vi. 2. ix. 7. Deut. xxviii. 30, 31. 47, 48. Judg. vi. 3—6. Ps. cxxviii. 2. Is. lxxv. 21—23.

13 And also ^f that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.

and uncertain. There is a season, and a time, for every one of God's purposes to take place in this lower world; and for us to perform the several parts of our duty, and prepare for the future: and we cannot anticipate, or retard, those appointed seasons by any of our contrivances or labours. Thus, there was a time, in the purposes of God, for our birth; and there is another for our death, known to him but unknown to us. There are times, in which nations and families are planted and take root; and then there are means to be used, duties to be performed, and comforts to be shared: but there are also times, in which God "plucks up that which was planted," and no human wisdom can prevent it; and then we are called to submission, and the duties of an afflicted state. (*Marg. Ref. a—e.—Notes, 2 Kings v. 26, 27. Is. xxii. 8—14, vv. 12—14. Jer. xvi. 8, 9. xlv. 4, 5. 1 Cor. vii. 29—31.*) In like manner he cuts off our dear friends or relatives, or heals us and them, in his own time: he breaks down our established prosperity, or builds it up like a city recovered from its ashes: he calls us to weep and mourn, or to rejoice and dance for gladness; to raise trophies of victory, or to destroy the monuments of success under severe calamities. He also causes at some times friends and relatives to meet in comfort, and with mutual endearments: at others, they are either separated, or sorrow makes it seasonable for them to refrain from embracing, or circumstances call them to other duties. (*Marg. Ref. f—n.—Notes, Ex. xix. 10—15, v. 15. 1 Cor. vii. 1—5. 25—28.*) There are also times, when men get wealth with ease, and keep it without difficulty: at other times, no prudence can preserve them from the most ruinous losses, nay, they will be glad to cast away all their wealth to save their lives. At some times men are called to rend their clothes in sorrow; at others, to prepare the garments worn on joyful occasions: at some seasons awful afflictions stop their mouths; at others, unexpected deliverances, open them, to speak the praises of God, and to express the gladness of their hearts. At one time they meet with kindness which excites their love; at another with injuries, which tempt them to resentment and hatred. Thus nations experience seasons, when they must wage war, as well as opportunities for the renewal of peace; nor can individuals on all occasions shun dispute and contention. (*Marg. Ref. o—y.*) To expect stable happiness in such an unstable world, must ensure disappointment. But to imitate the sailors, who keep the port in view during all their voyage, and avail themselves of fine weather and fair winds; yet expect and prepare for storms and various hindrances and hardships, and accommodate their conduct to their circumstances; this forms man's duty and wisdom in such a changing world. Otherwise all his toil and labour will be

14 I know that ^g whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: ^h nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and ⁱ God doeth it, that men should fear before him.

15 That ^k which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is ^{*} past.

^k i. 9, 10.

^{*} Heb. *driven away.*

vain and vexatious: and this God has appointed to the fallen sons of men, for their discipline, correction, and humiliation. But, however this state of things may appear to us, every one of these dispensations is "beautiful in its season:" and when the whole plan of God shall be finished, it will appear to have been altogether wise, just, and good. Yet by reason of our situation in this world, about which our time and thoughts are so much taken up; no man can find out all "the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end:" so that to us it will often appear disjointed and confused. (*Marg. Ref. z—d.—Note, ii. 9—11.*)—'Solomon proceeds...to illustrate...the imperfection of human wisdom, which is confined to a certain...season, for all things that it would effect; which if we neglect or let slip, all our contrivance signifies nothing....The utmost perfection at which our wisdom can arrive in this world, consists, ... First, in being contented in this order wherein God hath placed all things; and not disquieting ourselves about that which it is not in our power to remedy or alter. ... Secondly, in observing and taking the fittest opportunity of doing every thing, as the most certain means to tranquillity. ... Thirdly, in taking the comfort of what we have at present, and making a seasonable and legitimate use of it. And, lastly, in bearing the vicissitudes, that we find in all human things, with an equal mind.' *Bp. Patrick.*

V. 12—15. 'Wherefore long consideration and experience assure me, that, leaving these fruitless enquiries and vexatious cares about the future; the only happiness that is in our power, is to make the best we can of our present condition; rejoicing that things are so well with us, and being solicitous for nothing in this world, but to obtain a good hope in God, by living piously and virtuously, and doing good to others with what we have: and this not remissly and by fits, but seriously and constantly, as long as we live.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Indeed the chief advantage of worldly possessions consists in the pleasure which arises from doing good with them, and in using moderately and cheerfully the fruit of our labour; which is the gift of God. It would be madness to think of altering the decrees of God: his appointments cannot be frustrated or disconcerted: nothing can be added to or taken from them; but they remain for ever as he has purposed them: and he orders all things in that manner, which is best suited to bring men to stand in awe of his power and wrath, and to reverence his glorious Majesty.—There is also a uniformity in the vast variety of his dispensations: the same scenes are exhibited over again to successive generations: and God, as it were, recalls those judgments and mercies, which had been employed on former occasions. So that his dealings with individuals, and with collective bodies, from age to age, make the same displays of

19 For ^r that which befall^heth the

22 Wherefore I perceive that *there* is ^a nothing better than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that is his portion: for ^a who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?

V. 18—21. Some think that these verses contain the objections of certain infidels, to Solomon's doctrine of the

V. 22. (See on *Note*, ii. 24—26.) In the midst of all this disappointment and vexation, the best thing that a man can do, is, to use cheerfully the fruits of his industry, and the bounty of Providence : but at the same time, to “ exercise himself to have a conscience void of offence, towards God and man ;” returning to God through Jesus Christ, relying on his mercy, and rejoicing to do his duty. This will give him a humble confidence and joyful hope, which is his present portion, and the earnest of his future happiness. And he will not want to know the things which are coming upon him, in the intervening years or days of his life : and it would, in fact, be vain to enquire concerning them. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 12—15. *Is.* lxi. 5. *2 Cor.* i. 12—14.)

CHAP. IV.

The miseries arising from oppression; and the vanity resulting from envy, idleness, and avarice, 1—8. The advantages of friendship and social affections, 9—12. The vanity of royal dignity, through the folly of princes, and the fickleness of their subjects, 13—16.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—11.

In this changing world our proper comfort lies in the expectation of unchangeable happiness in heaven. How wretched then are those, who have nothing to hope, and every thing to fear, beyond the grave! In that world, to which the believer is hastening, there will be no more death or sickness, no more plucking up or breaking down, no weeping and mourning, no losing or scattering, no hatred, envy, or war; but eternal peace, and love, and joy, complete, yet still receiving continual accessions. While we continue on this stormy ocean, let us cast “anchor within the veil;” and let us seize the favourable opportunity for every good purpose and work. As the time for our being born is past, so the time for us to die is speedily approaching: in the interval there is a season allotted to us to “work out our own salvation,” and to do good to our brethren. If it had not been for sin, there would not have been a time for death; if it had not been for Christ, we must have died without hope. Our sins bring upon us all our personal, domestick, and publick calamities; to Christ we owe all our comforts. Let us then learn to acknowledge the hand of God in all the varying scenes of life; to submit to his justice without murmuring, to humble ourselves for sin, to seek the supports of his grace, and to hope for returning comforts; even if he please to overturn our prosperity, and to wither our gourds; if he call us to mourning and weeping, to rending our garments and girding ourselves with sackcloth; if he mar our enjoyments, bereave us of our substance, or expose us to embittered enemies. And on the other hand, if the Lord be pleased to plant, to build up, and to heal our wounds, to give us peace, and cause us to rejoice; if he send accessions of property or of kind friends, or render relative endearments comfortable to us; let us beware that we do not trust the transient calm: on the contrary, in the day of prosperity let us prepare for adversity, in the time of love for enmity, in the time of peace for war, in the time of health for sickness, and in the time of life for death. In the mean while let us receive the present comfort with gratitude, and bear the transient affliction with patience: let us diligently attend to the duty, and accommodate ourselves to the circumstances, of the present time; and expect our happiness, not from this changing world, but from an unchangeable God. But if we reverse this order, it will still recur to be enquired, “What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?” Nay, the more men see of the world around them, the more they will “witness the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.” Yet let us not rashly censure the appointments of God: every thing which he has planned and executed is perfectly fitted to its time, place, and occasion, and “is beautiful in its season.” But in such a

SO ^a I returned, ^b and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and, behold, ^c the tears of such as were oppressed, and ^d they had no comforter; and on the ^e side of their

a Job vi. 29. Mal. iii. 18. b iii. 16. v. 8. vii. 7. Ex. i. 13, 14. 16. 22. ii. 23, 24. v. 6—19. Deut. xxviii. 33. 48. Judg. iv. 3. x. 7. 8. Neh. v. 1—5. Job xxiv. 7—12. Ps. x. 9, 10. Prov. xxviii. 3. 15, 16. Is. v. 7. li. 23. lix. 7. 13—15. Mal. iii. 5. 3. 9. lxxx. 5. cii. 8, 9. Mal. ii. 13. Jam. v. 4. d Job xvi. 4. xix. 21, 22. Ps. lxix. 20 cxlii. 4. Prov. xix. 7. Lam. i. 2. 9. Matt. xxvi. 56. 2 Tim. iv. 16, 17. e Heb. hand.

world as this, where our *needful* employments are so many; and with such hearts as ours, which are so *needlessly* set upon earthly things, and anxious about them, no wonder that we are not able to find out all the works of God, and to see the reasons and the glory of them. To believe, obey, and submit is our part on earth; and not to comprehend the deep things of God.

V. 12—22.

It is both our duty and our privilege to be daily occupied in doing good to all around us, as we have ability and opportunity: and this would render our own temporal comforts doubly sweet to us; for indeed it is the only good in them. We should also avoid the extremes of avarice and extravagance, in the use of our substance; and should continually seek wisdom and grace from God, that we may properly “eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all our labour,” without disquieting ourselves about the everlasting and most perfect appointments of God. Rather let us fear before him, and reverence his wisdom, justice, and power; being assured that he deals with all his creatures, in every age, by the same unerring rules. Leaving these matters therefore to the Lord, we should take the place, and do the work, assigned us. Nor need we desire eminent stations, which so often tempt men to atrocious wickedness, and expose them to severe judgments. And should we not only witness the “iniquity found in the place of judgment,” but even suffer grievous things, we need not faint; for the time of deliverance for the oppressed, and for vengeance on the oppressor, will soon arrive. Rather let us pray for our poor besotted fellow sinners around us, that the Lord would shew them their real condition, and not leave them to their wickedness, “as brute beasts that have no understanding.” Surely the case of those who are so desirous of living like beasts, that the height of their hopes and wishes is to die like them, is most deplorable. And yet must they be disappointed in this their grovelling expectation. Indeed, as to the body there is no great difference at present: both must return to the dust. But who can describe the difference, when the soul of man leaves the body, and enters upon an eternal state of unmixed joy or sorrow; while the beast dies to live no more! Though we cannot fully explain this matter, yet, believing the word of God, we may know enough to convince us, that our business on earth is to seek future happiness; and embracing the salvation of the gospel, to be zealous of all those good works which are the evidences of faith and love, and rejoice in doing them. If we choose this as our portion, we shall be safe for eternity: though no one can tell us what shall befall us hereafter during life; or what will come upon our family or country after we are gone.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—3. Solomon returned from his survey

oppressors *there was* power ; but they had no comforter.

2 Wherefore ^e I praised the dead which are already dead, more than the living which are yet alive.

3 Yea, ^f better is *he* than both they, which hath not yet been, ^g who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.

4 ¶ Again, I considered all travail, and ^{*} every right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbour. ^h This is also vanity and vexation of spirit.

5 The ⁱ fool foldeth his hands together, and ^k eateth his own flesh.

6 Better is ^l an handful *with* quiet-

ness, than both the hands full *with* travail and vexation of spirit.

7 ¶ Then ^m I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun.

8 There is ⁿ one *alone*, and *there is* not a second: yea, ^o he hath neither child nor brother; yet *is there* ^p no end of all his labour; neither ^q is his eye satisfied with riches; neither *saith he*, ^r For whom do I labour, and be-reave my soul of good? This is also vanity, yea, ^s it is a sore travail.

9 ¶ Two ^t are better than one; be-cause they have ^u a good reward for their labour.

10 For ^x if they fall, the one will lift

of the general condition of mankind, as in many things resembling that of the beasts that perish; to consider more fully the case of the oppressed, who are rendered more wretched than the beasts, by the cruelty of their oppressors. He had doubtless often had occasion to behold and redress the oppressions committed in his own kingdom, by the rich and powerful, on the poor servant and labourer, on the widow and the orphan. (Note, iii. 16, 17.) This led him to reflect on those who were crushed by more potent tyrants, excited by malignant or mercenary false accusers; (συκοφαντησαντων. Sept.;) and who were destitute of any “comforter” or helper; as none would dare to appear for them, lest they should share their injuries, from that power which was employed to commit and maintain injustice. This view of human misery made him ready to conclude, that it was better to die, than to live in such a wretched world; nay, that it would have been better never to have been born, to witness and experience the afflictions and miseries, which arise from man’s wickedness all over the earth, (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, ii. 12—17. vi. 3—5. Ex. i. 22. iii. 7. Job xxiv. 2—12. Prov. xxviii. 16.) And so doubtless it would, if it were not for the comforts of religion and the hope of a better world; which the preacher all along meant to except from his general charge of vanity. (Note, xii. 11—14.)

V. 4—6. Turning his thoughts another way, Solomon next considered the labour and pains, which men take in useful undertakings, and in rendering important services to mankind. Thus they often become renowned, eminent, and prosperous: but then this excites envy and opposition, the effects of which more than counterbalance all the temporal advantages of their right work. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—See on Note, Prov. xxvii. 4.) Others, seeing the vexation which such persons meet with in an active course, foolishly expect to find more satisfaction in sloth and inactivity. Thus their strength and faculties lie dormant, and they often reduce themselves to pining distress: and yet some of them will assume an air of wisdom, and urge, that “better is an handful with quietness, than both

“hands full with travail and vexation of spirit;” which, though true of him who prefers quietness in doing his duty with a narrower income, to greater abundance with

contention; yet applies not to the case of the sluggard. (Marg. Ref. i—l.—Note, Prov. xxvi. 13—16.) His quietness is a mortal disease both of body and soul; his handful is wretched and wilful poverty; and any honest labour, or cumbersome plenty, is better than his quietness and starving.—‘Pride, ambition, emulation, envy, and hatred reign’ so uncontrollably every where, among all orders and ranks, all trades and professions; that when a man hath taken a deal of honest pains, in some useful work, and brought it to perfection; instead of gaining credit by it, ‘...his neighbours look awry upon him; nay, he is...disparaged and traduced by those who either cannot or will not imitate (but only carp at) his ingenious labours. ...Some...are so absurdly foolish, as...to sit down in perfect idleness. ...A wise resolution this! to do nothing because others do ill!’ Bp. Patrick.

V. 7, 8. Solomon next considered the case of one that went into the opposite extreme. It is that of a single man, without any associate, for fear of the expenses of a family; one who not only has no children, but is without any near relation, and who yet toils and labours incessantly all his days; who is full of care about scraping together and hoarding riches; who grows griping and penurious as he becomes wealthy and old; who lives in the meanest manner, and yet grudges himself every morsel, bereaving his soul of good; and who has not sense to ask himself, for whom he thus labours and starves; to whom it does not occur to enquire, ‘Whose slave am I, seeing I work and fare so hard? and who is to reap the fruit of all my toil, and penuriousness?’ The distant relations, or strangers, which inherit such a man’s wealth, never thank him for it; for they know that he would not leave it to them, if he could keep it any longer. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 9—12. v. 9—12. vi. 2. Gen. ii. 18. xv. 2, 3. Ps. xxxix. 6. Prov. xxvii. 20. Luke xii. 15—21, v. 20.)

V. 9—12. From the folly and misery of the solitary miser, the wise man takes occasion to point out the advantages of friendship, or of marriage, and a social life. Two may live more comfortably together, if suitably paired, than one can alone; and their satisfaction in each other’s company will be a good reward for the additional labour that it may occasion: for surely he has more satisfaction

^v Gen. iv. 8. up his fellow: ' but woe to him *that* is alone when he falleth; for *he hath* not another to help him up.

^a 1 Kings i. 1, 2. 11 Again, 'if two lie together, then they have heat; but how can one be warm *alone*?

^a 2 Sam. xxiii. 9. 16. 18. 19. 23. Dan. iii. 16, 17 Eph. iv. 3. ^b ix. 15, 16. Gen. xxxvii. 2. Prov. xix. 1. xxviii. 6. 15, 16. ^{*} Heb. *knoweth not to be.* 1 Kings xxii. 8. 2 Chr. xvi. 9, 10. xxiv. 20—22. xxv. 16. 12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; ^a and a three-fold cord is not quickly broken.

13 ¶ Better ^b is a poor and a wise child, than an old and foolish king, who ^{*} will no more be admonished.

in life, who labours hard to maintain a wife and children whom he loves, than the miser has in his absurd care and toil! and every kind of honest and faithful friendship is productive of some solace, amidst the evils of life. This proposition is illustrated by some familiar cases. If a man travel alone, and any accident befall him, he may be lost for want of help; but when two journey together, the one is at hand to help and take care of the other. When two lie together, they communicate heat to each other; but either of them alone, might have been incommoded by the cold. And two, or more, united together, may withstand an assailant, who would have prevailed against either of them separately; even as a three-fold or twisted cord is not readily broken, except by untwisting it. This is applicable both to the benefits of common friendship, and the communion of the saints.—' Lamentable is his condition, who hath no friend, no companion, to reach out his charitable hand to him, when he falls, suppose into a pit; none to comfort him when he is sick; none to testify his innocence when he is defamed; or, which is worse, to restore him, when by his own imprudence or negligence, he falls into sin.' *Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 7, 8. Gen. ii. 18. 24. Ex. iv. 14. 1 Kings i. 1, 2.)*

V. 13, 14. The preacher, though himself a king, next proceeded to shew the vanity of royal dignity. Frequently those, who should be most revered for authority and seniority, are very ignorant and imprudent; yet are too proud to be admonished or counselled, or even too old to learn: and thus they involve themselves and their people in great calamities. But a nation had better be governed by one of mean extraction, and in his youth, who is wise enough to take advice and prefer good counsel, than by such an old and foolish king. Or rather, a poor youth, who behaves prudently, is more respectable and happy than he. Wisdom indeed may bring a man even from prison to the greatest dignity, as it did Joseph; and then his former obscurity is no reproach to him: but one, born to inherit a throne, may become poor and distressed by his misconduct.—' Folly makes the other impatient of all advice; ... and the older he is, the more obstinate: because as his kingly dignity, he fancies, authorizes him to do what he lists; so his age gives him a privilege of knowing better than any body can tell him.' *Bp. Patrick.*—Probably Solomon foreboded, that this might be the case with Rehoboam, as it afterwards in some measure proved. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. b—d.—Notes, Gen. xli. 1 Kings xii.*)

14 For ^c out of prison he cometh to reign: whereas ^d also *he that is born* in his kingdom becometh poor.

15 I considered all the living which walk under the sun, with the second ^e child that shall stand up in his stead.

16 *There is* 'no end of all the people, *even* of all that have been before them: ^e they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely ^b this also is vanity and vexation of spirit.

V. 15, 16. These verses state, that Solomon observed the general propensity of men to prefer the heir-apparent as we say, to the reigning prince, however wise and excellent. This he remarked to be the way of "all the living, "who walk under the sun:" they are fond of changes, and pay court to the king's son, though comparatively a child, in preference to the king; as he is "the second" or *next* to him, and is shortly to stand up in his stead. Probably Solomon observed this, in the case of Rehoboam, with considerable uneasiness. But he remembered also that the people were continuing the conduct of all that had been before them; of those for instance, who raised a rebellion against David, in favour of Absalom: and, however sanguine their attachment and expectations might now be, as to his successor, they that should come after would not rejoice in him, but choose another favourite instead of him, still worshipping the rising and neglecting the setting sun: and this alone sufficed to render royalty, however well supported, "vanity and vexation of spirit."—' So this young prince, who is now followed with such applause, must not think that it will last alway: but they that come after will take as little delight in him, as the present generation doth in his father; and when he grows old, court his son, after the same fashion, as they now do him, being young.' *Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 2 Sam. xv—xviii. 1 Kings xii.)*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

Wherever we turn our eyes or our thoughts, we see melancholy proofs of the wickedness and misery of mankind; who, as if the evils of life and death were insufficient, seem to employ all their ingenuity and industry, in creating trouble to themselves and each other! So that every where under the sun, (except as good government allays the evil,) the earth is full of the oppressions of the powerful, and the groans and tears of the oppressed, who often are without redress or comfort: for so selfish are men, that when not directly concerned in oppression, they are more disposed to pay court to the affluent oppressor, than to compassionate or alleviate the miseries of the unhappy sufferers. In this view there is little reason to desire the continuance of life: and if this were all, we might be ready to congratulate those, who had done with it's few pleasures and many pains; and even to conclude it best, never to have entered into such a wicked and wretched world. And when we take into the account the future

CHAP. V.

Cautions against those things, which render men's devotions and vows vain and sinful, 1—7; and against

being stumbled by beholding oppression, 8. The vanity of riches, in the getting, keeping, or loss of them, 9—17. The proper use of them, in the fear of God, is the only remedy against this vanity, 18—20

state of righteous retribution, we may well say of ungodly men, that "it had been good for them, had they never been born." But we should not for a moment forget, that all these miseries are the effects of God's displeasure against the iniquities of men, and of their injurious conduct to each other: so that we have no reason to murmur, though we may well despair of happiness in such an afflicted scene.—Nay, even they, who do works eminently right and good, will reap vanity and vexation from them, in proportion as they expect a reward from men: for the pride and malignity of the human heart will single them out as the objects of embittered envy; and calumny, ingratitude, and opposition as certainly pursue eminent characters, as the shadow the substance. Yet none but the fool will fold his hands in indolence, and suffer his abilities to rust away for want of exercising them: for the effects of sloth, inducing poverty and unpitied distress, are more vexatious, than any labour and disappointment. Indeed these vexations may be somewhat alleviated by being diligent in every right work, from a believing regard to the gracious acceptance of God our Saviour and love to his name, and then modestly shunning ostentation and competition; by being quiet and minding our own business, avoiding contention, and seeking a comfortable provision for ourselves; and by being useful to others. In this sense, "better is an handful with quietness, than both hands full with travail and vexation of spirit." Yet the miser's folly is more egregious, than even that of the sluggard. Men commonly devise some plausible pretext for their avarice; they have families to provide for, or poor relations that have expectations from them; or they labour and hoard now, that they may hereafter enjoy ease and plenty. But the disease gathers strength by time and habit; and is capable of such excess, as could never have been credited, if it had not been proved by indisputable facts. Men, who have neither child nor brother, infirm through age, and tottering on the brink of the grave, still scrape and toil without measure or cessation! They continually grow more grasping and penurious: they bereave themselves, as well as others, of all enjoyment and comfort: they are the wretched, yet the willing slaves of the most cruel masters, who give them no rest or respite; till death remove them, and they leave their idol behind them; and their heirs rejoice, and commonly dissipate their treasure! Surely this is also "a vanity, yea, it is a sore travail." Let us then beware of covetousness, and guard against its first beginnings, if we would avoid these despicable and destructive extremes.

V. 9—16.

Though we cannot escape the vanity of life, yet we may mitigate it, by a prudent use of the comforts of society and endeared connexions: this will solace and recompense our labours; we shall have kind friends to sympathize with us in our sorrows, to comfort us when dejected, to animate us in our difficulties, to defend us from injury, or to assist us to repair our losses: and we may reciprocally render

them the same services. In all things union gives stability, and tends to success and safety; for a three-fold cord cannot easily be broken. But above all, the union of Christians, and the communion thence resulting, produce manifold advantages. (*Notes, Eph. iv. 1—6. Phil. i. 27—30, v. 27. ii. 1—4.*) Whilst with united hearts, endeavours, and prayers, they are occupied in "the work of faith and labour of love," they enjoy a good reward. They assist each other, when they fall into any sin, temptation, or trouble, by encouragement or friendly reproof: but "woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up." They warm each other's hearts, while they converse together of the joys of heaven, or the love of Christ, or unite in singing his praises: but a solitary Christian will scarcely ever be very lively, or fervent in spirit. And no enemy can withstand the combined efforts and fervent prayers of associated Christians; nor can Satan prevail against them, except by dividing them. "Let brotherly love" then "continue," and diffuse its divine influence through all the church of Christ: and let us endeavour to improve our opportunities of Christian fellowship, and to turn them to good account. In these things, all is not vanity; though there will be imperfection and alloy, as long as we are "under the sun." The poorest Christian, however, may find a more solid satisfaction, in communion with God, and the hope of heaven, and in his proper work, and the society of his brethren, than any ungodly prince can find upon his throne: nay, the most ignorant and inexperienced believer is wiser and happier, than those who are old and great, but will not take good counsel. For rank and old age do not always give wisdom, but rather increase pride and obstinacy, which are the most ruinous kinds of folly. (*Note, Job xxxii. 6—14.*) And if he who from a dungeon should, through his wisdom, be advanced to a throne, be preferable to him, who born in his kingdom is reduced to poverty by his folly; how honourable and happy will they be, who by faith in the Son of God, are advanced from the bondage of sin and Satan, to the glorious "kingdom that cannot be moved!" And how miserable and contemptible they, however rich and great, who have "their good things" in this life; and then for their sins are condemned to everlasting punishment in hell!—Indeed, the most politick and successful princes find little comfort in their dignity and reputation. The inconsistency of the people who soon forget their services; the domestick disquietudes, to which they are far more exposed than their inferiors; and the parties and rivalry, which are thus excited and fomented, commonly fill their closing scene with vexation and bitterness, as every reflecting reader of history must have often remarked. This has been the case in every age; and men must lay their account with it, however at first they may be caressed and extolled: "surely this also is vanity and vexation of spirit!" But the willing subjects of Jesus, our King, from age to age rejoice in him and in him alone, and will love him more and more, to all eternity. May all the living, that walk under the sun, hear of him, trust

KEEP ^a thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ^b ready to hear, than to ^c give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

2 Be ^d not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter *any* ^e thing before God: ^f for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore ^g let thy words be few.

3 For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and ^h a fool's voice is *known* by multitude of words.

4 When thou ⁱ vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; ^j for *he hath*

no pleasure in fools: ^k pay that which thou hast vowed.

5 ^l Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay.

6 Suffer not ^m thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou ⁿ before the Angel, that ^o it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and ^p destroy the work of thine hands?

7 For ^q in the multitude of dreams and many words *there are also divers* vanities: ^r but fear thou God.

8 ¶ If ^s thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of

in him, and obey him, henceforth to the end of the world. In this alone there is no vanity nor vexation.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1—3. Solomon meant by his whole argument to shew, that every thing was vanity except true religion: but here he cautions his readers against those mistakes, which render even religious duties vain and worthless.—‘Religion...is the only remedy indeed, the only comfort we have against all the troubles to which we are subject in this world: but such is the *vanity* of mankind, they spoil their very remedy, and take away all the virtue of that which should be their support, turning it into mere ceremony, whilst their minds remain impure, and without any true sense of God.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—Every one indeed ought to attend the house and ordinances of God; but it should be done with holy awe and reverence, shewn by the customary external expressions: as Moses was commanded to uncover his feet, when on holy ground. (*Marg. Ref. a.—Notes, Ex. iii. 4, 5. Josh. v. 13—15.*) The first care of all, who would acceptably worship God, should be to *hear*, and learn how he would be worshipped; that they may not, in a precipitate manner, affront him with a hypocritical or superstitious service; or with sacrifices, oblations, or ceremonies, without a correspondent frame of mind. These are “the sacrifices of fools;” who, through ignorance and carelessness, do evil and are not aware of it; but suppose they recommend themselves to God, when in fact they greatly provoke him. Men should therefore avoid rashness in their professions, petitions, or vows; they should not hastily speak before God every thing which occurs to their thoughts. They should remember his greatness and purity who dwells in heaven, that “high and holy place,” and their own indigence and sinfulness. They ought to avoid needless loquacity and vain repetitions; and express themselves in plain language and with perspicuous brevity, such as springs from the heart, and not such as is affected and studied. All kinds of copious prayers cannot be condemned, but only those which are unmeaning; such as the vain repetitions of the heathen who expected to be heard for their much speaking; the pater-nosters, and other forms used by the Papists; and

the long prayers of the Pharisees. (*Notes, 1 Kings xviii. 26—29. Matt. vi. 7, 8.*) These verbose supplications shew indisputable traces of a man’s ignorance and folly, and that he has confused, false, and dishonourable thoughts of God and religion: even as the incoherencies of a dream often shew the multitude of schemes, anxieties, and employments which occupy men’s waking hours, and the prevalent dispositions of their minds and hearts. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, x. 11—15. Gen. xxviii. 16, 17. Ps. lxxxix. 6—12, v. 7. Prov. xv. 8, 9. Is. lvii. 15, 16. Matt. vi. 6. 9. Heb. xii. 26—29. Jam. i. 19—21.*)

V. 4—7. Great caution is requisite to avoid sin and vexation in religious vows. In general a man should pay his vows, if *lawful*, however inconvenient it may be; and that without delay: for the contrary is extremely foolish and displeasing to God, who is mocked and trifled with; and it is much better to avoid all vows, than thus to infringe them. If a man had vowed any thing rashly, his mouth had given occasion to *his flesh*, or his corrupt nature, to commit sin; and he would have to plead, either before “the great Angel of the Covenant,” (whom some think to be meant,) or before the priest, the *messenger* of God, or those *angels* which witness our conduct, that his vow was made through a mistake, or was rash and foolish. This would provoke the Lord to frown upon him, and prevent the success of his undertakings: and why should a man expose himself to such severe rebukes, by needlessly vowing, or by distrustfully refusing to pay his vows? Men should therefore be watchful over their tongues: for as diverse vanities are found in the multitude of dreams; so assuredly will much sin and folly intermingle with the words of him, who speaks a great deal, and without due deliberation and reflection. But the proper remedy of these evils consists in the habitual reverential fear of God, as present at all times, and searching the hearts of all men.—‘Cause not thyself to sin by vowing rashly; as they do which make a vow to live unmarried, and such like.’ (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1—3. Gen. xxviii. 20—22. xxxv. 1. Lev. v. 4—6. xxvii. 1—29. Num. xxx. Judg. xi. 30—40. Ps. xv. 4. lvi. 12. lvi. 13, 14. Prov. xx. 25. Jer. xxxiv. 8—19. Matt. v. 33—37.*)

V. 8. It is a great discouragement to those who fear

judgment and justice in a province, ¹ marvel not at the ^{*} matter: ["]for *he* ^{that is} higher than the highest ^{*} regardeth; and *there be* ["] higher than they.

9 ¶ Moreover, ["] the profit of the earth is for all: ["] the king *himself* is served by the field.

10 He ["] that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: ["] this is also vanity.

11 When goods increase, ["] they are increased that eat them: and ["] what good is *there* to the owners thereof, saving the beholding *of them* with their eyes?

12 The ["] sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much;

but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep.

13 There is ["] a sore evil *which* I have seen under the sun, *namely*, ["] riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.

14 But ["] those riches perish by evil travail: ["] and he begetteth a son, and *there is* nothing in his hand.

15 As ["] he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.

16 And this also is ["] a sore evil, *that* in all points as he came, so shall he go: and ["] what profit hath he that hath laboured ["] for the wind?

17 All his days also ["] he eateth in darkness, and *he hath* ["] much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.

18 Behold, *that* which I have seen:

God, to behold the successful villany that is done on earth: especially by the violent perversion of law and justice, which the governors of kingdoms and provinces commit, in defiance of God and man. But they should consider, that though the Lord regards it, and "is higher than the "highest" of the oppressors; yet he doubtless has wise reasons for permitting these things, and knows how to educe good from them, and in due season will execute judgment upon the most haughty and prosperous sinners. Nor ought such transactions to excite great amazement, as they are the effects of man's depravity and Satan's power: and it is a part of the Lord's present system, to permit them to take place, for the fuller display of his own glory; though he confines them by certain limitations, which they cannot exceed.—The last clause seems to mean the holy angels, the ministers of Providence; who are far higher and mightier than the most powerful tyrants, whom they are often employed to crush and destroy, though they are as nothing before the King of kings. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes*, iii. 16, 17. iv. 1—3. *Ps.* lxxvi. 10. *Is.* x. 5—19. *Hab.* i. 12—17, v. 12.)

V. 9—12. The productions of the earth are intended for all men, and, in some degree, enjoyed by them: and the king depends as much on them as his poorest subject, and must perish if they were withheld; so that agriculture should above all things be encouraged. Thus our natural wants may be supplied and satisfied; but covetousness is an insatiable lust. If a man have ever so much, he grasps after more; or if he should at length give over his pursuit, he finds himself no more satisfied and happy than he was. Unless he be in a measure like the miser above described, (*Note*, iv 7, 8,) his family, servants, and dependents are increased in proportion to his estate: and he has no other advantage, except that he can look over all of it, and say, 'This is mine!' 'But this very thing, if he be covetous, 'is his torment, that he beholds so many mouths which

'eat at his cost.' *Bp. Patrick*.—Yet at last the poor labourer sleeps more soundly, whether he have a plentiful or a scanty meal, than the rich man can do; whose cares, fears, suspicions, intemperance, or want of exercise, often spoil his rest, and render his nights as uneasy as his days are insipid. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 1 *Kings* iv. 7—19. 22, 23. 1 *Chr.* xxvii. 25—31. 2 *Chr.* xxvi. 10. *Neh.* v. 14—18. *Prov.* xxvii. 23—27. xxx. 15, 16. *Is.* lv. 1—3. *Hab.* ii. 5—8, v. 5. *Matt.* v. 6.)

V. 13—17. It might also be observed in every part of the world, that men bestowed great pains to hoard up riches to their own hurt. Thus men's wealth often invites robbers, who alarm or perhaps murder them: or it exposes them to malicious prosecutions. Thus many have been excepted from acts of indemnity, merely because the prevailing party desired to seize their large possessions. And, in various ways, riches are often torn from a man with as much anguish, as they were gotten with labour and care: or his children waste them by their extravagance; and he has the vexation to see, that they will be poor notwithstanding all his labour to make them rich. But whether this be the case or not, when a man dies, he can take nothing away with him, and he leaves the world as naked as he came into it: so that he spends his life in labouring for that, which he can no more appropriate than "the wind;" he wears away his days in labour, anxiety, and uneasiness, without any comfort even in his natural enjoyments; he ends his days in sorrow and fretfulness; and the sickness of his body is attended by the sense of God's wrath in his soul, and the dread of a future reckoning. What a sore evil is a life thus spent and ended, and such an entrance into the eternal state! (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, viii. 8—10, *Job* i. 20—22. v. 3—5. xxvii. 13—23. *Ps.* xxxix. 6. xlix. 16, 17. *Prov.* xxiii. 4, 5. *Jer.* xvii. 11. *Matt.* vi. 19—21. *Acts* xii. 20—23, v. 23. 1 *Tim.* vi. 6—10.)

V. 18—20. (*Notes*, ii. 24—26. iii 22.) 'Whosoever

* *it is* 'good and comely *for one* to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all [†] the days of his life, which God giveth him: for ^{*} *it is* his portion.

19 Every man also [†] to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath

given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour, ^u *this is* the gift of God.

20 ^{*} For he shall not much remember the days of his life; ^{*} because God answereth *him* in the joy of his heart.

' he be whom God hath blessed, not only with plenty ... of worldly goods, but also with such a noble and generous mind, that he is not their slave, but truly master of them; being able to enjoy them innocently, ... with cheerfulness, and delight in doing good to others: Let him be very thankful to almighty God for so great an happiness. ... He that is thus highly favoured of God, will not think life tedious or irksome: but (forgetting all past toils, and taking no care for the future,) spend his time most pleasantly: because God hath given him his very heart's desire, ... in inward tranquillity of mind, or rather joy and gladness of heart.' *Bp. Patrick. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, viii. 14, 15. ix. 7—9. xi. 9, 10. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19.)*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—7.

It is no wonder that our outward possessions and enjoyments should be vain and vexatious; when our depraved hearts so generally render even our religious worship useless to ourselves, and dishonourable to God. (*Note, Matt. xv. 7—9.*) And if this only source of solid comfort be perverted to vanity, how great must be that vanity! Yet alas! not only hypocrites or ostentatious Pharisees provoke God by their vain shew of piety; but we have all cause to be humbled and ashamed on this account. How often do our wandering imaginations; our want of reverence, faith, love, gratitude, and spirituality, and the incursions of pride and vanity, render our attendance on divine ordinances little better, than a mere lip-labour, or "the sacrifice of fools!" This should teach us to prepare diligently for the service of God, and to go with cheerful yet with solemn steps, into his more immediate presence; to be of a teachable spirit, and studious so to learn his will, that we may not *inconsiderately* do evil in his sacred worship; to recollect who and where we sinful creatures are, and who that God is, unto whom we speak: that the filial boldness, with which we come to his throne of grace, may not degenerate into an irreverent familiarity. We should also remember, that we do not confess our sins or our obligations, or make known our requests before the Lord for his information; but in order to bring our minds into a humble, dependent frame, and to render him that honour which belongs to him. We should therefore watch against rashness and presumption: we should think, before we speak to the Lord; that our words may correspond to our desires, and accord with his promises: we should be very watchful against ostentation in publick services, as if, by copiousness and eloquence of words we meant to attract the attention or admiration of men, or thought we should prevail with God. No unmeaning repetitions, that were ever used in formal worship, can be more offensive to God, than such pompous declamations, even in the use of ex-

temporaneous prayer: the confusion of a dream is not more impertinent; the vain babbling of a fool is not more disgusting to judicious and pious minds, than such an affected multiplicity of words in religious worship. A few broken sentences from a humble heart, spoken in reverence, and with pious affections, while the speaker is ashamed of his own poor performance, are more honourable and acceptable to God, than those affected services which are often greatly admired by men, but in reality are a compound of arrogance, ignorance, and hypocrisy. Our words should then be few, except as the heart is fraught with large and manifold desires, which struggle for utterance, and which no words can fully express. (*Note, Rom. viii. 24—27.*) We have also great cause to guard against rashness in religious vows: and, in those things which are not previously our bounden duty, we should never vow without much consideration, counsel, and prayer: and we should be satisfied that the thing engaged for is lawful, in our own power, no injury to others, and fit for us to perform; however circumstances may vary. Otherwise we shall be tempted to delays and evasions, which will manifest our own folly, and provoke the Lord to anger; we shall fall into temptations and snares; and when we should be performing our vows, we shall be seeking excuses, before God or man, or in our own consciences, why we should violate them. But, however this may escape human observation, the Lord will not be trifled with: and manifold disappointments and losses in every undertaking may at length make us sensible, that it would have been better for us to pay what we vowed. Let us then remember, that we must give an account of every unprofitable word at the day of judgment; and that, when we give an unbounded licence to our tongues, we might as well expect a multitude of dreams without any incoherency, as that our discourse should be without wickedness and mischief: and especially let us seek to have our hearts possessed with the fear of God, and delivered both from the fear of man, and from desire of his applause.

V. 8—20.

In this present world we must expect to behold, and perhaps to suffer, the oppression of the wicked, and their violence and perversion of law and equity. But the Lord will carry his people through their troubles, and execute vengeance on their adversaries. "For he that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there be higher than they." Let us then pity and help the oppressed, as we have power; but neither envy nor fear successful oppressors: nay, we should pity and pray for them also, as long as there are any hopes of their "escaping the damnation of hell." The rich and great, indeed, are apt to think themselves entitled to every thing, and independent of every one: yet they are not only equally dependent on the Lord

CHAP. VI.

The vanity of riches, without power to enjoy them ; and of large families and long life, 1—6. The little advantage that a wise man has above a fool, or one man above another, 7, 8. The vanity of restless desires ; the frailty of man ; and the emptiness and uncertainty of all his enjoyments, 9—12

THERE is ^aan evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men:

for daily bread, with the poorest beggar ; but they are more dependent on the labour of the plowman, than he is on their wealth. The goodness of Providence is more equally distributed, than appears to a superficial observer. The most plentiful productions of the earth are in reality most valuable : the king needs them, and the poor share them ; and these relish their mean morsel, better than he does his luxuries. Thus far the profit of the field is satisfying, as the proper provision for our bodies : but no riches or abundance can supply the wants, or satisfy the desires, of our souls ; the attempt must be for ever vain and vexatious : nay, the increase of riches increases cumber and care more than enjoyment ; except a man's mind can be filled by his eyes poring upon his securities, surveying his acres, or viewing his hoarded gold. And it is evident in fact, that the poor labourer sleeps sweetly without fear or disturbance, whilst "the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep." For the more men covet and idolize wealth, the greater anxiety must they feel, when they consider its uncertainty. The riches, which have been gathered and hoarded by the toil and penury of many years, are often swept away by some unforeseen calamity : or a covetous man, by grasping at some still larger advantage, loses all in some ruinous project : nay, while his riches perish by such evil travail, he often loses his life in attempting to preserve them, or breaks his heart for very vexation at his disappointment ; or his children spend all, and become as poor, as if he had neither laboured nor saved. And whether the rich man do, or do not, survive his wealth ; a coffin, a shroud, and a grave, all given him at the option of the survivors, will shortly be his whole inventory ; and in other respects, as he came, so shall he go, except that he must give an account for all his conduct at the tribunal of God. What a sore evil then is this, for a rational creature to spend his life in incessant toil, care, and uneasiness ; and to live in dejection and fretfulness all his life ; and then to end his days in "sorrow and wrath," as well as with sickness and dying pains ! "Having therefore food and raiment, let us be therewith content : " and let us cheerfully use what God gives us, as the fruit of our labour, for the ends for which he bestows it. If he pleases that we should be poor, let us be patient and satisfied ; we may be safer and happier in that situation than if we were richer : and if God gives a man riches, let him remember to receive them from his hand, and to use them to his glory, and to rejoice in doing the duties of his station. It is a singular mercy, when God gives a man wealth, and enables him to use it in a becoming and useful manner ; taking his portion with moderation and thankful-

2 A ^b man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, ^cso that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth ; yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, ^dbut a stranger eateth it : this is ^evanity, and it is an evil disease.

3 If ^fa man beget an hundred children, and live many years, ^gso that the days of his years be many, and his soul

2 Chr. xi. 21. Esth. v. 11. Ps. cxxvii. 4, 5. Prov. xvii. 6. xlvii. 9.

v. 19. 1 Kings iii. 13. 1 Chr. xxix. 25. 28. 2 Chr. i. 11. Dan. v. 18. ii. 4—10. Deut. viii. 7—10. Judg. xviii. 10. Job xxi. 9—15. Ps. xvii. 14. lxxiii. 7. Luke xii. 19, 20. iv. 8. Deut. xxviii. 33, 43. Ps. xxxix. 6. Lam. v. 2. Hos. vii. 9. e iv. 4. 8. v. 16. f Gen. xxxiii. 5. 1 Sam. ii. 20, 21. 2 Kings x. 1. 1 Chr. xxviii. 5. g v. 17—19. Gen.

ness ; avoiding avarice and extravagance, and doing good according to his ability. This wisdom comes from above ; those who desire it must ask it of God, and such as have it will praise him for it. And if God answer a man's prayers and expectations in those better things, which are, and ought to be, "the joy of his heart ;" whether he have much or little, he will not make great account of the shortness and vanity, or of the pleasures or pains, of this life ; or perplex himself about the past, or the future : seeing his heart and treasure are out of the reach of the changes of this lower world, in a "kingdom which cannot be moved." (Notes, 2 Cor. iv. 13—18, v. 18. Col. iii. 1—4. Heb. xii. 26—29, v. 28.)

NOTES

CHAP. VI. V. 1. The former part of this chapter is a continuation of the subject, with which the preceding chapter concludes ; namely, the vanity of riches, without a heart or power to make a proper use of them ; which was then, and is still, a very "common evil among men." (Notes, v. 13—20.)

V. 2. 'He sheweth that it is the plague of God, when 'the rich man hath not a liberal heart to use his riches.'—The expressions by which the rich man's prosperity is described, are very emphatical. 'To those two words, '*riches* and *wealth*, (v. 19,) ... he here adds a third, ... viz. '*glory* ; which is more comprehensive than the other, including all those goodly things, which may do a man credit, and raise him to a splendid condition in this world. ... (Gen. xxxi. 1.) ... It denotes any thing that hath *weight* 'in it, and makes a man to be valued. ... Yet so great is 'his ingratitude to God, and his uncharitableness to men ; 'that for these and other sins, God denies him the power 'to enjoy these gifts of his bounty.' Bp. Patrick.—The passage indeed may be explained of sickness and bodily infirmities, by means of which a man is deprived of all comfort from his wealth and dignity ; and his attendants and physicians reap more advantage from his estate than he does. Yet it rather seems to refer to the miser's penuriousness, and to the suspicions and distastes which he imbibes, respecting his children and relations ; through which he attaches himself to strangers, who devour his substance, either during his life or after his death, to the injury of his children and family. This is a diseased state of the mind, and renders a man very miserable. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, ii. 18—23. iv. 7, 8. Esth. viii. 1, 2. Ps. xxxix. 6. Pro xiii. 22. Dan. v. 25—28, v. 28.)

V. 3—5. The most flourishing family, and the longest life with increasing prosperity, cannot make him happy,

h 2 Kings ix. 35. be not filled with good, ^h and also *that*
 Esth. vii. 10. ix. he have no burial; I say, ⁱ *that* an un-
 14, 15. Is. xiv. timely birth is better than he.
 19, 20. Jer. xxii. 19. xxxvi. 30.

i iv. 3. Job iii. 16. 4 For he cometh in with vanity,
 Ps. lvi. 8. Matt. and departeth in darkness, and ^k his
 xxvi. 24. name shall be covered with darkness.
 k Ps. cix. 13.

l Job iii. 10—13. 5 Moreover he hath not seen the
 xiv. 1. Ps. xc. 7—9. sun, nor known *any thing*: ^l this hath
 m Gen. v. 5, 23, more rest than the other.
 24, 27. Is. lxxv. 22.

n 3. Job vii. 7. Ps. 6 Yea, ^m though he live a thousand
 iv. 6, 7. xxxiv. years twice *told*, ^a yet hath he seen no
 12. Is. lxxv. 20. good: ^o do not all go to one place?
 Jer. xvii. 6.

o iii. 20. xii. 7. 7 All ^p the labour of man is for his
 Job i. 21. xxx years twice *told*, ^a yet hath he seen no
 23. Heb. ix. 27. good: ^o do not all go to one place?
 p Gen. iii. 17—19. Prov. xvi. 26.
 Matt. vi. 25. John vi. 27.
 1 Tim. vi. 6—8.

“whose soul is not filled with good;” “if he can never have enough: as we see often times that the covetous man either falleth into crimes that deserve death, or is murdered, or drowned, or hangeth himself, or such like, and so lacketh the honour of burial.”—Nay, if a man have no heart to use his abundance, and thus lives uncomfortably; and if he be treated with disrespect at his death, and not buried decently according to his rank, either through the avarice of his heirs, or their contempt of his character; he may justly be deemed more unhappy and dishonoured, than even an untimely birth; which seems indeed to come into the world in vain, and leaves it in obscurity and disgrace, and has no name to be remembered on earth; which has not seen the sun, or enjoyed any pleasure, or known any thing: yet has this embryo more rest than the character above mentioned. It had rest in the womb, and now rests in the grave; its pain was transient, its unhappiness a mere negation of pleasure; and it lived not to contract guilt. Whereas the other had little pleasure in life, and endured much vexation, contracted much guilt, and departed with disgrace to give an account of it at God’s tribunal. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. xlvii. 9. 2 Kings ix. 30—37. x. 1—10. 1 Chr. xxix. 26—28. Esth. v. 11—13. vii. 10. ix. 6—10. Job iii. 11—19. Jer. xxii. 13—19.*)

V. 6. Should the joyless, useless, and vexatious life of such a man be lengthened out, to above twice the age of Methuselah, it would only prolong his miseries and accumulate guilt; and he must go down at last to the dust, like the child that died in the womb. (*Marg. Ref.—Note, iii. 18—21, v. 20.—P. O. Gen. v.—Notes, Job vii. 7—11. Ps. iv. 6—8. Is. lxxv. 20. Rom. ii. 4—6.*)—The grave is exclusively meant: for in the eternal world there are distinct places for the righteous and the wicked; as Solomon evidently believed, or he would not have said, that “the righteous hath hope in his death.” (*Note, Prov. xiv. 32.*)

V. 7, 8. Though the labour of man, as to this present world, is chiefly bestowed about the supply of his bodily wants, and the satisfaction of his animal desires; yet the very appetite for food cannot be durably satisfied, but still craves more and more with each returning day; whilst the relish of it continually grows more languid: much less can the capacities and wants of the soul (7, *marg.*) be thus filled with suitable and satisfying good. (*Note, i. 2.*) In this respect, the most learned, ingenious, or sagacious man has

mouth, and yet the ^{*} appetite is not filled. ^{*} Heb. soul. 3. v. 10. Luke xii. 12.

8 For ^q what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath ^r the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living? q ii. 14—16. v. 11. r Gen. xvii. 1. Ps. ci. 2. cxvi. 9. Prov. xix. 1. Luke i. 6. 1 Tim. vi. 17.

9 ^s Better is the sight of the eyes than the ^t wandering of the desire: ^t this is also vanity and vexation of spirit. s ii. 24. iii. 12, 13. v. 18. t Heb. walking of the soul. Job xxxi. 7. Prov. xxx. 15, 16. Jer. ii. 20.

10 That ^u which hath been is named already, ^v and it is known that it is man: ^y neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he. u i. 9—11. iii. 15. v Gen. iii. 9. 17—19. Job xiv. 1—4. Ps. xxxix. 6. lxxxii. 6, 7. ciii. 15.

11 ¶ Seeing there be ^z many things z i. 6—9. 17, 18. ii. 3—11. iii. 19. iv. 1—4. 8, 16. v. 7. Hos. xii. 1.

no advantage above the very idiot; who by one means or other gets food, and relishes it as well as the other. Nay, the poor man, who knows how to suit himself to his station, and to act prudently while he continues among the living, has as much comfort as the richest; and in what then is he under any real disadvantage?—“What hath the poor that knoweth to walk before the living?” “Even the same as the rich: namely, a supply of food, and other necessities, to satisfy his natural wants and appetites, which is all that the rich can have, notwithstanding their abundance.” (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Gen. iii. 17—19. xv. 1. Prov. xvi. 26. xix. 1. Luke xii. 15—21, vv. 17—19. 1 Tim. vi. 6—10, vv. 6—8.*)

V. 9. “The sight of the eyes” seems to mean *present enjoyment*; for it is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the light. This is preferable to the restless desires, imaginations, and schemes, which engross men’s minds, spoil their present comfort, and create them abundance of vexation.—“To be content with that which God hath given, is better than to follow the desires which can never be satisfied. ... It is far better for a man to enjoy the present good, which is before his eyes, than to disquiet and rack his thoughts, with an insatiable desire of what he hath not, and perhaps cannot have.” *Bp. Hall.* (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, iii. 12—15. v. 18—20. Job xxxi. 5—8, v. 7. Prov. xxx. 15, 16.*)

V. 10. The whole of what *man* can obtain of wisdom, power, renown, wealth, or prosperity, had already been declared: but the word *man*, or *Adam*, implies his condition in his best estate; as taken from the dust of the earth and returning to it again; and condemned to spend his days and eat his bread in sorrow, and in the sweat of his brow, till that sentence be executed. (*Note, Gen. ii. 7. iii. 17—19. v. 1, 2.*) And it is in vain to contend with the almighty Judge, who has passed this sentence upon him, or to endeavour to get it reversed.—“Although a man grow famous, yet it is known that he is but a man: and he cannot contend with that which is stronger than himself.” *Melancthon*, quoted by *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, i. 4—11. iii. 12—15. Job xiv. 1—6. xxxiii. 12, 13. Ps. xxxix. 5, 6. lxxxii. 6, 7. xc. 3—10. ciii. 15—18. Is. xlv. 9, 10. Rom. v. 12—19. ix. 19—23.*)

V. 11, 12. Seeing the many things, which man pursues on earth, only form an increase of vanities; what is he the better for all his worldly devices and acquisitions? Who indeed can so much as tell what is good for man, “all the

that increase vanity, what is man the better?

^a in. 8. xii. 13. Ps. iv. 6. xvi. 5. xvii. 15. Lam. iii. 24—27. Mic. vi. 8.
^{* Heb. the number of the days of the life of his vanity. Ps. xc. 10—12.}
^b viii. 13. ix. 6. 1 Chr. xxix. 15. Job viii. 9. xiv. 2. Ps. xxxix. 5, 6. lxxxix. 47. cii. 11. cix. 23. cxliv. 4. Jam. iv. 14.
^c iii. 22. viii. 7. Job xiv. 21.

12 For ^a who knoweth what is good for man in *this* life, all ^a the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? ^c for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?

CHAP. VII.

The benefit of a good name; of death above life; and of sorrow and rebuke above vain mirth, 1—6.

“days of his vain life, which he spendeth as a shadow?” Or who can inform him of what will hereafter befall him, or of what will take place after his death; or what will become of his family?—“Those four things, wherein men place their happiness, ... wisdom, pleasure, honour, and wealth, ... draw so many, and so great ... inconveniences after them; as sufficiently demonstrate, a man is still to seek for the satisfaction of his desires, if he look no further.” *Bp. Patrick. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—See on Note, 10.—Notes, iv. 1—16. viii. 15, 16. ix. 4—6. xii. 11—14, v. 13. Ps. vi. 6—8. xvii. 13—15, v. 15. lxxiii. 23—28. Mic. vi. 6—8. Jam. iv. 13—17.)*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

There are not only many and sore evils and miseries “under the sun,” but they are “common among men;” as every careful observer of mankind must know. For it is seen often, that Providence confers on a man a confluence of earthly possessions; so that he wants nothing for outward enjoyment, and has no desire after more substantial good: and yet the Lord leaves him so to his avarice, or his malignant dispositions, that he has no heart to make a comfortable use of them; and, by one means or other, they all come into the hands of strangers; and “this is vanity and a sore disease.” Nay, put the case, that any one have a numerous family, and a good constitution, and live in health and affluence to old age: yet if his soul be not enriched with wisdom and grace, and so he lives unbeloved, and dies unlamented and despised; it were wiser to envy the felicity of a still-born child, than that of such a person, who has only staid on earth to contract guilt and experience vexation. Sooner or later, the rich and the poor, the wise and the foolish, must be laid in the grave: and it is of small consequence whether this be in infancy, or after double the years of the oldest man who ever lived; seeing the cares of life so much overbalance its pleasures; except as we live to prepare for heaven, to glorify God, and to do good. For, setting these things aside, how vain are all man’s labours! how empty are all his enjoyments! They are merely a round of trifling pursuits and unsatisfying gratifications, the pleasure of which is more than counterbalanced by the uneasy cravings of the appetite, which are continually returning. And what in this view can the wise do toward acquiring happiness, above the fool; or the rich, above the poor and industrious? Nay, the poorest man, who knows how to walk before the living God, is far happier here than the most prosperous ungodly man. Yet the pleasures of present enjoyments is far better, than the empty reveries of visionary good, on

Observations concerning oppression, bribery, pride, anger, and discontent, 7—10. The advantages of wisdom; of accommodating to circumstances; and of avoiding extremes, and occasions of offence, 11—22. The dangers to the wisest arising from bad women, with Solomon’s own experience in that respect, 23—28. Man was created upright, but ruined by his own devices, 29

A GOOD ^a name is better than ^b precious ointment; and ^c the day of death than the day of one’s birth.

^a Prov. xxiii. 1. Is. lvi. 5. Luke x. 20. Heb. xi. 2. 39.
^b x. 1. Ps. cxxxiii. 2. Prov. xxvii. 9. Cant. i. 3. iv. 10. John xii. 3.
^c iv. 2. Job iii. 17. Is. lvii. 1. 2. 2 Cor. v. 1. 8. Phil. i. 21—23. Rev. xiv. 13.

which many feed as upon the wind; and start out of these waking dreams and find themselves empty, or rather filled with vexation at their disappointment, and tortured with the gnawing of their exorbitant and roving desires. (*Note, Is. xxix. 7, 8.*) But indeed every endeavour of sinful, mortal man, to find rest and happiness in earthly things, is a vain struggle against the sentence passed upon him for his rebellion, or rather against the effects of his apostasy. And it is equally vain, and still more impious, to cavil at the justice of the sentence, and to “contend with Him that is mightier than he.”—If the earth, with all its inventions and possessions, be only an accumulated vanity; “what is man the better” for all his speculations and devices? For where is he, who can shew unto man any substantial good, in created things, with which he may solace his mind, while he passes as a shadow through this vain life? Every attempt of this kind would be as futile, as the pretences of fortune-tellers, to inform us of those future events which God has kept secret from all living; and should be treated as a presumption of the same nature. But in returning to God, trusting in his mercy through Jesus Christ, submitting to his will, and preparing for death, by a conscientious obedience to his commands, we may “find rest to our souls,” and enjoy sweet earnestness of heavenly consolations: and soon shall we glide through this vexatious world, and find ourselves in that happy place, where “is fulness of joy, and pleasures at God’s right hand for evermore.”

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1. Solomon ‘now seems to proceed to prescribe the best remedies that can be found, against that vanity to which we are subject; by setting down many wise precepts for our direction and conduct, support and comfort, in a troublesome world. ... And if we examine the following particulars, we shall find they are comprehended in this general direction; *the change of our mind, thoughts, and opinions.* ... The doctrines that begin this chapter, are quite opposite to the common opinions of the world: That “a good name is to be preferred to precious ointment;” and the day of one’s death before one’s birth-day: mourning before feasting; sadness before laughter; rebukes before commendations; the end of a thing before the beginning of it; a patient suffering spirit, before a stout haughty mind; wisdom before riches, &c. These, and such like, are the maxims of true wisdom and piety, which must be learnt, in order to the settlement of our minds in peace and tranquillity, notwithstanding the vanity that is in all things.’ *Bp. Pa-*

^d Gen. xlviii. 1, &c. xlix. 2, &c. 1. 15—17. Job i. 4, 5. Is. v. 11, 12. xxii. 12—14. Am. vi. 3—6. Matt. v. 4. xiv. 6, &c. 1 Pet. iv. 3, 4.

2 *It is* ^d better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for ^e that is the end of all men; and the ^f living will lay it to his heart.

^e Num. xxii. 10. Deut. xxxii. 29. Rom. vi. 21. 22. Phil. iii. 19. Heb. ix. 2.

3 * Sorrow ^g is better than laughter; for ^h by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.

^f Deut. xxxii. 46. Is. xlvii. 7. Hag. i. 5. marg. Mal. ii. 2.

4 The ⁱ heart of the wise *is* in the house of mourning; but ^k the heart of fools *is* in the house of mirth.

^g Or, Anger.

^h Ps. cxix. 67. 71. cxxvi. 5, 6. Jer. xxxi. 8, 9. 15—20. 1. 4, 5. Dan. ix. 3, &c. x. 2, 3. 19. Zech. xii. 10—14. Luke vi. 21. 25. John xvi. 20—22. 2 Cor. vii. 9—11. Jam. iv. 8—10. ⁱ Rom. v. 3, 4. 2 Cor. iv. 17. Heb. xii. 10, 11. Jam. i. 2—4. ^j Neh. ii. 2—5. Is. liii. 3, 4. Matt. viii. 14—16. Mark v. 38, &c. Luke vii. 12, 13. John xi. 31—35. ^k 1 Sam. xxv. 36. xxx. 16. 2 Sam. xiii. 28. 1 Kings xx. 16. Is. xxi. 4. Jer. li. 39. 57. Dan. v. 1—4. 30. Hos. vii. 5. Nah. i. 10. Mark vi. 21, &c.

5 *It is* ^l better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear ^m the song of fools.

6 For ⁿ as the ^o crackling of thorns under a pot, so ^p is the laughter of the fool: this also is vanity.

7 ¶ Surely ^q oppression maketh a wise man mad; and ^r a gift destroyeth the heart.

8 ^s Better *is* the end of a thing than the beginning thereof; and ^t the patient in spirit *is* better than the proud in spirit.

^l Pet. i. 13. ^m Prov. xiii. 10. xiv. 29. xv. 18. xvi. 32. xxviii. 25. Luke xxi. 19. Rom. ii. 7, 8. Heb. x. 36. Jam. v. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 20, 21. v. 5, 6.

Ps. cxli. 5. Prov. ix. 8. xiii. 13. xv. 31, 32. xvii. 40. xxvii. 6. Rev. iii. 19. ⁿ Ps. lxix. 12. ^o ii. 2. Ps. lviii. 9. cxviii. 12. Is. lxxv. 13—15. Am. viii. 10. Luke vi. 25. xvi. 25. 2 Pet. ii. 13—17. Jude 12, 13. ^p Heb. sound. ^q Prov. xxix. 9. ^r Deut. xxviii. 33, 34. 65. ^s Ex. xxiii. 8. Deut. xvi. 19. 1 Sam. viii. 3. xii. 3. Prov. xvii. 23. Is. i. 23. xxxiii. 15. ^t Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. Is. x. 24, 25. 28—34. Luke xvi. 25. Jam. v. 11.

trick.—The Beatitudes, with which our Lord began his sermon on the mount, are a collection of paradoxes, not wholly dissimilar from those of Solomon, but more complete and comprehensive; on the due understanding and reception of which, the Christian's wisdom, comfort, and usefulness peculiarly depend. (*Notes*, and *P. O. Matt.* v. 1—12.)—A reputation for piety and integrity will do far more to render a man agreeable, useful, and comfortable, than the most costly perfumes. (*Marg. Ref.* a, b.—*Notes*, x. 1. *Prov.* xxii. 1. *Is.* lvi. 3—7, v. 5. *Luke* x. 17—20, v. 20. *Heb.* xi. 1, 2. 39, 40. *Rev.* ii. 17. iii. 12, 13, v. 12.)—And to a wise and godly man, the day, when he leaves this vain world, is happier than that on which he came into it: for the one was the beginning of his sorrows and conflicts; and the other terminates them, and begins his endless felicity. (*Marg. Ref.* c.—*Notes*, 2—6. *Is.* lvii. 1, 2. *2 Cor.* v. 1—8. *Phil.* i. 21—26. *2 Tim.* iv. 6—8. *Rev.* xiv. 12, 13, v. 13.)

V. 2—6. The day of death is sometimes more useful to a man's survivors, than any day of his life was; as it is more profitable to go to those houses where there is mourning for the dead, than to those where feasting and mirth prevail: for as death is the end of all men, every one is concerned to consider and prepare for it, and such scenes are calculated to give a serious turn to the mind. (*Marg. Ref.* d—f.—*Note*, *Gen.* xlviii. 1. *P. O.* 1—8. *Notes*, *Num.* xxiii. 10. *Deut.* xxxii. 29.) So that "sorrow" may be preferred to "laughter:" and the drooping countenance, which excites thoughtfulness, though occasioned by sharp trials, and attended by painful conflicts, is a proper medicine for the diseases of the human heart, and often productive of a happy change. It is therefore a mark of wisdom for a man to go, willingly and by deliberate choice, to "the house of mourning," at the call of duty, and often to reflect on death and another world; and it is a proof of folly, when nothing is delighted in but mirth and levity. Even sharp rebukes, when wisely given, are far better for the soul than the diversions of ungodly men: for their laughter is a mere transient noise and bustle, which soon expires, like the crackling of thorns in the fire, and produces no abiding pleasure or good, but is indeed a mere vanity. (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.* g—o.—*Notes*, ii. 1, 2. *Ps.* cxix. 67. 71. cxxvi. 5, 6. *Prov.* xiv. 13. *Dan.* v. 1—4. *Rom.* v. 3—5. *2 Cor.* iv. 13—18, v. 17. *Jam.* i. 2—5. *1 Pet.* i. 6, 7. iv. 3—5.)

V. 7. 'A man that is esteemed wise, when he falleth to 'oppression, becometh like a beast.'—And the latter clause may be considered as shewing what leads a man, in other respects wise, to oppress his neighbours: namely, a gift or bribe, which powerfully corrupts the heart. Yet the former clause is generally understood of the effect produced on the oppressed. It is the more necessary to settle the judgment on right principles; because various events, which must be expected, tend to disturb the mind, and raise tempests in the soul. Thus violent oppression may drive even a man, wise in other respects, to act in the most outrageous manner, as if bereft of understanding. Many have been thus excited to insurrections, and have in consequence been slain in war, or executed as rebels: and no human wisdom is sufficient, at all times, to preserve a man in such trying circumstances. Nay, even pious men have, for a time, been thus betrayed into very unwarrantable measures. (*Notes*, *Deut.* xxviii. 32. 34. 65—67.) On the other hand, the offer of a large gift or bribe, unless the heart be established by grace on sound principles, may produce the most fatal effects on those, who before seemed well disposed. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, *Ex.* xxiii. 6—9, v. 8. *Deut.* xvi. 18, 19. See on *Note*, *Prov.* xvii. 8.)

V. 8. 'He noteth their lightness which enterprize a 'thing, and suddenly leave it off again.'—'The conclusion of all things is to be expected, before we judge 'of them: for whilst they are growing and coming on, 'they appear with a quite different face, from what they 'have when they are gone.' *Bp. Patrick.*—This may be understood either of good undertakings, which at first appear unpromising, but in the event succeed beyond expectation; or of trials, which are grievous for the time, but end well. (*Marg. Ref.* r.—*Notes*, *Ps.* cxxvi. 5, 6. *Is.* x. 24—26. *Lam.* iii. 26—30, v. 26. *Luke* xvi. 24—26. xviii. 1—8. *Jam.* v. 9—11.)—"And better is the long in "spirit, than the high in spirit."—"A meek and patient 'spirited man, that can quietly wait for the end and event 'of things, is better than he, that is proud and impetuous, 'who violently rushes on all enterprizes, and will needs 'force his own terms.' *Bp. Hall.* The hastiness of giving up good designs, because of difficulties, as opposed to a steady, courageous perseverance, seems also especially intended. (*Marg. Ref.* s.—*Notes*, 9. *Prov.* xiii. 10. xiv. 29. xv. 17, 18. xvi. 32. *Luke* xxi. 12—19, v. 19. *Rom.* viii. 24—27, vv. 24, 25. *2 Thes.* iii. 1—5, v. 5.)

1 Sam. xxv. 21, 22. 2 Sam. xix. 48. Esth. iii. 5. 6. Prov. xiv. 17. xvi. 32. Jon. iv. 9. Eph. iv. 26. 27. Jam. i. 19. u Gen. iv. 5, 6, 8. xxxiv. 7, 8, 25, 26, 30, 31. 2 Sam. xiii. 22, 28, 32. Prov. xxvi. 23—26. Mark vi. 19, 24. x Judg. vi. 13. Jer. xlv. 17—19. * Heb. out of wisdom. Gen. vi. 11, 12. Ps. xiv. 2, 3. Is. l. 1. y Rom. i. 22—32. iii. 9—19. † Or, as good as an inheritance, yea, better too. ix. 15—18. 1 Kings iii. 6—9. Luke xvi. 8, 9. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19. y xi. 7. z Job i. 10. xxii. 21—25. Prov. ii. 7, 11. xiv. 20. xviii. 10, 11. Is. xxxiii. 6.

9 Be not 'hasty in thy spirit to be angry; for 'anger resteth in the bosom of fools.

10 Say not thou, *What is *the cause* that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire 'wisely concerning this.

11 ¶ Wisdom is 'good with an inheritance: and *by it there is profit* to them that see the sun.

12 For 'wisdom is 'a defence, and money is a defence: but 'the excellency of knowledge is, *that* wisdom giveth life to them that have it.

13 ^b Consider the work of God: for ^c who can make *that* straight, which he hath made crooked?

† Heb. a shadow. Judg. ix. 15. Ps. lvii. 1. Is. xxx. 2. xxxii. 2. a Deut. xxx. 19, 20. xxxii. 47. Prov. iii. 18. ix. 11. xi. 4. John xii. 50. xviii. 3. Phil. iii. 8. b Job xxxvii. 14. Ps. viii. 3. cviii. 43. Is. v. 12. c i. 15. Job ix. 12. xi. 10. xii. 14. xxxiv. 29. Is. xiv. 27. xliii. 13. xlv. 10, 11. Dan. iv. 35. Rom. ix. 15, 19. Eph. i. 11.

V. 9. 'Anger is an enemy to counsel and advice, and 'is indeed the property of fools; who out of weakness of 'mind ... are familiarly transported with it upon the slight-est causes; and not easily appeased again, as wise men 'are when they chance to be incensed.' *Bp. Patrick*.—The same word is sometimes rendered *anger*, at others *grief*: and the excess of grief, as fixing its residence in the heart, and unfitting a man for every great and good undertaking, should be guarded against, as well as anger; and with the more care, as it is more plausible and creditable than anger and revenge. A few say, 'I do well to indulge anger;' but many say, 'I do well to indulge grief:' and indeed those are often censured, who will not suffer it to settle in their bosoms. (*Marg. Ref. t, u.*—Gen. iv. 6—8. xlix. 5—7. 1 Sam. xxv. 13, 32, 33. 2 Sam. xiii. 22—29. Esth. iii. 3—6. Prov. xiv. 17. Jon. iv. 5—11. 1 Thes. iv. 13—17.)

V. 10. We know the evil of former times only by report, but we *feel* present inconveniences and distresses: and therefore are prone to think former times were better to live in than the present. But though corrupt nature has shewn its malignity in various ways, and has been counteracted by the interposition of God in different degrees, and calamities have been dispensed in greater or less proportion; yet the earth has always been replete with iniquity and misery: and it is no proof of wisdom to enquire after the reason of that, which probably exists only in men's distempered imaginations.—The dotage of some speculators concerning a golden age, and the happiness of men in the simple state of nature, are specimens of this unwise method of speaking concerning former times: as is the proneness of almost all old men to speak with decided preference on the state of things when they were young. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.*)

V. 11, 12. "Wisdom is good with an inheritance," as it enables a man to do the more good with it, during his continuance on earth: or "wisdom is *as good as an inheritance*, and more profitable to them that see the sun." Money may indeed purchase exemptions from many trials and dangers; but true wisdom and knowledge alone can

14 In 'the day of prosperity be joyful, 'but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath 'set the one over against the other, 'to the end that man should find nothing after him.

15 All *things* 'have I seen in the days of my vanity: 'there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and 'there is a wicked man that prolongeth *his life* in his wickedness.

16 Be 'not righteous over-much; 'neither make thyself over-wise: why shouldst thou 'destroy thyself?

17 Be 'not over-much wicked, neither be thou foolish: 'why shouldst thou die 'before thy time.

i viii. 12, 13. Job xxi. 7—15. Ps. lxxiii. 3—13. Jer. xii. 1, 2. k Matt. vi. 1—7. ix. 14. xv. 2, &c. xxiii. 5, 23, 24, 29. Luke xviii. 12. Phil. iii. 6. 1 Tim. iv. 3. l Gen. iii. 6. Job xi. 12. xxviii. 28. Prov. xxiii. 4. Rom. xi. 25. xii. 3. 1 Cor. iii. 18, 20. Col. ii. 18, 23. Jam. iii. 13—17. † Heb. be desolate. Matt. xxiii. 38. Rev. xviii. 19. m Jer. ii. 33, 34. Ez. viii. 17. xvi. 20. Jam. i. 21. n Gen. xxxviii. 7—10. 1 Sam. xxv. 38. Job xv. 32, 33. Ps. lv. 23. Prov. x. 27. Acts v. 5, 10. xii. 23. * Heb. not in thy time.

deliver a man from destruction, and make him acquainted with the way of life and salvation. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.*—Notes, ix. 13—18. Prov. x. 15. xi. 4. xviii. 10, 11. Phil. iii. 8—11. 2 Tim. iii. 14—17, v. 15.)

V. 13, 14. Man's wisdom consists in observing God's unalterable appointments, and in suiting himself to them. (*Marg. Ref. b, c.*—Notes, i. 12—18, v. 15. Job xi. 7—12, v. 10. xxxiv. 20—30, v. 29. Is. xlii. 13—17, v. 16. Dan. iv. 34—37.) In prosperity he should be joyful, and thankful, and do good: in adversity he should consider, that the righteous Lord is the *Author* of afflictions, whoever be the instrument, and that sin is the *cause* of sufferings: he should examine what sins he has committed, which have brought the correction upon him: and how he may obtain support under them, benefit by them, and deliverance from them. He should consider the vanity of the world, and seek a better portion; the evil of sin, and exercise repentance; and the approach of death, and prepare for it. For indeed God has thus intermingled prosperity and adversity in the lot of man on earth, that he might still feel his dependence on him, and seek all his happiness from him; without either being lifted up in prosperity, or sinking into despair in adversity. (*Marg. Ref. d, e, f.*—Notes, ii. 24—26. iii. 1—11. Deut. viii. 3. Mic. vi. 9. Jam. v. 13.)

V. 15. By the "days of his vanity," Solomon may either mean his life in this vain world, or that part of it when he was seeking happiness *in vanity*. He had sometimes observed a very upright, conscientious man ruined, as to his temporal interests, and even bereft of his life, on account of his righteousness; meaning that cruel tyrants put the godly to death, and let the wicked go free: and also a wicked man prolonging his life in his wickedness. Hence he seems to infer, that this vain world could not be all, but that a future state of retributions might be expected. (*Marg. Ref. g, h, i.*—Notes, iii. 16, 17. viii. 11—15. ix. 1—3. Job ix. 22—24. xxi. 7—16. Ps. lxxiii. 1—14. Jer. xxii. 1, 2. Rom. ii. 4—6.)

V. 16, 17. Some think that the former of these verses

18 *It is* ° good that thou shouldest take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: ° for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.

19 Wisdom ° strengtheneth the wise, more than ten mighty *men* which are in the city.

20 For ° *there is* not a just man upon earth, that ° doeth good, and sinneth not.

21 Also ° take no heed ° unto all

words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee:

22 For oftentimes ° also thine own heart knoweth, that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.

23 ¶ All this have I proved by wisdom: ° I said, I will be wise; but it was far from me.

24 That ° which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?

25 † I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom,

contains the words of an ungodly man; who, hearing that sometimes a righteous man is ruined by his righteousness, gravely exhorts men not to be too diligent, exact, and scrupulous, about either the practice or study of religion; as it would probably be prejudicial to their interests, and eventually ruin them. And the latter verse they suppose to be Solomon's answer to the objector, in which he warns him not to be so presumptuous and foolish in his wickedness, lest God should be provoked to cut him off prematurely, and in his sins.—But there are many parts or appearances of religion, which may be carried to a pernicious extreme. A man may be too tenacious of insignificant forms, or human inventions: he may pretend to kinds and degrees of righteousness, which the scriptures do not require, laying much stress on celibacy, fastings, and other austerities: his boldness and zeal may verge towards rashness and rage; his conscientiousness may degenerate into superstition and scrupulousness; his benevolence into indiscretion and indiscriminate profusion; and his candour and good nature into folly: and in affecting to be acquainted with the whole of divine truth, he may become presumptuously curious, and intrude into unrevealed things. Thus many run into extremes, and expose themselves to needless persecution, or to the anger of God.—‘Be not too rigorous in exacting the extremity of justice upon every occasion: neither do thou affect too much semblance and ostentation of more justice than thou hast. Neither do thou arrogate more wisdom to thyself than is in thee.’ *Bp. Hall*.—Some expound the verses of the publick administration of justice, which should neither be too severe nor too lenient: but though *these extremes* may be included among others, yet there is no reason to think they were specially intended.—That the affectation or ostentation of extraordinary righteousness, or an over-doing in outward observances, while more essential matters were proportionably neglected, was intended; and not humble purity and zeal, seems evident from the caution to the reader not to make himself over-wise; that is, “Be not wise in thine own conceit;” or do not intrude into secret things which belong to God. Here affectation or excess, in some particulars, must be meant; and so doubtless it is in the other clause. (*Marg. Ref. k, l.—Notes, Gen. iii. 6. Job xxviii. 23—28, v. 28. Matt. vi. 1—4. xv. 1, 2. xxiii. 23, 24. Col. ii. 20—23.*)—It is, however, certain that we cannot love and serve God too much, or be over-righteous in any thing for which we can produce the warrant of his word: and the other extreme, of presumptuous and over-

much wickedness, is far more common, and ruinous to far greater numbers. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. m, n.—Notes, Gen. xxxviii. 7—10. 2 Sam. xvii. 23. xviii. 9—14. Ps. lv. 23. Matt. xxvii. 3—5.*)

V. 18. It is profitable to lay hold and keep hold of both these counsels, and to avoid all extremes; and he who fears God will be preserved from these dangers and snares, or extricated out of them. (*Marg. Ref. o, p.—Notes, viii. 11—13. xii. 11—14. Ps. xxv. 12—14. cxlv. 19, 20. Prov. iv. 24—27.*)

V. 19, 20. The prudent precautions and contrivances of one wise man, may do more towards the preservation of a city, than the power of ten mighty men. Or rather, true wisdom gives a strength and fortitude to the soul, which far surpasses all natural courage, by leading a man to trust in God for protection. And this confidence is warranted, even though there be no righteous person on earth, who never falls into sin, nay, whose good actions are perfectly free from sin; seeing God deals with all who trust in him according to his covenant of mercy and grace in Jesus Christ. (*Marg. Ref. q, r, s.—Notes, ix. 13—18. Job xv. 14—16. Ps. cxxx. 3, 4. Prov. xx. 9. xxi. 22. xxiv. 3—6. Is. liii. 4—6, v. 6. lxiv. 6—8, v. 6. Jam. iii. 1, 2. 1 John i. 8—10. iii. 4—6, v. 5.*)

V. 21, 22. ‘The consideration of which frailty of mankind is useful many ways, ... to teach us gentleness towards those who do us ... injuries.’ *Bp. Patrick*. (*Notes, Tit. iii. 1—3.*)—These verses are also a most important counsel, how to avoid the vexation of this vain world. When men are in a passion, or actuated by envy or resentment, they speak very provoking things; and those who notice every expression will be continually embroiled; nay, their very servants will be a perpetual vexation to them. On one occasion or other, they may speak disrespectfully, utter slanders, or wish evil to some one; and this may be overheard and reported, and create much confusion, when perhaps it was only a hasty word, without much meaning. For if a man watches his own heart, when he is vexed and fretful, he will find in numerous instances a propensity to speak such words, or vent such wishes, respecting others, not excepting even his friends and superiors. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. t, u.*)

V. 23—28. These practical matters Solomon had “proved by wisdom;” but he humbly owned, that he had greatly failed of his determined purpose of being wise. Many things he found himself incapable of investigating or comprehending; and in his earnest search into the na-

27. *Marg.* ii. 15. and ^z the reason of things, and to
 ii. 16, 17. ix. 1. ^a know the wickedness of folly, even of
 2. *Jer.* xii. 1, 2. foolishness and madness:

26 And ^b I find more bitter than
 death the woman, whose heart is snares
 and nets, and her hands as bands:
 * whoso pleaseth God shall escape from
 her; but the sinner shall be taken by
 her.

27 Behold, this have I found, ^c saith

ture and reason of things, and to discover the wickedness of men's ignorance, carelessness, and impiety, and of their vain mirth and mad intemperance, he had found himself betrayed into very much folly; especially he had been miserably deluded by unprincipled women, to the unspeakable anguish of his heart. All imaginable stratagems and artifices were employed by them, to ensnare men in wickedness, and all efforts to hold them in bondage. (*Notes*, and *P. O.* 1 *Kings* xi.) Solomon here speaks very contritely of his own misconduct; and doubtless he was delivered out of this snare of Satan. Yet he, and he alone, who habitually aimed to please God, and thus was accepted of him, could expect to escape this danger, into which the careless sinner would fall, probably to rise no more. Again, Solomon observed with surprise, that when he looked over his courtiers, and his subjects, one by one, as far as their conduct fell under his inspection, in order to make out the number of truly pious and honest persons among them; he could find a few men of this stamp, at least one of a thousand: but a woman among all those, (that is, among his thousand wives and concubines,) had he not found; not one who was thoroughly faithful, upright, and pious. We are not hence to infer, that Solomon thought there were fewer good women than men: but that he knew, that he had not gone the right way to find the virtuous woman, when he deviated so widely from the original law of marriage; and, instead of seeking one rational companion, the sole object of his endeared affections, he had collected an immense multitude for magnificence and indulgence. The more valuable part of the sex would not willingly form one in such a group: and if any of them were previously well disposed; the jealousies, party-interests, contests, and artifices, which take place in such situations, would tend exceedingly to corrupt them, and render them all nearly of the same character. Solomon therefore here speaks the language of a penitent, warning others against the sins into which he had been betrayed; and not that of a waspish satirist, lashing indiscriminately one half of the human species. (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.—Notes*, i. 12—18. ii. 3. 12—17. ix. 7—9. *Judg.* xvi. 5—21. *Prov.* ii. 16—19. v. 3—19. vii. 6—23. xviii. 22. xix. 14. xxiii. 27, 28. xxxi. 10—31.)

V. 29. The royal preacher sums up the whole of his observations on the state and conduct of man, in this verdict. God indeed created man upright, and very good; but, Adam having apostatized from him, his posterity have sought out an immense number of "inventions," in order to find happiness in the world, and without God, which have only proved so many variations of impiety and ini-

the Preacher, [†] counting one by one, [†] Or, weighing one thing after another, to find out the reason. to find out the account;

28 Which ^d yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: ^e one man among a thousand have I found; ^f but a woman among all those have I not found.

29 Lo, this only have I found, that ^g God hath made man upright; but ^h they have sought out many inventions.

Rom. i. 21—32. iii. 9—19. Eph. ii. 2, 3. Tit. iii. 3.

quity; so that very few pious persons are to be found any where on earth. A most decisive testimony concerning original sin, and the wretched state of man by nature! (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, *Gen.* i. 26—31. iii. 4—7. v. 1—3. vi. 5. *Is.* liii. 4—6, v. 6. *Jer.* ii. 13. xvii. 9, 10. *Rom.* i. 18—32. iii. 9—18. 2 *Tim.* iii. 1—5.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

That is most valuable which is most useful, and enables a man to do the greatest good: a character, therefore, for probity and discretion is far more desirable, than worldly possessions or pleasures; nay, than the renown of shining talents and splendid performances. But "a name in the book of life" is the only distinction, which will prove finally advantageous. If this be our felicity, and our experience and conduct prove it; we may rejoice in the thoughts of death, as a removal from sorrow and fear, and an entrance upon the full enjoyment of all, which we have here loved and thirsted after. Others may be weary of the sufferings of life, and be driven out of the world, with a vain hope of terminating their anguish: but the established believer alone is willing to live though in pain; and willing to die, that he may go to be with him "whom his soul loveth." He finds it profitable to frequent the house of mourning, as it keeps him serious, and recollected in the thoughts of his latter end: and he perceives and experiences, that the house of feasting tends to render the mind dissipated, and the conscience either unfeeling or uneasy. Nay, he learns to take more solid pleasure, in sympathizing with the afflicted and endeavouring to relieve and comfort them, than in scenes of festivity and vain mirth. To be frequently the spectators of affliction, tends also to abate our pride and love of worldly things, and to endear the eternal salvation of the gospel. Indeed sorrow is more suited than carnal joy to our state in this sinful, suffering world: the Redeemer wept, but it is not recorded that he ever laughed, though he "rejoiced in spirit." A serious mind is the proper soil for wisdom; *consideration* is the beginning of repentance and conversion; and that "sadness of countenance," which attends consideration, is a suitable medicine to cure the diseases of the heart. By despising these maxims, men detect their own character: for "the heart of the wise is in the house of mourning; but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth." He who runs from those scenes, in which men may both do and get good; and hurries to places where every thing tends to dissipate reflection, and to keep him from thinking of death till it comes; is likely to live and die, without wis-

CHAP. VIII.

A commendation of wisdom, 1. The king must be obeyed, from prudence, and for conscience-sake, 2—5. The misery of men for want of foresight, neglect of op-

dom or hope. And though such rebukes, as this of the wise man, sound harsh, and give pain, they are far better than the songs, and musick, and empty laughter, with which so many waste their lives, as if they were sent into the world to play the fool, to die, and perish. For the whole is “like the crackling of thorns under the pot,” a mere shadow of joy, which soon expires, and leaves the soul to darkness and despair. This also is very vanity, and yet the world is full of it!—To support the expenses of dissipated and licentious pleasures, wicked men oppress those, who are far wiser and better than themselves; and not only injure them in temporal things, but tempt them to many sins, for which they will in some measure be answerable. For many have by persecution been induced to renounce the service of God; and even wise and pious men have, for a time, been driven into mad and foolish measures, by the vehemence of temptation to which oppressors exposed them. Considering the sharp trials which may await us, and conscious of our own frailty, we should earnestly pray that “the grace of our Lord may be sufficient for us.” We should avoid all occasions of sin; such as covetousness, which among numerous other evils leads to bribery; and a bribe corrupts the heart, and overpowers the good purposes of those who intend to do justice. Contention also runs a man into innumerable snares, and is far more easily begun, than ended; yet “the end” of it is indeed “better than the beginning.” But we shall have continual need of patience; that we may wait, in the way of faith and obedience, the event of those trials which now distress us, but may hereafter comfort us; and of every good undertaking, which will surely at first have difficulties to encounter; and that we may with quietness bear the injuries of our fellow-creatures, which is far happier, than to be “proud in spirit” and “swift to wrath.” For if we be “hasty in spirit to be angry,” we may next be tempted to harbour revenge; and experience will then surely convince us, that he is very foolish who suffers anger to rest in his heart. We should likewise watch against discontent: the wickedness of the world around us should excite our sorrow, and our endeavours for personal and publick reformation; but we must be careful not to reflect on Providence, or to undervalue our mercies, as if our lot were cast in the most unhappy times. For such complaints originate from ignorance, inconsideration, pride, and impatience. All times and places hitherto have abounded in sin and in trouble: we should therefore seek our rest in God, and he will enable us to live comfortably in any situation.

V. 11—22.

Without true wisdom, the largest estate will little profit the owner, even for the short space, that he will see the “sun in the land of the living;” but with it his riches may be useful to himself and others: and if the wise man have no estate on earth, he has that which is unspeakably better; he has “the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus

opportunities, and the unavoidable stroke of death, 6—8. Men abuse power, and the patience of God, to the increase of wickedness and misery, 9—11. The righteous happy, and the wicked miserable, notwithstanding contrary appearances, 12—15. The unsearchableness of God’s counsels and works, 16, 17.

“Christ,” which will secure him from all evil, and bring him to endless felicity. We ought also to “consider the “work of God,” even in those things, which come on us through men’s wickedness; that we may submit to his wise and righteous appointments, which cannot be altered, and could not possibly be mended. We should expect and prepare for changes: the day of prosperity, while it enables us to rejoice, calls upon us to exercise gratitude, and to do good: the day of adversity calls us to consideration, repentance, and prayer: and the interchanges of joy and sorrow continually instruct us, that God himself is the only unchangeable Good of his people, and that all else is vanity and uncertainty. Even piety will not exempt us from calamities here: we should therefore count our cost; for in our days of vanity here below, the righteous often suffers for his righteousness, and the wicked prospers by his wickedness: if, however, we suffer according to the will of God, we are and shall be happy; but we should be careful not to provoke opposition, by unscriptural rigidity, by fiery zeal, by severe censures, or dogmatical decisions concerning those who differ from us; and we may leave it to the followers of Antichrist, to be zealous for uncommanded austerities and observances. Those who are *thus* righteous over-much, and provoke opposition, do not “suffer “for righteousness’ sake,” but “destroy themselves.” Let us then be zealous and diligent in the substantial parts of true religion, on which the scriptures principally insist; and then we shall be in no danger of exceeding: and when we hear men, with profane solemnity, cautioning others against being too bold and active in the service of God; let us caution them, not to bring themselves into swift destruction by their presumptuous crimes. Alas! how many die before their time, by the hand of the executioner, and by loathsome diseases, through their own over-much wickedness! The path of truth and duty, however, commonly lies in the middle, at a distance from extremes; and it is good to take hold of both these cautions: but if we truly fear God, he will conduct us safely on this perilous way, and bring us forth from every snare, and the power of every enemy. The wisdom which he gives is the strength and support of the soul, as it leads the possessors to make “his name their strong Tower:” and though we are such polluted sinners, and “there is not a just man on earth, “that doeth good, and sinneth not;” yet our God will mercifully accept and preserve those, who trust in him and desire to do his will. If then he so bear with us, we ought to bear with each other: but they, who take fire at every affront, will be always quarrelling and sinning: and the modern point of honour, tenaciously observed, would be the rule of being always mischievous and always miserable. He that has most self-knowledge, and is most watchful over his own heart, in different circumstances, will make most allowance for others; being conscious that he needs it from them. In proportion as men are careful to approve themselves to God, they will be less anxious to obtain

WHO is ^aas the wise *man*? and ^bwho knoweth the interpretation of a thing? ^ca man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, ^dand the ^eboldness of his face shall be changed.

2 ¶ ^eI counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and *that* ^fin regard of the oath of God.

3 Be ^gnot hasty to go out of his

a ii. 13, 14. 1 Cor. ii. 13—16.
b Gen. xl. 8. xli. 15, 16. 33, 39. Job xxxiii. 23. Prov. i. 6. Dan. ii. 23—30. 47. iv. 18, 19. 2 Pet. i. 20.
c Ex. xxxiv. 29, 30. Prov. iv. 8, 9. xvii. 24. xxiv. 5. Matt. xvii. 2. Acts vi. 15.
d Deut. xxviii. 50. Acts iv. 13. 29. Eph. vi. 19.
e Heb. strength. 2 Tim. iv. 17.
f 1 Kings ii. 43.
g x. 4. Prov. xiv. 29.

sight: ^hstand not in an evil thing; ⁱfor he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.

4 Where ^kthe word of a king is, ^lthere is power: and who may say unto him, ^mWhat doest thou?

5 Whoso ⁿkeepeth the commandment shall ^ofeel no evil thing: and ^pa wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.

h 1 Kings i. 50—52. ii. 21—24. 13. xlviii. 4. Jer. xlv. 16, 17. Acts v. 8, 9.
i Prov. xvi. 14, 15. xxx. 31. Dan. iv. 35. v. 19.
k 1 Kings ii. 25. 29—34. 46. Prov. xix. 12. xx. 2. Dan. iii. 15. Luke xii. 4, 5. Rom. xiii. 1—4.
l Job xxxiii. 12, 13. xxxiv. 18, 19. Rom. ix. 20.
m 2. Ex. i. 17. 20. 21. Hos. v. 11.
n ii. 14. x. 2. 1 Chr. xii. 32. Prov. xvii. 24. Luke xii. 56, 57. 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15. Phil. i. 9, 10. Col. i. 9. Heb. v. 14.

man's approbation: and those who are very desirous of knowing what others say of them, perhaps expecting to hear their own commendations, will generally be disappointed, and hear such things from every quarter, as are vexatious and mortifying: for few think so favourably of others, as men do of themselves.

V. 23—29.

Various important lessons may be learned in wisdom's school, and they will be confirmed by experience: but when we resolve, and even bestow pains, "to be wise," we shall often find it far from us. Many things are too deep for us to fathom, and too distant for us to explore. (Notes, viii. 16, 17. Job xi. 7—12. Rom. xi. 33—36.) And whilst we "apply our hearts to search out wisdom, and the "reason of things;" our principal study, "as sinners," relates to the nature, evil, foolishness, and madness of sin, with its causes, effects, and remedies. But alas! those who should teach wisdom to others, are often themselves led to act very foolishly; and by nothing more than by bad women. Happy is he, whom God preserves from this most fatal snare, and all its bitter effects. Would we be so happy; let us seek to "walk before God" and in his sight, trusting in his grace, and observing all his precepts: for many are left to fall into dreadful evils, to punish them for their pride, hypocrisy, or wickedness in other respects. If any such captives of Satan have been delivered by a miracle of mercy, they have more abundant cause for gratitude and watchfulness; and they should be doubly earnest to warn others of their danger.—Many a godly man can with thankfulness acknowledge, that he has found one prudent and virtuous woman in the wife of his bosom, and aver that he desires no more: but those who have gone, as far as they could, in Solomon's track, have seldom found one of this character in all the multitude. This militates against polygamy, as well as every other species of licentiousness: and it is a general rule, that they, who declaim most severely against women, have their chief acquaintance with the most worthless of the sex. In short, the law of God is the rule of our happiness; and the world is miserable, principally because this rule is so universally disregarded and violated.—It is most lamentable, that so few, either men or women, can be found, who are really the upright servants of God; and that man, whom "God made upright" and happy, has found out so many inventions to render himself wicked and miserable. But let us bless God for Jesus Christ, and seek for his mercy and grace, that we may be numbered with his chosen remnant in glory everlasting.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1. Solomon had shewn that wisdom is acquired with great difficulty; that the wisest are in many things mistaken; and that even wisdom is often attended with vexation: yet he here enquires, who is worthy to be compared with the wise man; with the man, who knows how to interpret the word of God, and to explain the nature and uses of surrounding objects; and to avail himself of his acquaintance with men and things, that he may be able properly to direct his conduct, as circumstances may require. (Marg. Ref. a, b.—Notes, ii. 12—17. Gen. xl. 8. xli. 25—38. 1 Kings iii. 5—14. 23—28. x. 1—3. Dan. ii. 17—30.) He observes that wisdom confers a peculiar dignity and comeliness on the possessor, and gives him an ascendancy over the minds of men: yea, "the "boldness of his countenance is doubled," by the consciousness that he understands the subject or the work, in which he is engaged. Some interpret the last clause to mean, that by wisdom, the severity and overbearing confidence of a man's looks are changed into mildness and modesty. 'The more we know, the more humble we ought to be; and by the very cheerfulness and pleasantness of our countenance to invite others to us; and not by our frowning forbid them, or make them afraid to approach us.' Bp. Patrick.—'Whereas before he was proud and arrogant, he shall become' (by wisdom,) 'humble and meek.' (Marg. and Marg. Ref. c, d.—Notes, Acts iv. 13—22. vi. 15. 2 Cor. iii. 12—18. iv. 1, 2. Jam. iii. 13—18.)

V. 2. It has in most ages and countries been common for subjects, when required, to confirm their engagements of loyalty and submission to the king, with a solemn oath; which should be conscientiously observed. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Prov. xvii. 11. xxiv. 21, 22. Ez. xvii. 15—21. xxi. 23. Rom. xiii. 1—8. Tit. iii. 1—3. 1 Pet. ii. 13—17.) But some think, that the words may relate to the limits of a man's obedience: he must obey the king, as far as he can consistently with performing his vows and duties to the King of kings. (Notes, Dan. iii. 16—18. vi. 10, 11. Matt. xxii. 15—22. Acts iv. 13—22, vv. 19, 20.) "Take heed "to the mouth of the king, and to the word of the oath "of God." Old Version.

V. 3—5. The royal and sacred Teacher here counsels his readers, not to leave the presence of the king, under the impulse of anger and passion; or hastily to withdraw from his service: (Notes, x. 4. 2 Sam. xx. 1, 2. 20—22. 1 Kings xii. 16. Prov. xxv. 15:) nor yet obstinately to persist in or justify any criminal practices: for a king, who

o. ii. 1. 11. 17. vii. 13, 14.

p. xi. 9, 10. xii. 1. Is. iii. 11. 14. xxii. 12-14. Luke xiii. 25. xvii. 26. —30. xix. 42-44. Heb. iii. 7-11.

q. vi. 12. ix. 12. x. 14. Prov. xxiv. 22. xxix. 1. Matt. xxiv. 44. 50. xxv. 6-13. 1 Thes. v. 1-3.

r. Or, *how it shall be.*

r. iii. 21. 2 Sam. xiv. 14. Job xiv. 5. xxxiv. 14. Ps. xlix. 7-9. lxxxix. 48. Heb. ix. 27.

s. 1 Cor. xv. 43. 2 Cor. xiii. 4.

t. Or, *casting off weapons.* Deut. xx. 1-8. 2 Kings vii. 15.

6 ¶ Because ^o to every purpose there is time and judgment, ^p therefore the misery of man is great upon him.

7 For ^q he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him ^r when it shall be?

8 There ^s is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit; neither hath he ^t power in the day of death: and there is no ^u discharge in that war; ^v neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.

t Ps. ix. 17. lii. 5-7. Prov. xiv. 32. Is. xxviii. 15, 18.

9 All ^u this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: ^v there is a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.

10 And ^w so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from ^x the place of the holy; and ^y they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this is also vanity.

11 Because ^z sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily;

u. i. 14. iii. 10. iv. 7, 8. vii. 25.

x. v. 8. 13. Ex. xiv. 5-9. 28. Deut. ii. 30. 2 Kings xiv. 10-12. xxv. 7.

y. 2 Kings ix. 34. 35. Job xxi. 13. 32, 33. Luke xvi. 22.

z. Ps. cxxii. 1-5.

a. ii. 16. ix. 5. Ps. xxxi. 12. Prov. x. 7.

b. Ex. viii. 15. 32.

Job xxi. 11-15.

Ps. x. 6. i. 21.

22. Is. v. 18, 19.

xxvi. 10. lvii. 11.

Jer. xlviii. 11.

Matt. xxiv. 49.

50. Rom. ii. 4.

5. 2 Pet. iii. 3-10.

has absolute power, needs only give the word, and his mandates and menaces will at once be executed; and none is able, or indeed authorized, to call him to an account, or to "say to him, What doest thou?" (*Marg. Ref. g—l. —Notes, ix. 1—3, v. 3. 1 Kings i. 49—53. ii. 15—25. Esth. vii. 9, 10. Job xxxiii. 12, 13. xxxiv. 16—19. Prov. xvi. 14, 15. xix. 12. Dan. iii. 19—23. iv. 34—37. Rom. ix. 20, 21.*) A quiet obedience in all things lawful would best ensure exemption from punishment: and the self-knowledge and experience of a wise man would enable him to discern the proper times and opportunities of remedying abuses, obtaining redress of grievances, and carrying any useful point, by judicious, lenient, and submissive measures; which could not be done, by force and violent means, against a superior power. (*Marg. Ref. m, n.—Notes, iii. 1—11. x. 2, 3. Matt. v. 25, 26. 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2.*)

V. 6, 7. To accomplish any wise and good design, times must be observed and judgment exercised. But as men, through ignorance or negligence, commonly let opportunities slip, and attempt things unseasonably and injudiciously; they involve themselves in manifold troubles, which might have been avoided: and when the eternal world is taken into the account, it may be said that this is one grand cause of the final misery of mankind. Many things relating to the future cannot be foreknown; nor can one discover them to us: and about those, in which foresight might be of use, men in general are heedless and inattentive. Thus all things seem involved in uncertainty, and no suitable preparation is made for those events which are coming upon them.—The "sure testimony of God" received in humble, realizing, obedient faith, is the only remedy of this evil. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, iii. 16—18. vi. 11, 12. ix. 11, 12. xii. 1. Matt. xxv. 1—13. Luke xiii. 22—30, vv. 24, 25. 1 Thes. v. 1—3. Heb. iii. 7—13.*)

V. 8. The preceding observations are peculiarly applicable to death, and its infinitely important consequences. No foresight can discern the time of a man's departure: men know, however, that they must die, and yet they seldom prepare for that solemn season! No man "hath power over the spirit," "to retain the spirit," or breath, or rational soul, when God is pleased to take it away; no authority or bodily strength can stand any man in stead at that hour; no one can decline the conflict with that tremendous enemy, or find any weapon with which he may successfully resist him: and the wickedness, by which men set God at defiance, will not by any means defend them from the power of this his messenger and executioner.—

Some, understand the verse in another sense. "Let no prince ... abuse his power to tyranny, because he hath no superior to control him; but remember, ... First, That ... he hath no dominion over men's ... spirits. ... Next, that he cannot command them long; for death will ... irresistibly seize on him, as well as on the meanest man. Nay, he cannot rule the chances of war: ... neither his policy nor his power shall be able always to defend him from the vengeance, that will be taken of the injustice, cruelty, and impiety, which he exercises in his government." *Bp. Patrick.* This is, indeed, one way in which the text may be applied; but the preceding interpretation appears far more exact, comprehensive, and important. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. r—t.—Notes, iii. 18—21. ix. 4—6. Job xiv. 1—6, vv. 5, 6. Ps. xlix. 7—10. Prov. xiv. 32. Luke xii. 15—21, v. 20. Heb. ix. 27, 28.*)

V. 9, 10. To abate the ambition of some men for power, and the envy of others at their success, the wise man here observes, that, in the course of his careful and accurate observations, he had remarked instances, in which one man had exercised authority over others, not only to their hurt, but especially to his own. So that, while he was proceeding in his course of successful tyranny, he came to an untimely end; and all his pomp and magnificence ended in a premature burial: he was soon forgotten, or, had made himself to be forgotten; or he was only remembered with contempt and abhorrence.—"The place of the holy," may mean the courts of justice, to which the wicked ruler came, and from which he returned, with great state, and surrounded with admiring multitudes; while he professed to administer justice, as the vicegerent of the holy God. But some interpret the clause of the sanctuary, that holy place, where sacrifices were offered to God, and where the wicked ruler cloaked his oppression with the appearance of piety.—Some understand the latter verse to mean, that wicked rulers often died in peace and had a splendid funeral; that their wickedness was soon forgotten, even in the place where it had been committed; and that it was indeed a vanity, that an oppressor and tyrant should fare as well as a just and clement prince, in respect of this present world. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, v. 8. 13—17. ix. 4—6. 2 Chr. xxiv. 17—27. xxv. 17—24. Prov. x. 7. Luke xvi. 22, 23.*)

V. 11—13. The denunciations of divine wrath against sinners, or any particular heinous sin, not being in general executed immediately when the crime is committed; those who perhaps trembled at first, when they committed mur-

c Jer. xlii. 15.
d v. 16. vii. 15.
1 Kings ii. 5—9.
xxi. 29. xxii. 34.
35. Prov. xiii.
21. Is. lxxv. 20.
Rom. ix. 22.
2 Pet. ii. 9.
e vii. 18. Ps. xxxvii.
11. 18. cxii. 1.
cxv. 13. Prov. i.
32, 33. Is. iii. 10.
17. lxxv. 13. i. 4.
20—24. Matt.
xxv. 34. 41—46.
Luke i. 50.
f iii. 14. 1 Chr.
xvi. 30. Ps. xcvi.
9.
g Job xviii. 5. xx.
5. xxi. 30. Ps.
xi. 5. Is. lvii. 21.
Mal. iii. 18.
Matt. xiii. 49.
50. John v. 29.
h Ps. lv. 23. Is.
xxx. 13. 2 Pet.
ii. 3.
i vi. 12. Job vii. 6.
7. xiv. 2. Ps.
xxxix. 5. cxliv.
4. Jam. iv. 14.
k iv. 4. 8. ix. 3.
x. 5.
l ii. 14. vii. 15.
ix. 1. 2. Job ix.
22—24. xxiv. 21
—25. Ps. lxxiii.
13, 14. Mal. iii.
15.

therefore the heart of the sons of men
is ^e fully set in them to do evil.

12 Though ^d a sinner do evil an hun-
dred times, and his *days* be prolonged,
yet ^e surely I know that it shall be well
with them that fear God, which ^f fear
before him:

13 But ^g it shall not be well with
the wicked, ^h neither shall he prolong
his days which are ⁱ as a shadow; be-
cause he feareth not before God.

14 ¶ There is ^k a vanity which is
done upon the earth; that ^l there be
just *men*, unto whom it happeneth ac-
cording to the work of the wicked;
again, there be wicked *men*, to whom
it happeneth according to the work of
the righteous: I said, that this also is
vanity.

m ii. 24. iii. 12.
13. 22. v. 18. ix.
7—9

15 Then ^m I commended mirth, be-
cause a man hath no better thing un-
der the sun, than to eat, and to drink,
and to be merry: for that shall abide
with him of his labour, the days of his
life, which God giveth him under the
sun.

16 When ⁿ I applied mine heart to ⁿ 9. vii. 23.
know wisdom, and to see the business
that is done upon the earth: (for also
^o *there is that* neither day nor night
seeth sleep with his eyes:)

17 Then I beheld all the work of
God, ^p that a man cannot find out the
work that is done under the sun: be-
cause though a man labour to seek *it*
out, yet he shall not find *it*: yea, far-
ther; though a wise *man* think to know
it, yet shall he not be able to find *it*.

o ii. 23. iv. 8. v.
12. Gen. xxxi.
40. Ps. cxxvii. 2.
p iii. 11. vii. 23.
24. xi. 5. Job v.
9. xi. 7—9. Ps.
lxxiii. 16. civ.
24. Prov. xxx.
3, 4. Is. xl. 28.
Rom. xi. 33

der, perjury, robbery, or other crimes, finding no harm come upon them, conclude that they shall escape with impunity, and so grow more daring in iniquity. The wickedness of men abuses “the long suffering of God” into an occasion of more desperate crimes, and their hearts are wholly bent to commit evil of every kind. Whereas, if God should cut off every criminal by some tremendous judgment, as soon as ever he had violated his commandments; men would be afraid to run into such excesses, as they now do without fear or shame. (*Marg. Ref. b, c.—Notes, Job xxi. 7—16. Ps. x. 2—11. Is. v. 18, 19. xxviii. 14, 15. Matt. xxiv. 45—51. Rom. ii. 4—6. 2 Pet. iii. 1—4. 8, 9. 14—16.*) But though the ungodly should perpetrate multiplied and aggravated crimes, and their lives be continued in outward prosperity: yet Solomon assuredly knew, that it would be “well with those who feared God,” and walked before him in his ordinances and commandments, from a reverential awe of his authority, justice, and heart-searching presence: but that it would not be well with the wicked; for they must needs be disquieted with their own passions, and rendered uneasy by remorse and terror: and their most durable prosperity would flee away like a shadow, and expire as a short reprieve; and then just vengeance would come upon them for their contempt of God. (*Marg. Ref. d—g.—Notes, vi. 3—5. vii. 18. xii. 11—14. Job xx. 4—9. Ps. xxxvii. 34—38. lxxiii. 18—28. Is. iii. 10, 11. lvii. 20, 21. lxxv. 20. Mal. iii. 13—18. iv. 2, 3.*)—*Shadow.* (13) *Marg. Ref. h, i.—Notes, Ps. xxxix. 5, 6.*

V. 14, 15. In the course of human affairs, godly men are often involved in those troubles, which are the general effect of vice: being visited with pain, disease, or poverty; or despised, reviled, and hated: while wicked men prosper and are caressed, as if they were the peculiar favourites of God and man. (*Marg. Ref. k, l.—Notes, ii. 12—17. vii. 15. ix. 1—3. Job ix. 22—24. Ps. lxxiii. 12—14. Jer. xii. 1—4.*) This observation caused Solomon again to recommend a moderate use of worldly things, with a cheerful and contented mind: this he regarded as the greatest advantage, which can be made of all below the

sun. Amidst all changes, such a frame of mind, if the result of right principles, might be preserved; and be the recompence and solace of all his labours in this evil world. —Some indeed, think that Solomon records this, as the corrupt inference which he drew from the afflictions of the righteous, and the prosperity of the wicked, whilst he was a wanderer from God and his service. ‘If this be the case,’ says he, ‘let us indulge ourselves; let us eat, drink, and be merry; for wisdom and righteousness have little advantage of folly and madness; and the pleasure, that a man has enjoyed, is the only thing of which he may not be robbed.’ (*Notes, ii. 24—26. iii. 12—15. ix. 7—9. xi. 9, 10.*)

V. 16, 17. Solomon here records the result of his perplexing researches into the affairs of men, and the purposes and works of God. Examining with great attention into the employments of mankind, he found that many of them scarcely allowed themselves rest or sleep, day or night; and yet their anxiety seemed very unprofitable and vain. And when he enquired with similar diligence into the works of God, he found he could not comprehend or explain them all. He was persuaded, that no application or capacity would enable a man to fathom the depths of the divine dispensations, in the government of this lower world. Some think that Solomon meant himself, as an anxious enquirer into these subjects, when he mentioned him who “neither day nor night saw sleep with his eyes,” because he was restless and unwearied in his fruitless investigation. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, ii. 18—23, v. 23. iv. 7, 8. v. 9—12. xi. 3—6. Deut. xxix. 29. Job xi. 7—12. Rom. xi. 33—36.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

None of the rich, the powerful, the honourable, or the accomplished of the sons of men, are equally excellent, useful, or happy, with “the wise man.” For who else can interpret the words of God, or deduce the proper instructions from his truths and dispensations? Wisdom, that is heavenly wisdom, confers the most permanent

CHAP. IX.

Like things happen to good and bad men till death,
1—3. The near approach of death should induce
men to use cheerfully the comforts of life, and dili-

amiableness, and engages the most durable esteem; it softens the manners of the severe, and it gives boldness to the timid in the path of duty. (*Note, Jam. iii. 17, 18.*) May we choose and seek this wisdom, whatever we lose or come short of; and “with all our getting,” get a ‘good understanding in the way of godliness!’ The wise man will obey the king and those in authority in all things lawful, and charge others to do the same: he will be conscientious in his subjection, as a part of his obedience to God; and not trifle with oaths or solemn engagements. Common prudence indeed will teach a man to avoid unequal contests with those who are too powerful for him; and to shun exasperating language concerning such as “give no account” of their conduct. But the wise man will be submissive from higher principles: from regard to the honour of God and the credit of his profession, he will repress all railing, and indecent censures of such as administer publick affairs; (*Notes, 2 Pet. ii. 10, 11. Jude 5—10;*) he will engage in no virulent opposition or hasty measures; he will continue in his place and station; he will not enter upon any turbulent attempts, much less persist in evil designs; nor needlessly expose himself to the anger of the ruler. But if this be wisdom, and the reverse folly, in human affairs; what madness must it be for us weak and dependent creatures, to persist in rebellion against the Almighty, who “doeth what he pleaseth,” who speaks with power, and “giveth no account of his matters!” Here especially unreserved subjection is our only wisdom: he that “keepeth his commandment,” to “repent, and to “bring forth fruits meet for repentance,” and “to believe “in the Son of God,” “shall feel no evil thing:” the wise man’s heart will discern, that now is the time to seek pardon and peace, and to prepare for the day of final retribution. But alas! what numbers slip this opportunity; form an erroneous judgment of things present and future; and bring misery upon themselves both in this life and that which is to come! As they cannot foresee, and none can certainly inform them of future events, they think themselves justified, in utterly neglecting the preparation for death and judgment: and so these overtake them unawares, and sink them into irreversible misery. “Oh, that men “were wise, that they understood these things, that they “would consider their latter end!” For death will come shortly, and perhaps suddenly: and no power, prosperity, courage, or prudence, can avail a man in that day, when “God shall require his soul.” The believer alone is prepared to meet the solemn summons without dismay. To him, “the king of terrors” will appear disarmed of his sting, and his grim countenance be softened into a smile: when he placidly yields to the stroke of death, he resigns his soul into his Redeemer’s hands, and confidently expects the period, when that conqueror of fallen man shall be “swallowed up in victory.” But with what horror will the wicked discover, that neither their daring presumption, nor their artful schemes of villany, can retard the approach

gently to perform its duties, 4—10. In all human affairs, probabilities are often strangely crossed, and great calamities befall men unawares, 11, 12. A fact recorded shewing that wisdom, and usefulness procure little respect or gratitude, notwithstanding the excellency and efficacy of wisdom, 13—18.

of this dreadful foe! Nay, frequently their crimes accelerate this distressing season, as well as add anguish to it; and thus, “the wicked is driven away in his wickedness, “but the righteous hath hope in his death.” (*Note, Prov. xiv. 32.*) If this is the end of all men, as to this present scene, and an eternity of happiness or misery is to succeed; our grand concern is to know, that when our “earthly tabernacle shall be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in “the heavens.” (*Notes, and P. O. 2 Cor. v. 1—8.*)

V. 9—17.

Careful observers of mankind will find, that those abuses of power, which injure others, are still more hurtful to the tyrant himself: and if, after a vexatious and mischievous life, a man must have nothing on earth but a grave for his body, and infamy on his character; all must needs be vanity. Nay, should any man live in ungodly prosperity to extreme old age; and then die in outward peace, and have his crimes concealed or varnished over by a pompous funeral, a panegyric oration, a splendid monument, and a lying inscription; all would still be vanity. (*Note, Luke xvi. 22, 23.*) Wicked men may indeed misconstrue and pervert the long-suffering “of God, because “sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily;” and they may be emboldened in iniquity by impunity: but they will find that, in his own season, and according to his own infinite wisdom and justice, he will certainly execute on them his most tremendous threatenings. (*P. O. 2 Pet. iii. 1—13.*) And faith will assure us, that it will certainly be well, in time and to eternity, with the conscientious worshipper and servant of God: and that they must be miserable, who “have no fear of God before their eyes.” Let us then pray for an increase of faith; that we may view eternal things as near, real, and infinitely important. This alone can establish the heart during this mixed and changing scene, in which the righteous often suffer, and the wicked prosper. But instead of saying with the epicure, “Let us eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow “we die;” or on the other hand, murmuring against the appointments of God, and indulging vain objections; let us seek for a lively hope, a submissive will, and a contented mind. Then leaving the Lord to clear up all difficulties in his own time, we may cheerfully enjoy the comforts, and bear up amidst the trials of life, for the few days which we are to pass “under the sun:” whilst peace of conscience and “joy in the Holy Ghost” will abide within us, through all outward changes, and even “when flesh and heart “shall fail.” And, trusting in the mercy and truth of God in Christ, we should rest assured of his wisdom, justice, and goodness, where we cannot discern them. Thus we shall escape the perplexity and presumption, which must unite with all attempts to unravel the intricacies of his providential government. For the most acute and penetrating minds, using the most unwearied diligence,

FOR all this I * considered in my heart even to declare all this, that ^a the righteous, and the wise, and their works, *are* in the hand of God: ^b no man knoweth either love or hatred *by* all *that is* before them.

2 All *things come* ^c alike to all: *there is* one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: ^d as *is* the good, so *is* the sinner; and he that sweareth, as *he* that ^e feareth an oath.

3 This *is* an evil among all *things* that are done under the sun, that *there is* one event unto all: yea, ^f also the

heart of the sons of men is full of evil, ^g and madness *is* in their heart while they live, and ^h after that *they go* to the dead.

4 For ⁱ to him that is joined to all the living, there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

5 For ^k the living know that they shall die; but ^l the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; ^m for the memory of them is forgotten.

6 Also ⁿ their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither ^o have they any more a portion for ever, in any *thing* that is done under the sun.

must fail of comprehending all his works and ways. Secret things belong to him, and revealed things alone to us. Our endeavours therefore, "to be wise above what is written," must involve us in sin and perplexity, and can never lead to any satisfactory conclusions. But to believe and obey here, will be a preparation for that world hereafter, where "we shall know, even as also we are known."

NOTES.

CHAP. IX. V. 1—3. Though Solomon could not "find out the whole work of God;" yet his enquiries led him to many useful conclusions, which he "declared" for the benefit of others. For he was assured, that "the righteous and the wise, and their works," were under the special care of God; and that they would be favoured with that measure of success and usefulness which he saw best. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. a.—viii. 11—13. Deut. xxxiii. 3. 1 Sam. ii. 9. Ps. i. 1—3. xxxvii. 5—8. xc. 13—17, v. 17. Prov. iii. 5, 6. Is. xlix. 3, 4. 2 Tim. ii. 19.*) Yet the events of human life were so intricately and mysteriously arranged, that no one could decide concerning himself, or another man, whether he were accepted and beloved of God, or under his wrath, by any outward occurrences.—The Lord in his manifold wisdom sometimes afflicts, and sometimes prospers, both the righteous and the wicked, without any exact discrimination. No kind, degree, variety, or continuance of outward affliction can be mentioned, from which a godly man is certainly exempted; or of worldly prosperity, which wicked men have not enjoyed. And yet prosperity is by no means the uniform lot of the wicked, or adversity of the righteous. But matters are so varied and blended together, that "all things" may be said to "come alike to all:" and one event to befall the most unjust, selfish, sensual, and impious; and the most upright, kind, pure, and pious, who "walk in" "all the commandments and the ordinances of God," and reverence his holy name, as well as act honestly and blamelessly among men. The difference between them, as to present happiness, arises not from outward causes, but from the inward supports and consolations which the righteous enjoy, and the benefit they derive from these

varied trials and mercies; and from the inward remorse and terror which wicked men experience, and their growing more daring in impiety under the several dispensations of Providence. For as this state of things appears grievous, and often proves a temptation to the righteous, it exceedingly conduces to the destruction of the wicked. (*Marg. Ref. b—e.—Notes, vii. 15. viii. 14, 15. Job xii. 6—10. xv. 17—35. xxi. 7—22. Ps. lxxiii. 1—4.*) As far as the sons of men are left to themselves, their hearts are full of evil; and prosperity in sin causes their lusts to rage even to "madness:" thus they are led to set God himself at defiance by their impieties and daring crimes; and they proceed in this course, till death closes their career, their hope expires with their breath, and they join the company of those who before have perished in their sins. (*Marg. Ref. f—h.—Notes, viii. 11—13. Gen. vi. 5. Job xv. 14. 16. Jer. xvii. 9, 10. Rom. i. 28—32.*)—*Feareth an oath.* (2) *Marg. Ref. e.—Go to the dead.* (3) *Note, Prov. xiv. 32.*

V. 4—6. Whilst life is prolonged, an afflicted man may expect better days, and the conversion of the vilest sinner may be hoped for; since he continues in the land of hope. In this view life is very valuable; and the proverb is applicable, that "a living dog is better than a dead lion." The condition of the meanest or most despicable living man, is preferable to that of the most noble and renowned of those who have died impenitent. For "the living know that they shall die," and so may perhaps prepare for that solemn event: but the dead have no further knowledge of any thing here on earth. They have no further recompence of their worldly labours; they are soon forgotten; and the love, hatred, or envy, which they bare to others, and others to them, with all the pleasant or painful effects, are done with for ever, as far as this world is concerned: and, however rich and great they were, "they have no longer" a portion for ever, in any thing that is done "under the sun." With reference to this, Solomon doubtless is to be understood in the whole argument: his scope is to shew the vanity of earthly things, and the madness and folly of a wicked life, of which all the benefits must speedily be relinquished for ever. Nor

^p Gen. xii. 19. ⁷ ^p Go thy way, ^a eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; ^r for God now accepteth thy works.

^q ii. 24—26. iii. 12, 13. 22. v. 18. viii. 15. Deut. xii. 7. 12. xvi. 14, 15. 1 Kings viii. 66. 1 Chr. xvi. 1—3. xxix. 21—23. 2 Chr. xxx. 23—27. Neh. viii. 10—12.

^r Gen. iv. 4, 5. Ex. xxiv. 8—11. Luke xi. 41. Acts x. 35.

^s 2 Sam. xix. 24. Esth. viii. 15. Rev. iii. 4, 5. vii. 9, 13, 14. xix. 8. 14.

^t Ruth iii. 3. 2 Sam. xiv. 2. Dan. x. 3. Am. vi. 6. Matt. vi. 17. Luke vii. 46.

^{*} Heb. See, or, Enjoy life.

^u Prov. v. 18, 19. xviii. 22. xix. 14. Mal. ii. 15. x vi. 12. Ps. xxxix. 5. cxliv. 4. y ii. 10. 24. iii. 13. 22. v. 18. z Num. xiii. 30. 1 Chr. xxii. 19. xxviii. 20. xxix. 2, 3. 2 Chr. xxxi. 20, 21. Ezra vi. 14, 15. Neh. ii. 12—20. iii. 1, &c. iv. 2. 6. 9—13. 17—23. xiii. 8—31. Ps. lxxi. 15—18. Jer. xxix. 13. Matt. vi. 33. John iv. 34. Rom. xii. 11. xv. 18—20. 1 Cor. xv. 10. xvi. 10. Eph. v. 16. Col. iii. 23. 2 Pet. i. 12—15.

⁸ Let ^s thy garments be always white; and ^t let thy head lack no ointment.

⁹ ^{*} Live joyfully ^u with the wife whom thou lovest, ^a all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: ^r for that *is* thy portion in *this* life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.

¹⁰ Whatsoever ^a thy hand findeth to

do, do *it* with thy might; ^a for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

¹¹ ¶ I ^b returned, and saw under the sun, ^c that the race *is* not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; ^d but time and chance happeneth to them all.

¹² For ^e man also knoweth not his time: ^f as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds *that are* caught in the snare; so *are* ^g the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.

xvii. 26—31. xxi. 34—36. 1 Thes. v. 3. 2 Pet. ii. 12.

would either the righteous be perplexed at the transient afflictions with which they meet, or the wicked hardened by their fading prosperity; if they recollected how soon all this will end, and that a state of eternal retribution will succeed. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, iv. 1—3. vii. 1, 2. viii. 9—13. *Job* xiv. 7—12. *Ps.* cxlvi. 3, 4. *Prov.* x. 28. *Is.* xxxviii. 17—20. lv. 6, 7. *Luke* xiii. 22—30, *vn.* 24—26. *Rom.* ii. 4—6. 2 *Cor.* vi. 1, 2. *Heb.* iii. 7—13.)

V. 7—9. Solomon, having spoken to the case of the wicked, here returns to “the righteous and wise,” whom he had before mentioned (1): and he exhorts them to a cheerful confidence in God, who will assuredly do well to all whose works he accepts. They should therefore seek to possess a peaceful conscience, a lively hope, and a contented mind: and in this case they might enjoy, with comfort and gratitude, the bounty of Providence, whether rich or poor. (*Marg. Ref.* p—r.—See on *Note*, ii. 24—26.—*Notes*, *Gen.* iv. 3—5. *Neh.* viii. 10—12. *Rom.* v. 1—5.) They needed not go as mourners all their days; but might be clothed in white garments, and use fragrant ointments, as was customary on festive occasions: for they alone had cause for gladness of heart. (*Marg. Ref.* s, t.—*Notes*, *Esth.* viii. 15. *Dan.* x. 2, 3. *Matt.* vi. 16—18. *Rev.* iii. 4—6. xix. 7, 8.) They were not required to refrain from a liberal use of their possessions, (so that it were done with temperance and charity;) either out of penuriousness, or distrust, or from a superstitious notion that religion consisted in a painful austerity. Let them use the comforts of the day, and bear its burdens, and not be solicitous about the morrow.—It would also lessen the uneasiness of life, to have a partaker of its comforts, and a solace of its griefs, in a beloved wife. Though Solomon himself had so multiplied wives; yet he here uses the singular number, and says “*the wife* whom thou lovest;” as one sensible of his folly in that matter. (*Marg. Ref.* u.—*Note*, *Prov.* v. 15—19.) He recommends it to a man to live with this one beloved wife with cheerfulness, making the best of present things, avoiding impatience and gloomy despondency, as dishonourable to God, and tormenting to himself. A few days of life are given to man on earth; and sin has made them vanity. (*Note*, *Gen.* xlvii. 9.) But

he may yet find many comforts, as his present portion, and the recompence of his labours: and it would be both foolish and ungrateful to lose the benefit of them, by fretting over his troubles, or anticipating future calamities. (*Marg. Ref.* x, y.)

V. 10. Man’s wisdom in this dying world consists, in cheerfully using present comforts, and diligently attending to present duties. “Whatever a man’s hand finds to do;” whatever he regards as his duty, or incumbent on him, for the benefit of himself, his family, the church, or the world, according to his rank, station, talents, and opportunities; he ought to set about it without delay, and pursue it without remissness, and to the utmost of his abilities. He ought not in any measure, to yield to weariness or discouragement, because of opposition, difficulties, or hardships: and he should redeem his time for such purposes, remembering that he is hastening to the grave; and then all opportunities of this kind will be over, seeing “no work, nor contrivance, nor knowledge, nor wisdom” is there. Even in the eternal world no opportunity will be given of glorifying God by doing good to man, as there is now on earth. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 4—6. 1 *Chr.* xxix. 3—9. *Ps.* lxxi. 17, 18. lxxxviii. 10—12. *Is.* xxxviii. 17—20. lv. 6, 7. *John* ix. 4—7. *Heb.* iii. 7—13. 2 *Pet.* i. 12—15.)—The original is *Sheol*, the Septuagint *Hades*, which may as well be understood of the invisible world, as of the grave. (*Note*, *Ps.* xvi. 8—11, v. 10.)

V. 11, 12. The wise man next observed another cause of vanity in worldly things; namely, that men’s success seldom correspond even to their more reasonable expectations. The swiftest do not always win the race; for they may fall, or be impeded in their course: battles are not uniformly determined, according to the number, valour, or conduct of the contending parties: knowledge and prudence are so far from ensuring riches to the possessor, that they often fail of procuring him a subsistence: and the most skilful, in any trade, science, or profession, are far from sure of being most favoured or employed. But there are favourable or unfavourable times, into which men are cast: the former often procure success to far inferior talents and exertions; under the latter, no abilities or efforts can prevent

b 11. vi. 1. vii. 15.
viii. 16.

13 ¶ This ^h wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it *seemed* great unto me :

i 2 Sam. xx. 15—
22. 2 Kings vi.
24—33. vii. 1,
&c.

14 *There* ⁱ was a little city, and few men within it: and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it:

k Gen. xl. 23.
Esth. vi. 2, 3.

15 Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; ^k yet no man remembered the same poor man.

disappointment. There are also various events, which cannot be foreseen, which determine a man's success in any enterprize, and have a decisive effect upon his lot in life. These seem to come by "chance;" yet they are the appointment of God: but they, who do not regard him, charge them on *fortune*, and exclaim against this imaginary being, as blind, capricious, or partial. These things however, are thus ordered on purpose, that ungodly men might be left wholly in uncertainty. (*Marg. Ref.* b—d.—*Notes*, 1—3. ii. 12—17. 1 *Sam.* xvii. 42—53. 2 *Chr.* xiii. 13—22. *Ps.* cxlvii. 10, 11. *Prov.* xxi. 30, 31.) There is a time allotted to all, in which to seek and obtain the most important advantages: but in general they know not, or observe not, that time, but suffer it to slip past them unimproved; and then they are involved in unforeseen calamities, as fishes and birds are in the net or snare, and the time of trouble and of death comes upon them suddenly, so that they cannot escape. (*Marg. Ref.* e—g.—*Notes*, iii. 1—11. viii. 6, 7. *Hab.* i. 12—17.) This is the case, especially with those, who postpone the great concerns of their souls to some future opportunity: they are often given up to a "strong delusion;" and are caught in Satan's net, which he baits with some worldly object, for the sake of which they reject or pervert the gospel, and go on in sin, till they suddenly fall into everlasting destruction. (*Notes*, 1 *Thes.* v. 1—3. 2 *Thes.* ii. 8—12.)

V. 13—18. Solomon illustrated his remarks from an incident that had fallen under his observation; in which great wisdom, with eminent success, had been shewn for the good of others, without any advantage to the person himself. (*Note*, 11, 12.) A mighty king came, with every warlike preparation, to besiege a small city which was very feebly garrisoned, and yet he failed of success: for a certain "poor man," by his sagacity, contrivance, and prudent management, delivered the city. But when the danger was over, and the poor man's assistance was no more wanted; he was totally neglected and forgotten, through the ingratitude of his citizens, and their contempt of his poverty. This event was a proof that wisdom is decidedly preferable to strength (*Note*, vii. 19, 20;) and also that it would be a vain possession, if its recompence were from men: for when the emergency was over, "the poor man's" wisdom was despised, and his words were not heard." (*Marg. Ref.* i—m.—*Notes*, 2 *Kings* iii. 10—20. vi. 8—12. 31. vii. *Prov.* x. 15. xxi. 22. xxiv. 3—6.) One reason of this is assigned: wise men speak with modesty and gentleness: and though their words are more attended to by a few, who derive great good from them; yet the vociferation and plausible speeches of the ostentatious go far-

16 Then said I, ^l Wisdom *is* better than strength: nevertheless ^m the poor man's wisdom *is* despised, and his words are not heard.

17 The words ⁿ of wise *men are* heard in quiet, more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.

18 Wisdom *is* ^o better than weapons of war; but ^p one sinner destroyeth much good.

—18. iii. 8. iv. 3, 4. Tit. i. 10, 11.

l 18. vii. 19. *Prov.* xxi. 22. xxiv. 5.
m *Prov.* x. 15.
Mark vi. 2, 3.
John vii. 47—
49. ix. 24—34.
1 Cor. i. 26—29.
Jam. ii. 2—6.
n *Gen.* xli. 33—
40. 1 *Sam.* vii. 3
—6. *Is.* xlii. 2.
4. *Jam.* i. 20. iii.
17, 18.
o 16.
p *Josh.* vii. 5. 11,
12. xxii. 20.
1 *Sam.* xiv. 28,
29. 36—46.
2 *Sam.* xx. 1, 2.
2 *Thes.* ii. 8—
12. 2 *Tim.* ii. 16
Heb. xii. 15, 16.

ther with the ignorant and thoughtless multitude: such is man's folly, that the empty and conceited declaimer will commonly be most popular. "Wisdom is" indeed "better" than weapons of war: yet it is so much more easy to do harm than good, that one ungodly man, with a moderate degree of plausibility, subtlety, address, and fluency of speech, will often prevail against those of the most consummate wisdom, prevent the success of the best concerted plans, overturn the most prudent regulations, and speedily destroy the good that has long been devising and accomplishing. (*Marg. Ref.* n—p.—*Notes*, ii. 18—23. *Josh.* vii. 1. 10—12. *P. O.* 10—18. *Notes*, 1 *Kings* xii. *Is.* xlii. 1—4. *Jam.* iii. 17, 18.)—'The best and safest counsels, cannot so much as be heard or regarded, till people's straits have made them humble, sad, and serious.' *Bp. Patrick.*—'Whatever declaimer thou seest in the church, by enticement and elegance of words, exciting applauses, moving laughter, and stirring up the people to affections of joy; know, that it is a sign of folly, both in them that speak, and in them that hear him. For the words of the wise are heard in quiet and moderate silence.' *Jerome*, quoted by *Bp. Patrick.*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

We ought not to think, that our enquiries into the word or works of God are useless, because we cannot comprehend all mysteries, or explain all difficulties: for if we proceed with modesty and seriousness, we shall come to many satisfactory determinations; and shall continually be learning such things, as may be useful to others also. When we have had adequate proof of any important doctrine, we should not waver or hesitate on account of objections: for in every thing, which relates to the incomprehensible God, we must expect difficulties that we cannot solve.—In the midst of the varied and intricate dispensations in the affairs of men, it is of the greatest consequence to be established in the belief, that "the righteous and the wise, and their works," are under the especial care of the Almighty. If therefore we *first* seek his favour, and then regulate all our undertakings according to his revealed will, and put our concerns into his hands; we may rest satisfied, that our great end will be answered, whether we meet with the expected success or not. But we shall either perplex or deceive ourselves, if we attempt to judge of our acceptance with God by external events: for this is not the rule which his word has appointed. Forgetful of this, some believers increase their load of trouble, by construing their disappointments and afflictions into evidences of his displeasure,

CHAP. X.

The care requisite to preserve a reputation for wis-

and by concluding that they are not his children, or he would not thus deal with them: and a far greater number of unbelievers mistake outward success, for the token and proof of his love to them. But, in this sense, "all things come alike to all, and there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked." Not that the Lord does not give a decided preference to the good, and holy, and reverential worshipper, above the profane and unrighteous: but because the complex reasons of his conduct, in dispensing adversity or prosperity to individuals, do not lie level with our capacities and information. He acts by perfectly wise rules, and according to one consistent plan: but its parts are so various and complicated, that to us they must needs appear perplexed. We are called "to walk by faith:" those who have no faith infer, that the righteous will never obtain any decisive advantage above the wicked; and this occasions much of the evil that is done under the sun. Yet it would not be so, if "the hearts of the sons of men" were not full of evil; and if madness were not in them: so that they are glad of a pretence for indulging their lusts, and neglecting their duty. Thus they live and die befooled and infatuated, and are not aware of their madness in rebelling against God, till the scenes, which open to their view in the eternal world, awfully convince them of it.—Let us bless God, that we are yet "joined to all the living," where there is hope; and let us consider this as a counterbalance to all our troubles: and as we know that we must die, and that "after death is the judgment," let us deem preparation for these solemn events the great business of our lives. Thus, when we leave this world, though we shall have no "knowledge of any thing that is done under the sun;" nor any portion in it; and though we should be forgotten by those who loved, and those who hated and envied us, and all our competitions and pursuits on earth vanish as a dream; we shall possess a better and a far more enduring substance.

V. 7—10.

We should in every case seek acceptance with God for ourselves and our works, before we think of finding satisfaction in outward things: but when we have attained a good hope in this respect, we may go our ways, and "eat our bread with joy, and drink our wine," or even our water, "with a merry heart;" for the meanest morsel coming from our Father's love, and in answer to our prayers, will have a peculiar relish. (*Note, Ps. xxxvii. 16, 17.*) The believer, who is assured of his acceptance, has of all men the best right to be cheerful; peace and joy are his duty, as well as his privilege: nor does his religion debar him from any rational or desirable earthly enjoyment. It requires not celibacy, or solitude, or affected austerities; which are the inventions of Satan and of Antichrist, in order to affright men from "the yoke of Christ," as if it were intolerably galling. But whilst we cultivate the social affections, and endeavour to be agreeable to our friends and relatives; and take the portion assigned us to defray the charges of our pilgrimage, and so

dom, and the different conduct of a wise man and a fool, 1—3. Observations on the duties and errors of rulers and subjects, with various maxims for the prudent conduct of affairs, 4—20.

to bear our labours with resignation: let us not forget, that our life here is vanity, and only a few days of vanity; (*Note, Gen. xlvii. 9;*) that all our enjoyments and possessions are passing away; and that we must seek nobler acquisitions, as the portion of our souls in the eternal world. We should then use all these things according to the rules of the word of God, and in subserviency to his glory: (*Note, 1 Cor. x. 29—31, v. 31;*) and, whatever our outward adorning or indulgence be, we should be careful, that our spiritual garments be always white, and free from spot or blemish; and that we be continually anointed, adorned, and refreshed, by the influences of the Holy Spirit. Nor may we permit either the comforts or the trials of life to render us inattentive to our various duties. We have each a work to do. Sinners have the salvation of their souls to seek, and the assurance of that salvation: believers have a great work to do, in order to evidence their faith, adorn the gospel, glorify God, and serve their generation. Magistrates, ministers, the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlearned, in their various situations, may all find some work to do, nay, they have that, which is their appropriate duty and the required improvement of talents; and they are called to "do it with their might," and to the utmost of their abilities. (*Notes, and P. O. Matt. xxv. 14—30. Luke xvi. 1—12.*) The speedy approach of death should cause us to quicken our pace, and double our diligence in our proper employment: seeing "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither we are going," and to which we approach every moment. Alas! how wretched are they, whose bodies are conveyed to the tomb, and their souls into an eternal state, before they have properly begun the great work of life! And if sorrow could enter heaven, methinks, believers would there mourn over their lost opportunities of doing good to their fellow-sinners, and so glorifying their God and Saviour, while they lived here on earth.

V. 11—18.

Whilst we guard against supineness and procrastination; we should also beware of self-dependence in our undertakings; otherwise we shall meet with disappointment and vexation: for every one may observe, in all places "under the sun," that no abilities or external advantages can ensure success. Happy then are they, whose "works are in the hands of God!" he will give success to them if that be best; or he will recompense the intention when unsuccessful. He appoints that "time and chance, which happen to all men:" he enables them to run the race, and then confers the prize: he gives strength and victory, wisdom and favour, opportunity, and understanding to embrace it; "grace and glory," and every other "good thing to them that walk uprightly." But they who know not his accepted time, and "the day of their visitation;" (*Notes, Luke xix. 41—44. 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2;*) who do not "seek him whilst he may be found," and so waste their lives in the pursuit of earthly vanities; will be inextricably entangled in the snare of Satan, and perish suddenly with-

DEAD flies cause ^a the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour: so doth ^b a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.

2 A ^c wise man's heart is at his right

hand; ^d but a fool's heart is at his left.

3 Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his ^e wisdom fail-eth him, ^f and he saith to every one that he is a fool.

out remedy. Whatever opportunities we may slip, whatever advantages we miss, and whatever calamities befall us, through unforeseen and apparent casual events, or our own impolicy; if we do not neglect the salvation of our souls, a few days will set all right. But superior talents, and even great success, will be a mere vanity to him, who does not mind "the one thing needful." Even the good works of wise and pious men often expose them to present vexations. If we would not be rendered uneasy by perpetual disappointments, we must not expect much gratitude from men, for the most disinterested and beneficial services: but learn to do good from simple "good-will to men," and regard to the honour of God; and in hopes of his gracious acceptance. In this way we shall "not be weary of well doing, assured that in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." (Note, Gal. vi. 6—10.)—Wisdom and grace are indeed far more valuable, than wealth, power, "weapons of war," or any external accomplishments: yet they are seldom much respected in the poor and obscure. Under urgent distresses indeed, men will sometimes regard the counsels of "a poor wise man;" and be willing to use his superior skill, to serve a present turn, or promote their own interest. But when such needy friends are no more wanted, they will rarely be remembered: nay, they may assure themselves, that their wisdom will by numbers be despised, and their words disregarded. For men are so attracted by glare and noise, that the magnificent, the forward, and the loquacious, will ever be the favourites of the ignorant, unthinking multitudes, with which the world abounds, and "bear rule among them:" and the wise must be contented to speak in quiet, and with effect, to the few, who are more desirous to profit, than to be flattered and amused. And this is not only the common case in popular assemblies; but even in those places, where men meet together to hear the word God: for numbers prefer a smoother doctrine, and are more attentive to the embellishments and eloquence of the preacher, than to his important message. Thus ministers are tempted to accommodate their discourses to the corrupt taste of the audience; and in this way especially "one sinner destroyeth much good," and disseminates false doctrines, to the deception of many souls, and the great scandal of the gospel; whilst "many follow his pernicious ways, by means of whom the way of truth is evil spoken of."—But whilst we lament these ruinous follies and mistakes of mankind; let us watch against ingratitude to our benefactors, especially to any poor man who has been useful to us. Let us recollect and consider carefully, whether some benefactor of this description, has not been left unrewarded and forgotten by us; that if it has been so, we may, though late, repay our obligations. (Notes, Esth. vi.) Let us learn to judge of men by their wisdom and piety, and not by their wealth or splendour; let us submit to the will, and depend on the power and mercy, of our God; and then none

of our labours will be in vain, however now neglected. And seeing that the great "Deliverer" of sinners "from the wrath to come," and from the power of Satan, when he became poor for our sakes, was so despised and hated, nay, even now is treated with so much ingratitude and contempt; and seeing we ourselves are so often forgetful of our immense obligations, and inattentive to his wise and gracious words: we have the less reason to complain, if we meet with similar treatment in this evil world.

NOTES.

CHAP. X. V. 1. When the perfumer has compounded any precious ointment, with great skill and attention; if he do not cover it carefully, the flies, attracted by the fragrance, will be entangled in it, and there die and putrefy: and this will spoil the perfume, and render the ointment noisome. Thus, when a man has acquired, with great care and pains, a high reputation for wisdom, or any other honourable qualification; if he remit his watchfulness, and be heedless, self-indulgent, or imprudent, only in a few instances, and those by no means heinous, they will tarnish his character, and sink him into neglect. For in proportion as a person becomes conspicuous, he is the more strictly watched; greater things are expected from him, and less allowance made for his infirmities: nay, envy and malevolence become more busy in reducing his character to the ordinary level; and in impeding those useful designs which his credit, if it had not been impaired, might have rendered successful. So that those mistakes which would scarcely have been counted blemishes in another man, will by many be deemed almost inexcusable crimes in him: and they will be gratified by detecting and exposing them. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ex. viii. 21. 24. xxx. 22—38. 2 Chr. xix. 2. Neh. vi. 10—14, v. 11, Matt. v. 14—16. Gal. ii. 11—16.)

V. 2, 3. A wise man's understanding is employed about the duties of his station, and his heart is in his work: it is his delight; he does it earnestly; and he therefore learns to do it skilfully, as a man who uses his right hand. But a fool employs no contrivance, because he is heartless as to every good thing; he understands any subject better than his own profession, and any one's duty better than his own. Thus he goes about his work, so to speak, in a left-handed manner, and makes nothing of it. 'A wise man always takes honest courses, but a fool turns into by ways.' Bp. Patrick. Indeed men of this intermeddling and conceited disposition discover their ignorance and folly on every occasion: they cannot take a journey, or walk abroad, or enter into conversation, but they run into such gross and evident errors, or engage in such disputes and projects, as expose them to every body; for they have not wisdom enough to conceal their own emptiness and mischievous dispositions. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, 11—15. v. 1—3, v. 3. Prov. xii. 15, 16. xviii. 1, 2. 6, 7.)

4 ¶ If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, ^f leave not thy place; ^g for yielding pacifieth great offences.

5 ¶ There is ^h an evil *which* I have seen under the sun, ⁱ as an error *which* proceedeth ^{*} from the ruler:

6 ^k Folly is set in great ^l dignity, and ^m the rich sit in low place.

7 I ⁿ have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.

8 He ^o that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, ^p a serpent shall bite him.

9 Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; *and* he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby.

10 If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put

to more strength: but ^q wisdom is profitable to direct.

11 ¶ Surely ^r the serpent will bite without enchantment; and ^s a babbler is no better.

12 The ^t words of a wise man's mouth *are* ^u gracious; ^v but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.

13 The ^w beginning of the words of his mouth *is* foolishness; and the end of his ^x talk *is* mischievous madness.

14 A ^y fool also ^{*} is full of words: ^{*} a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him who can tell him?

15 The ^z labour of the foolish wea-

^a 2 Sam. i. 16. ^b 1 Kings xx. 40—42. ^c Ps. lxiv. 8. cxl. 9. ^d Prov. x. 8. 10. 14. xviii. 6—8. xix. 5. xxvi. 9. ^e Luke xix. 22. ^f Judg. xiv. 15. ^g 1 Sam. xx. 26—33. xxii. 7. 8. 16—18. xxv. 10. 11. ^h 2 Sam. xix. 41—43. xx. 1. ⁱ 2 Kings vi. 27. 31. ^j Prov. xxix. 9. ^k Matt. ii. 7. 8. 16. ^l Luke vi. 2. 11. xi. 38. 53, 54. ^m John xii. 10. ⁿ Acts v. 28—33. vi. 9—11. vii. 54—59. xix. 24—28. ^o Heb. mouth. ^p u v. 3. 7. ^q Prov. x. 19. xv. 2. ^r Heb. multiplieth words. ^s Job xxxiv. 37. xxxv. 16. ^t x iii. 22. vi. 12. viii. 7. ^u Jam. iv. 13, 14. ^v y 3. 10. ^w Is. xlv. 12—17. xlvii. 12, 13. lv. 2. lvii. 1. ^x Hab. ii. 6. 13. ^y Matt. xi. 28—30.

may probably fall into it himself; so he who violently seeks the ruin of an obnoxious competitor, will probably compass his own destruction. (*Marg. Ref. n.—Notes, Esth. vii. 9, 10. Ps. vii. 14—16, v. 15. Prov. xxvi. 24—27, v. 26.*) He who breaks a hedge, which divides between one man's field and another's, may expect to be bitten by a serpent that lies concealed in it: and thus the man, who attempts to break down the fences of law and authority, on account of some personal offence, may expect a fatal end. He who should attempt to remove the stones, which served for land-marks, or that were too heavy for him, would probably be crushed by them: and so will he who attempts to subvert an established government. And if a man intends to cleave a knotty block of wood; he must first procure proper tools, and duly sharpen them, and then proceed cautiously and skilfully; otherwise he will endanger and weary himself to little purpose. Thus those, who would compass practicable and desirable alterations, should proceed with caution, and procure proper helpers, and use cool deliberation and steady perseverance; and not expect to carry matters by force and violence, which are not sufficient even to cleave a block of wood. In all these matters wisdom is profitable to direct to proper means and occasions, and to prevent mischief, and a man's wearying himself in vain.—'Without wisdom, whatsoever a man taketh in hand, turneth to his own hurt.' (*Marg. Ref. o, p.—Notes, 11—15, v. 15. ix. 13—18, vv. 16—18. Matt. x. 16.*)

V. 11—15. The serpent was supposed capable of being charmed by certain incantations, which would prevent its biting; (*Note, Ps. lviii. 3—5*;) but otherwise it could not safely be meddled with: and those babblers, who by flattery, plausibility, and slander, insinuate themselves into the favour of weak princes, are no better than the serpent. In themselves, they may indeed be as despicable as they are poisonous: but they have it in their power to do immense mischief, and must be opposed with great caution. They may be outwitted and supplanted: but it is dangerous to attempt overpowering them; for they do not care whom they destroy, if exasperated. In general the wise man will

^z Ps. cvii. 4, 7. Is. xxxv. 8—10. Jer. l. 4, 5. rieth every one of them; ² because he knoweth not how to go to the city.

^a 2 Chr. xiii. 7. xxxiii. 1, &c. xxxvi. 2, 5, 9, 11. Is. iii. 4, 5, 12. ^b 16 ¶ Woe to thee, O land, ^a when thy king is a child, ^b and thy princes eat ^c in the morning!

^c Prov. xx. 1, 2. Is. v. 11, 12. xxviii. 7, 8. Hos. vii. 5—7. ^d 17 Blessed art thou, O land, ^d when thy king is the son of nobles, ^e and thy princes eat in due season, for strength and not for drunkenness!

^e Prov. xxxi. 4, 5. ^f Prov. xii. 24. xiv. 1. xx. 4. xxi. 25. xxiii. 21. xxiv. 30, 31. Heb. vi. 11, 12. 2 Pet. i. 5—10. ¹⁸ By much ^f slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness

of the hands the house droppeth through.

¹⁹ A ^g feast is made for laughter, ^h and wine ^{*} maketh merry; ⁱ but money answereth all things.

²⁰ ^k Curse not the king, no, not in thy [†] thought; and curse not the rich ^l in thy bed-chamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.

viii. 3. xvi. 9. Acts ii. 45. xi. 29. Phil. iv. 15—19. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19. Is. viii. 21. Acts xxiii. 5. [†] Or, conscience. vii. 21, 22. ^l Luke xii. 2, 3.

gain his advantage, by speaking with gentleness, candour, and discretion, and in a manner suited to procure him favour. But the lips of the foolish man, as it were, dig a pit in which to swallow up himself. When he first begins to speak, he betrays his ignorance and impertinence: and if he meet with the least check, he is put off his guard, and becomes like a madman, in rage and abuse. It is in vain, therefore, to enter into any contest with him: for he is full of words; and will speak last, though his discourse be so perplexed, that no one can tell what he intends to do, or what he will say next, or how his impertinent discourse will end. And, in like manner, when he undertakes the management of affairs, he is sure to weary himself to no purpose: for he is so inconsiderate and headstrong, that if he undertook a journey to some city; he would neither be able to find the way, nor be willing to follow another's directions. So that nothing can hinder a wise man's prevailing against such a competitor; except his own indignation and indiscretion give the foolish man an advantage against him, to crush him by violence. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 5—10. v. 1—3, v. 3. 4—7, v. 7. Ps. xxxvii. 29—31. Prov. x. 8—10. 14. 19—21. xii. 18, 19. xv. 20. 24. xvi. 23. xviii. 6—8. xxv. 11, 12. xxix. 9.)

A babler. (11) "The master of a tongue." (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.*)—A flatterer and slanderer seems principally intended.

V. 16—19. A prince, who is a child in years, or in ignorance, fickleness, and caprice, is a heavy judgment from God to any nation: especially, when the nobles, who ought to be able and active statesmen and counsellors, begin and spend their days in sensual indulgence. (*Marg. Ref.* a—c. —*Notes*, 1 Kings xii. 8—15. 2 Chr. xiii. 4—12, v. 7. Prov. xx. 1. Is. iii. 1—9, vv. 4, 5. v. 11—17, vv. 11, 12. 22, 23. xxviii. 7, 8. Hos. vii. 5—7.) But the land is especially favoured, and is likely to prosper, where the king is descended from noble progenitors, and inherits their capacity for government: or, as some explain the word, when he is a man of mature years and experience; and when his princes are temperate, and apply themselves to business. (*Notes*, 2 Kings xx. 1, 2. xxii. 1, 2. xxiv. 17, 18. For as the sluggard lets his house go to decay for want of repairs, till the roof "droppeth through," and the whole moulders into ruins; so the kingdom, which is governed by careless and profligate rulers, must come to destruction. For while they are making feasts and indulging themselves in wine, as if they had nothing to do, but to laugh and be merry; the publick treasure is wasted, the national defence is neglected, heavy taxes must be imposed, the people grow discon-

tented, the enemies are emboldened, and every thing concurs to bring dire calamities on the state. The money which such rulers waste in their luxury, and lavish on the companions of their revels and debaucheries, would have answered all the purposes of good government, and provided for every emergency: but, being thrown away, manifold oppressions, disturbances, and miseries must needs ensue, which a few drunken feasts will very ill compensate. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.* d—i.—*Notes*, 5—7. ii. 1—3. ix. 7—9. Prov. xxiv. 30—34. xxxi. 4—7. Dan. v. 1—9. Eph. v. 15—20, v. 18. 1 Tim. vi. 17—19. 1 Pet. iv. 3—5. 9—11.)

V. 20. Government, and the distinctions of rank in society, are the appointments of God, and productive of much good to mankind. Kings, magistrates, and great men, therefore, with all their defects and faults, are entitled to respect and honour: and as none ought openly to revile and wish evil to them; so malice against them should not be indulged in the heart, or ill wishes allowed even in thought, or vented in the most private manner. And men should remember, that secret discourses and combinations of this kind, are often detected by means almost as unlikely, as if a bird of the air should convey the intelligence to the parties concerned.—Kings have their friends and emissaries, where they are not supposed to be present. 'Their ears are as long as their arms;' and God himself often wonderfully brings treason to light. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes*, vii. 21, 22. viii. 2. Is. viii. 21, 22. Acts xxiii. 1—5, vv. 3—5. Rom. xiii. 1—7. 1 Pet. ii. 13—17. 2 Pet. ii. 10, 11. Jude 9, 10.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—10.

A reputation for wisdom and honour, is not only more valuable than "precious ointment," but more difficult to be preserved from losing its good savour, and becoming offensive. (vii. 1.)—Seeing we are never entirely secure against tarnishing our characters by one folly or another, as long as we live, this may be considered as an additional reason, why the day of a wise man's "death is better than that of his birth:" for when he dies, his reputation is established, and a sanction given to all he has done for the good of mankind; whereas the indiscretion of an unguarded hour, or an incidental transgression, may at any time bring all his endeavours and devices into disrepute.—Every professed Christian, in proportion as he is zealous for religion, may be considered as "in reputation for wisdom and honour," and a little folly will be more offensive in him

CHAP. XI.

An exhortation to be liberal and unwearied in doing

than in another. The world will watch him more narrowly, and censure him more severely: his profession condemns their principles and conduct, and excites their enmity; and therefore they will make no allowances for him. Every minister of the gospel is, in a higher sense, "in reputation for wisdom and honour:" he is "a city set upon a hill, that cannot be hid;" his faithful preaching will condemn numbers, and they will watch for matter of accusation against him, that he may appear no better than they. (*P. O. Matt. v. 13—16.*) How careful then should we be to "abstain from all appearance of evil!" and how ready to make any sacrifice, rather than give a handle to those, who seek to hinder our usefulness, by blasting our characters! In general, retirement is most eligible: for few are much in the way of temptation and observation, without in some degree weakening their own influence. As men arrive at greater eminence in these respects, they are more noticed, will be more severely judged, and their mistakes will be of more extensive bad consequence. Alas! how many have we heard of, whose examples have illustrated these observations! Men of eminent reputation for abilities, for zeal, piety, and usefulness; who have sunk into neglect, or even become a disgrace to the cause of truth, by being overcome by temptation, or perhaps *unjustly* suspected of some crime, for want of a proper attention to appearances! It is, in such cases, vain to exclaim at the censoriousness of mankind: we all ought to know that the world is censorious, especially towards religious characters; and for that reason should "provide for things honest, not only in the sight of God, but also before men;" and "by well doing, to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men;" and pray without ceasing for grace to enable us "to walk in wisdom towards them that are without."—A man's wisdom is evinced by his heart being engaged, and his ingenuity exerted, in his proper work; that he may be skilful and successful in it. How necessary then is it, that ministers should give themselves wholly to their proper work; in order to become "approved unto God workmen, that need not be ashamed," and that "their profiting may appear unto all men!" Indeed every man, who does not delight in God's commandments, will at length be proved emphatically a fool. But we meet with great numbers, among every class in society, who prove themselves ignorant and foolish upon every emergency: all their wisdom consists in plausible professions and artifices, which continually fail them; and their words and works betray their real characters to all around.—It is generally our wisdom peaceably to abide in our places in the community; to avoid giving needless offence, especially to our superiors; and, if we have inadvertently offended, to disarm resentment by submissions: for those who rashly engage in opposition to authority, seldom escape without some grievous calamity. In this evil world, we must expect that rulers, as well as others, will mistake and do wrong; and we should be prepared to make many and great allowances. But they should be warned of their duties, and apprized of the imprudence and bad consequences of "setting folly in great dignity, and causing

good, 1—6. The prosperous should expect affliction and death, and beware of future misery, 7, 8: and young persons should remember judgment in their most cheerful hours, 9, 10

"the rich to sit in low place." Yet when such grievances are experienced, without great caution men will incur far worse consequences in attempting to redress them. In every case, resentment and pride are dangerous counsellors; and hasty and violent measures are scarcely ever either equitable or expedient. Those who seek the downfall of others, will themselves often fall into mischief: in attempting to break through customary rules and limits, immense dangers are incurred: and "wisdom is" not only "profitable to direct" us what ought to be done, but in what manner it may safely be attempted. Times and occasions must be waited for; prudent contrivance will go much further than brutal force; and those who attempt even salutary alterations, without having previously adopted suitable plans, and engaged proper coadjutors, will seldom succeed, and will often render matters worse than before.

V. 11—20.

Those who would do good must not *despise* their opposers, though they be superficial and worthless. Men may do much mischief with such a mean capacity, as could never have attained to any thing useful. A vain babbler wants neither power nor inclination to bite like a serpent. Gentle means are commonly most prevalent; and they whose words are soft and insinuating, the language of truth, piety, and goodness, will have most influence: whilst the vehement and endless vociferation, the furious passion, the boastings, railings, menaces, and "mischievous madness," which many employ, only prove their own folly, prevent the success of their own purposes, and give their opponents the advantage against them. Such as are most "full of words," scarcely ever most abound in sense or prudence: and those, who will have the last word in dispute, have seldom truth on their side: great talkers are frequently very defective, indecisive, or rash, when they proceed to action; so that they lose themselves in the plainest matters; and alas! how many foolish men weary themselves with vain labour about religion, and will not know the only way to Zion, the city of our God!—When the government of kingdoms devolves on those who are weak and wicked, we should remember that the Lord is displeased, and so use proper means of averting his indignation: and it becomes us to be very thankful, when affairs of state are prudently and successfully managed.—How many indulge sloth, and spend their time in feasting, intemperance, and vain mirth, to the ruin of their families and of their souls! And we need not wonder that the affairs of nations are often ruined in the same way: for though money is not worthy of being idolized, or even hoarded; yet it is too valuable to be wasted in vanity and luxury. It cannot indeed purchase pardon of sin, or spiritual grace and peace; but, in respect of outward concerns, it may be said to "answer all things." Besides providing what is needful and convenient for ourselves and families, it will subserve a thousand purposes of benevolence, and even of piety. It may endow alms-houses, hospitals, schools, and seminaries of religious instruction; it may educate and support ministers and missionaries; it

^a Deut. xv. 7—11. **CAST** ^athy bread upon the ^{*}waters; ^bfor thou shalt find it after many days.

^c Heb. *face of the waters*. Is. xxxii. 8. **2** Give ^ca portion to ^dseven, and also to eight; ^efor thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.

^b 6. Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. Prov. xi. 18, xix. 17. Matt. x. 13. xxv. 40. Luke xiv. 14. 2 Cor. ix. 6. Gal. vi. 8—10. Heb. vi. 10. **3** If ^fthe clouds be full of rain, they empty *themselves* upon the earth: and ^gif the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.

^c Neh. viii. 10. Esth. ix. 19. 22. Ps. cxli. 9. Luke vi. 30—35. 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19. **4** He ^hthat observeth the wind shall ^eDan. iv. 27. Acts xi. 28—30. Gal. vi. 1. Eph. v. 16. Heb. xiii. 3. ^f1 Kings xviii. 45. Ps. lxxv. 9—13. Is. lv. 10, 11. 1 John iii. 17. ^gMatt. iii. 10. Luke xiii. 7. xvi. 22—26. ^hProv. iii. 27, 28. xx. 4. xxii. 13.

may build places of worship, and enable those who love the word of God, to circulate it, at home and abroad, in every land and language: indeed no good work can well be accomplished without it. Very few men, however, hit the true medium in this respect: and many well-meaning persons deprive themselves of the ability of doing good to numbers, by an inconsiderate profusion; and whilst they shun the vice of covetousness, run headlong into the opposite extreme. But wisdom teaches us to estimate every thing according to the benefit which may be derived from it, and to apply it to its proper use; to attend on the duties of our station, and not to intermeddle with matters that belong not to us; to avoid doing or speaking those things in secret, which, being detected, might tend to our injury and disgrace; to curb every rising of malevolence, and to “fear God, honour the king,” and render unto every man his due. (*Notes and P. O. Matt. xxii. 15—22. Note, Luke xii. 1—7, vv. 1—3.*)

NOTES.

CHAP. XI. V. 1, 2. Solomon had repeatedly recommended a cheerful use of worldly things, as a remedy against their vanity: and here he adds an exhortation to the liberal use of them in acts of beneficence. The expression, “Cast thy bread upon the waters,” may perhaps allude to the husbandman’s casting his bread-corn, which he could ill spare, upon a marshy soil, or even on the waters that covered it, where apparently he had little prospect of a crop. Men should allot a considerable proportion from their gains, earnings, or estates, according “as God hath prospered them,” to supply the wants of the needy, and even of the unworthy and ungrateful. This may seem like throwing their provisions into the waters: but it will certainly not be lost, and long afterwards they will reap the benefit of it. They are therefore exhorted to give a portion of their substance, not merely to one or two, but to seven or eight, to as many as occasion requires; and not to object, that they have already given to this or the other person. And this they should do, under a conviction of the instability of human affairs; and as sensible that all their other possessions may be soon torn from them, but that this will be safe, and reserved for them, in all possible emergencies. ‘Here again Solomon contradicts the vulgar principle, upon which covetous wretches move; and directs the quite contrary. They think all is lost, that is given away in charity: no such matter, saith

not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

5 As ⁱthou knowest not what *is* the way of the spirit, ^k*nor* how the bones *do grow* in the womb of her that is with child; ^leven so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

6 In the morning ^msow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for ⁿthou knowest not whether shall [†]prosper, either this or that, or whether they both *shall be* alike good.

ⁱ John iii. 8. ^k Ps. cxxxix. 14, 15. ^l Job v. 9. xxvi. 5—14. xxxvi. 24—33. xxxvii. 23. xxxviii. 4, &c. xxxix. xl. xli. Ps. xl. 5. xcii. 5. civ. 24. Is. xl. 28. Rom. xi. 33. ^m ix. 10. Is. lv. 10. Hos. x. 12. Mark iv. 26—28. John iv. 36—38. 2 Cor. ix. 6. 2 Tim. iv. 2. ⁿ ix. 1. Hag. i. 6—11. ii. 17—19. Zech. viii. 11, 12. Acts xi. 20, 21. 1 Cor. iii. 5—7. 2 Cor. ix. 10, 11. [†] Heb. *be right*.

‘the preacher (1), the fruit of it will be found hereafter, ‘beyond what can be imagined! Oh, saith the covetous ‘man again, I know not what will be hereafter; now I ‘have enough, but in the latter end of my life I may want; ‘and therefore it is best to save whilst I may. No, saith ‘the preacher, for that very reason give. ...For thou ‘knowest not how calamitous the times may shortly be, ‘and then the good thou hast done will stand thee in ‘greater stead, than all the goods thou enjoyest: ...which ‘perhaps may be taken from thee, and leave thee nothing ‘to do good withal; but make thee an object of other men’s ‘charity; which no person hath greater reason to expect, ‘than he, who when he had wherewithal, hath been kind ‘to others in that condition. ...When thou thinkest not ‘of it, God will requite thee, either in this world, or in ‘the next.’ *Bp. Patrick. (Marg. and Marg. Ref. a, b.—Notes, 3—6, v. 6. Ps. cxxvi. 5, 6. Prov. xix. 17. xxii. 9. Is. xxxii. 6—8. Luke vi. 37, 38. Acts xi. 27—30. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. 2 Cor. ix. 6—15. See on Note, Prov. xi. 24, 25. —A portion to seven. (2) Marg. Ref. c, d.—Notes, Neh. viii. 10—12.)*

V. 3—6. The clouds exhale the water, and it is treasured up in them, on purpose that they may empty themselves in watering the earth, and in diffusing plenty. Thus God enables men to get wealth, or knowledge, or influence, that they may do good with them: nor can these distinctions profit them, if they do not benefit others. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps. lxxv. 9—13. Prov. xxv. 14. Is. lv. 10, 11. Hos. vi. 1—5, vv. 3—5. Jude 11—13.*) Speedily they will be cut down as trees: and as the tree continues where it fell; so will men abide in that state in which death leaves them, and this will be according as they have, or have not, brought forth good fruit. (*Marg. Ref. g.—Notes, Matt. iii. 7—10. Gal. vi. 6—10.*) Selfish men object to this duty, from their circumstances, families, or necessary expenses; and especially from the vices and ingratitude of the poor. But the husbandman, who should thus object to the plowing or sowing of his ground, or reaping his crop, because the wind was cold or rough, or the clouds threatened rain, would miss his seed-time, and lose his harvest: and so will they, who have always an excuse ready when a good work is proposed. (*Marg. Ref. h.—Notes, Prov. iii. 27, 28. xx. 4.*)—Men are ready to say, we cannot conceive in what manner we shall ever be repaid, for the trouble and expense of our charity. But can they understand, how the *spirit* or *soul* is united to the body; or how

o Job xxxiii. 28. 7 ¶ Truly ° the light is sweet, and
30. Ps. lvi. 13. a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to
Prov. xv. 30. behold the sun:

p vii. 11. Ps. 8 But ° if a man live many years
lxxxiv. 11. Matt. and ° rejoice in them all; ° yet let him
v. 45. remember the days of darkness; for
q vi. 6. viii. 12. they shall be many. ° All that cometh
r iii. 12, 13. v. 18. is vanity.
—20. viii. 15.

s vii. 14. xii. 1—5. 9 ° Rejoice, O young man, ° in thy
Deut. xxxii. 29. youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in
Job x. 22. xv. 23. xviii. 18. Jer. xiii. 16. Joel ii. 2. Matt. xxii. 13. Jude 18.
t i. 1—11. 15. 17. 19. 21—13. 26. iv. 8. 16. v. 15. 16. vi. 11.

u 1 Kings xviii. 27. xxii. 15. Luke xv. 12, 13. x xii. 1. 1 Kings xviii. 12. Lam. iii. 27.

the body is fashioned in the womb? And if a man be unable to understand these things, how can it be expected, that he should know the other manifold “works of God” who maketh all? (Marg. Ref. i—1.—Notes, viii. 16, 17. Job v. 8—10. xxvi. 14. Ps. cxxxix. 14—16. John iii. 7, 8. 12, 13.) Every good action therefore, which springs from a right principle, ought to be considered, as sowing the seed of a future harvest: true wisdom consists in doing this daily, and in every part of the day, without sparing trouble or expense, from youth, to extreme old age: and if many endeavours to be useful seem to terminate in disappointment, this should not be a discouragement; for none can know which of all their attempts will be most successful, or be certain that they will not all succeed, though they do not know it, or live to see it. (Marg. Ref. m, n.)

V. 7, 8. Ungodly men expect the comfort of life from health and prosperity, which are as pleasant to the mind as light is to the eyes, and as the sun cheers us after a gloomy season. But should a man live many years, and enjoy every pleasure of life through them all: let him remember that this season will speedily pass away; tedious days of sickness and pain may precede death; and if these be his “good things,” an eternity of darkness and despair will follow. All this outward prosperity then is a mere vanity. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, ii. 24—26. iii. 12—15. viii. 11—15. xii. 1—7. Ps. xxxix. 5—8. xc. 7—11.)

V. 9, 10. This address to young persons is peculiarly animated and affecting. Solomon supposes that in general they would not be convinced that “all was vanity,” until they had made the trial; that they would desire liberty and opportunity to pursue every pleasure, and to gratify every inclination, and regale every sense, during the vigour of youth; and that they were sanguine in their expectations of happiness. ‘Well,’ says he, ‘follow the bent of your desires, wherever they lead you: do as I have done; repeat the same experiments, as far as it is in your power: but be assured at the same time, that for all these things God will call you into judgment.’ He then exhorts them seriously, to behave so in their youth, as may best remove or prevent sorrow and disease in future years, and the wrath of God in a future state; or, to guard against both the vehement passions of the mind, and the ungovernable appetites of the body: “for childhood and youth are “vanity.” Even in that early period sickness and death may come, youthful pleasures are vain and empty, and even in childhood and youth the heart is exceedingly prone to sin and folly. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—See on Note, 7, 8.—Notes, ii. 1—17. iii. 16, 17. xii. 1. 11—14. Gen. iii. 6. vi. 5. Prov. xxii. 15. Jer. xvii. 9, 10. Rom. ii. 4—11. 2 Cor. v. 9—12. 1 Pet. iv. 3—5.)

the days of thy youth, and ° walk in ° the ways of thine heart, and ° in the sight of thine eyes: but ° know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.

10 Therefore ° remove ° sorrow from thy heart, ° and put away evil from thy flesh; ° for childhood and youth are vanity.

xxiv. 25. Rom. ii. 5—11. xiv. 10. 1 Cor. iv. 5. 2 Cor. v. 10. 2 Pet. iii. 7. Rev. xx. 12—15. b xii. 1. Job xiii. 26. Ps. xxv. 7. 2 Pet. iii. 11—14. * Or, anger. Ps. xc. 7—11. c Job xx. 11. 2 Tim. ii. 22. d i. 2. 14. Ps. xxxix. 5. Prov. xxii. 15.

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

Nothing tends more to give us a sanctified and comfortable use of outward things, than liberal and well directed beneficence. Every “work and labour of love” to others, for the Lord’s sake, will prove advantageous to ourselves: the more abundantly we bring forth these fruits of faith and grace, the better we shall be prepared for every evil that can befall us on earth: and that which is thus expended, is more effectually secured, and bears higher interest, than any other part of our property. Unbelievers indeed think it all thrown away, as “bread cast upon the waters:” but faith knows it to be “seed sown” in well watered land, which, after a time of patient waiting, will yield a plenteous increase. Unbelief therefore hoards against the evil day: faith “lends to the LORD,” to be repaid when he sees it is wanted. Unbelief, as the parent of avarice, resembles the clouds exhaling and retaining the waters; but faith, working by love, resembles the clouds dispensing their stores, and emptying themselves on the parched earth. The covetous man, however, will not part with his idolized treasures till death tears him from them. Then, as he lived to himself, he is cut down like a barren tree, and cast into the fire, there to remain for ever: but the believer, who has lived to God, and brought forth fruit as “a tree of righteousness,” will flourish in the paradise of God for ever. Yet selfishness will continue to make excuses and objections; and the dread of present loss, self-denial, or inconvenience, renders men reluctant to every proposed method of doing good: thus they lose their seed-time and harvest, and their hoarded abundance will rise up against them for their condemnation at the last day. But let us rely on the faithful word of God, and leave him to make it good in his own time and manner. Let the rich be liberal in these profitable services, and others according to their ability. Let not ministers be slack, or discouraged in their work, because they do not see their prayers answered, and their labours blessed. Let them sow the good seed plentifully, and with perseverance, and they will “find it after many days:” the Lord works by them, at those times, and in those ways, of which they are not aware; they cannot tell which sermon or exhortation he may please to bless, or whether they may not all be useful. Let it suffice, that God will accept and recompense every well-meant endeavour; and the whole will subserve the purposes of his glory, and the salvation of souls. And let no Christian be weary of well-doing, in every way. This will do more to render life comfortable, than carnal prosperity and pleasure.—The light of the Sun of Righteousness and his healing beams are far more pleasing to

CHAP. XII.

An exhortation to early piety, 1. A description of the infirmities of old age, and the approach and consequences of death, 2—7. A repeated declaration that “all is vanity;” the preacher’s purpose and care in

his instructions; and the solemn conclusion of his subject, in a charge to fear and obey God, as the whole of man, and thus to prepare for judgment, 8—14.

REMEMBER now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, ^b while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, ^c when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

2 While ^d the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, ^e nor the clouds return after the rain:

3 In the day when the keepers of

the house shall tremble, and the ^f strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders ^g cease because they are few, ^h and those that look out at the windows be darkened,

4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and ^h all the daughters of musick shall be brought low:

5 Also *when* they shall be afraid of *that which is high*, and fears *shall be* in the way, ⁱ and the ^k almond-tree shall flourish, and the grass-hopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: ^l because man goeth to his long home, ^m and the mourners go about the streets:

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the

^f 2 Sam. xxi. 15—17. Ps. xc. 9, 10. cii. 23. Zech. viii. 4.
^g Or, *fail because they grind little.*
^h 2 Sam. xix. 35.

ⁱ Gen. xlii. 38. xlii. 29. 31. Lev. xix. 32. Job xv. 10. Ps. lxxi. 18. Prov. xvi. 31. xx. 29. Is. xlii. 4.
^k Jer. i. 11.
^l ix. 10. Job xvii. 13. xxx. 23. Ps. xlix. 10—14. Heb. ix. 27.
^m Gen. i. 3—10. Jer. ix. 17—20. Mark v. 38, 39.

the believer’s soul, than the light of the sun to his eyes: and though he must expect pain, sickness, and death, yet his Redeemer will not leave him comfortless: his Sun may be clouded and eclipsed; but it shall never go down to leave him in darkness and despair. Soon will the longest life of earthly pleasure and prosperity expire: and how numerous and dreary will be the days, the years, the countless, endless ages of darkness, which await those who “die in their sins!” Let the careless and the carnal remember this, and prepare for their closing scene. Nor can young persons begin this needful work too soon. While their spirits are lively, and their hearts cheerful, let them so temper their joy, as to recollect continually the account they must give of their whole conduct. And let those, (alas, how numerous are they!) who determine to give a loose to every appetite, and rush into every scene of dissipation and vicious pleasure, to which they can have access, take this along with them, ‘That God registers every one of their sinful thoughts and desires, their idle words, and wicked works; and will at last produce the account of numberless crimes, which they committed with their jovial comrades, and speedily forgot.’ If they would then avoid remorse, terror, and anguish in future years; if they would have hope and comfort on a dying bed; if they would escape temporal and eternal misery; let them learn to bridle their passions, in the fear of God, and in the view of this great season of retribution; let them remember the vanity of youthful pleasures, and the uncertainty of human life; and let them anticipate those reflections, which, neglecting this advice, they may hereafter make on their own conduct, when oppressed with pain and terror in sickness, old age, or the approach of death; or when condemned at the tribunal of the righteous Judge.

NOTES.

CHAP. XII. V. 1. The word, rendered “Creator,” is plural, and may refer to the expression used at the creation of Adam and Eve: “Let us make man.” (Notes, Gen. i.

26, 27, v. 26. Job xxxv. 9—13, v. 10.)—This exhortation is connected with the close of the preceding chapter. (Note, xi. 9, 10.) Instead of that vain and vicious conduct, which tends to so many future evils, Solomon recommends an early attention to religion. In allusion to man’s natural forgetfulness of God, he calls upon young persons to “remember their Creator.” (Marg. Ref. a. Notes, Gen. xxxix. 1—10. 1 Sam. xii. 2—7. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 3—7. Ps. lxxi. 17, 18. Prov. viii. 17. xxii. 6. Luke i. 11—17, v. 15. 2 Tim. i. 3—5. P. O. 1—9. Note, 2 Tim. iii. 14—17. P. O. 10—17.) They should remember his glorious perfections, as displayed in the work of creation; their own relations and obligations to him, and dependence on him, as their Creator and Lord; the duties thence resulting, and the account which they must render; the value of his favour, and “the power of his wrath,” in whom they live, move, and are. They should remember their sins against their Creator, and repent and seek forgiveness of them; and their duties, and set about performing them, in dependence on his mercy and grace, and a desire to live to his glory. This should be done, as early as may be, whilst the body is vigorous and the spirits active; and before those “evil days” or “years” approach in which no pleasure can be found, except in communion with God and in the hope of heaven. At that trying season there will be no occasion for the additional anguish of reviewing a mispent life: repentance and conversion will be attended with peculiar and mighty difficulties: and the circumstance of not having renounced sin and worldly vanities, till a man is forced to say, “I have no pleasure in them,” will render his sincerity very questionable to his own conscience.—The word rendered *youth*, seems to mean *the best and choicest season of life*. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 2—7. xi. 7, 8. 2 Sam. xix. 31—39. Ps. xc. 7—10, v. 10.)

V. 2—7. This figurative description of old age and its infirmities, has furnished the critics with much employment, and a field for the display of their ingenuity: but such matters must here be handled with great brevity.—

^a iii. 26. Gen. iii. 19. xviii. 27. Job iv. 19, 20. vii. 21. xx. 1. xxxiv. 14, 15. Ps. xc. 3. Dan. xii. 2.

pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.
7 Then shall the ⁿ dust return to the earth as it was; and ^o the spirit shall return unto ^p God who gave it.

^o iii. 21.
^p Gen. ii. 7. Num. xvi. 22. xxvii. 16. Is. lviii. 16. Jer. xxxviii. 16. Zech. xii. 1. Heb. xii. 9. 23.
^q i. 2. 14. ii. 17. 26. iv. 4. vi. 12. viii. 8. Ps. lxii. 9.

8 ¶ Vanity ^q of vanities, saith the Preacher; all is vanity.

^r 1 Kings viii. 12, &c. x. 8.

9 And ^{*} moreover, because the Preacher was wise, ^r he still taught the

people knowledge; yea, ^r he gave good heed, and sought out *and* set in order many proverbs.

10 The ^t Preacher sought to find out [†] acceptable words: and *that which was* ^u written *was* upright, *even* words of truth.

11 The words of the wise *are* ^x as goads, and as nails fastened *by* the

1 Kings iv. 32. Prov. i. 1 x. 1. xxv. 1.

t i. 1. 12.

† Heb. words of delight. Prov. xv. 23. 26. xvi. 21—24. xxv. 11, 12. 1 Tim. i. 15.

u Prov. i. 1—6 viii. 6—10. xxii. 17—21. Luke i. 1—4. John iii. 11. Col. i. 5.

x Jer. xxiii. 29. Matt. iii. 7. Acts ii. 37. 2 Cor. x. 4. Heb. iv. 12.

In old age, the relish for all pleasures is lost, and men grow indifferent even to those objects which once occasioned the most agreeable sensations: so that the sun, with its pleasant light, and the beautiful moon and stars, are, as it were, obscured to them; or the understanding, imagination, memory, and judgment, the lights of the mind, are so impaired that they seem darkened.—One affliction or pain succeeds another, as clouds return after heavy showers in a rainy season. (*Marg. Ref. d, e.—Notes, xi. 7, 8. Ps. xlii. 6—8, v. 7.*) The hands and arms, with which a man defends himself from assaults or accidents, as watchmen keep the house, grow feeble, and tremble when their help is requisite. The legs and thighs, which, as strong men, support the body, seem in old age to bend under its weight. The teeth, which used to grind the food, are most of them gone; and the few that remain are become nearly useless. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. f.—Notes, Gen. xlvii. 31. Josh. xxiii. 1. 2 Sam. xxi. 15—22. 1 Kings i. 1, 2. Ps. lxxi. 8, 9. 17, 18. Zech. viii. 4, 5.*)—The eyes, by which the soul looked, as it were, out of the windows, grow dim. Men become disinclined or incapacitated to open their mouths in publick debates, having lost the distinctness of their voice with their teeth: or they have little inclination to eat, as they cannot grind or chew their food, without pain and difficulty: or, as some understand it, they keep at home and retired, their doors being shut towards the street, because their health suffers from their not being able to digest their food as formerly. Their rest is so easily disturbed, that they awake and rise up, uneasy and alarmed, at the least noise, as the singing of a bird, or the crowing of a cock: and even when deafness is one part of their infirmities, their alarm is the greater, at hearing any unexpected noise. The voice and the ear, those daughters of musick, are no longer capable of performing their functions; or the spirits are too dull to let them attend to singing men and singing women with satisfaction. (*2 Sam. xix. 35.*) Every ascent in the way terrifies them, on account of the labour of climbing; they shun every high place through fear of falling from it; nay, they feel themselves so feeble and clumsy, that they dread being thrown down, or run over, whenever they walk out. Their heads, covered with white hair, seem to blossom like the almond tree: every little inconvenience, like the weight or the chirping of a grass-hopper, is a burden to them, and renders them fretful; or they are bowed down, so that their backbone projects like that of a locust, and they have no longer any desire after those pleasures which once allured them, nor any relish for them. (*Marg. Ref. i.*) Thus man draws nigh to the end of his journey, and will shortly be at his “long home,” or his *home of ages*. The grave may in some sense be thus called: but the eternal state of

happiness or misery, to which the soul removes at death, and to which the body will follow at the resurrection, is far more emphatically so called. (*Marg. Ref. l, m.—Notes, ix. 10. Job xvii. 13—16. Ps. xlix. 14—20. Heb. ix. 27, 28.*) When this takes place, others will, either sincerely or insincerely, mourn for him, as he formerly did for others. (*Marg. Ref. m.—Notes, Gen. l. 1—14. Jer. ix. 17—21. Matt. ix. 18—26, v. 23. Mark v. 35—43, vv. 38, 39.*) Then the “silver cord will be loosed:” which may mean, the inexplicable bond of union between body and soul; or the spinal marrow, which, by the nerves, continues sensation from the brain to every part of the body. Or the whole verse may be a description of the functions of life, taken from a well; where is a *cord* to the *bowl* or bucket, with which the water is drawn, a *wheel* by which the more easily to raise it, a *cistern* into which it may be poured, and a *pitcher*, or vessel, to carry it away with; but now all are broken or loosened, and become useless. Thus at death, the lungs cease to play, the heart ceases to beat, the blood to circulate; every vessel becomes useless; the whole surprising contrivance for forming and communicating the blood, which is the life, from the fountain of the heart to every extremity of the body, is now entirely deranged; “the silver cord is loosed, the golden bowl is “broken,” the pitcher and the wheel are marred at once. Then the body returns to its dust, and the soul to God the Creator, to be fixed in a state of happiness or misery, according to the things done in this present life. (*Marg. Ref. n—p.—Notes, iii. 18—21. Gen. ii. 7. iii. 17—19. Job iv 17—21. Ps. xc. 3—6. Dan. xii. 1, 2. 2 Cor. v. 1—8. Ph.. i. 21—26.*)

V. 8—10. In the view of this near approach of death, Solomon, (who probably wrote the above description in part from his own experience,) again declares, that “all is vanity, and vanity of vanities;” (*Note, i. 2;*) and then he proceeds to close his subject in the most solemn manner. He had been renowned and eminent in all kinds of wisdom: but the best use he could make of it, was by continuing to “teach the people knowledge.” With great care and labour, he had sought out, arranged, and published many proverbs, for their instruction: he had bestowed pains to find out words suited to convey his meaning, in the plainest, most convincing, and agreeable manner to their minds; and what he had written was upright and true, and worthy of their full credence and strictest observance. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1 Kings iii. 5—14. iv. 29—34. x. 3. 6—9. Prov. i. 1—6. ii. 1—9. xv. 26. xvi. 22—24.*)

V. 11—14. The words which prophets and wise men employed in instructing the people, were intended to be “as goads,” which cause the sluggish ox to mend his pace

^y John iii. 10. ^z Gen. xlix. 24. ¹ Ps. xxiii. 1. ^{1xxx.} l. Is. xl. 11. Ez. xxxiv 23. John x. 14. ^{Heb.} xiii. 20. ¹ Pet. v. 4. ^a Luke xvi. 29—31. John v. 39. xx. 31. xxi. 25. ² Pet. i. 19—21. ^{* Or, reading.} ^b i. 18. ^{† Or, The end of the matter, even all that hath been heard is}

^y masters of assemblies, *which* are ^z given from one Shepherd.

12 And further, ^a by these, my son, he admonished: of making many books *there is* no end; and much ^{*} study is ^b a weariness of the flesh.

13 [†] Let us hear the conclusion of

the whole matter: ^c Fear God, and keep his commandments; ^d for this is the whole *duty* of man.

14 For ^e God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it be* good, or whether *it be* evil.

^e xi. 9. ^{Ps.} xcvi. 13. ^{Matt.} xxv. 31—46. ^{Luke} xii. 1, 2. ^{John} v. 29. ^{Acts} xvii. 31. ^{Rom.} ii. 16. ^{xiv.} 10—12. ¹ Cor. iv. 5. ² Cor. v. 10. ^{Rev.} xx. 11—15.

^{v.} 7. ^{viii.} 12. ^{Gen.} xxii. 12. ^{Deut.} vi. 2. ^{x.} 12. ^{Ps.} cxi. 10. ^{cxii.} 1. ^{cxlv.} 19. ^{cxlvii.} 11. ^{Prov.} i. 7. ^{xxiii.} 17. ¹ Pet. ii. 17. ^{Rev.} xix. 5. ^d ii. 3. ^{vi.} 12. ^{Job} xxviii. 28. ^{Ps.} cxv. 13—15. ^{Prov.} xix. 23. ^{Luke} i. 50.

when drawing in the yoke: they would therefore occasion pain, whilst they alarmed the conscience, and shewed men their guilt and danger; but they were suited to quicken them, in “fleeing from the wrath to come,” and in walking in the way to heaven. “The masters of assemblies,” the priests or prophets who taught the people, when assembled at the temple or in other places, and who received their instructions from the one great Shepherd of Israel, intended them to be “as nails,” fastened in their memories, consciences, and judgments, so as not easily to be removed; that they might there remain, for their establishment in the truths and ways of God. (*Marg. Ref.* x—z.—*Notes*, *Gen.* xlix. 22—26, v. 24. *Is.* xxii. 20—25, vv. 23—25. *Jer.* xxiii. 28, 29. *Heb.* iv. 12, 13. xiii. 20, 21. *1* *Pet.* v. 1—4.) Solomon therefore, with the authority and affection of a father, exhorts every reader to be admonished by the instructions which he has here given. To write a great many books was an almost endless work, not suited to the shortness of human life; and the study of the writer, and even of the reader, would in that case be a great “weariness to the flesh.” Nor was it at all necessary: for whatever books were written, or studies pursued, they would all be vanity and vexation; except they led to this, as the conclusion of the whole matter, that “to fear God, and keep his commandments, is the whole of man.” The word, *duty*, is very improperly added in the translation; for it is the whole interest, privilege, honour, and happiness, as well as duty of man, to fear the wrath and seek the favour of God; to reverence his perfections, and to become his spiritual worshippers and servants, “walking in all his commandments and ordinances, blameless.” For after this vain life is over, another scene will succeed, and men shall be judged, and recompensed according to their conduct, secret as well as open, and whether good or evil. (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.* a—e.—*Notes*, viii. 8—10. xi. 9, 10. *Ps.* cxi. 9, 10. cxii. 1. *Prov.* i. 7. *Acts* xvii. 30, 31. *Rom.* ii. 4—11. *1* *Cor.* iv. 3—5. *2* *Cor.* v. 9—12. *1* *Pet.* iv. 2—5. *Rev.* xx. 11—15.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

All the wickedness and misery of man spring from his forgetfulness of God, to which he is exceedingly prone even from his youth. Though every object around us, and our own reason and conscience, and even existence, proclaim his power and Godhead; yet is he scarcely ever in our thoughts, while left to ourselves: and men in general remain ignorant or careless about their Creator and daily Benefactor; and neither fear, love, serve, trust, nor thank him; as his glorious perfections and their infinite obligations to him demand of them. We need, therefore, to be called upon to “remember our Creator,” that we may

perceive our need of a Redeemer and a Sanctifier; and may be excited to return to the Lord, by the way which he has opened, that, being reconciled to him, we may walk with him through this evil world. We should also call upon our children, and the thoughtless and inexperienced young persons around us, to attend to those neglected truths and duties; and remind them of the advantages of beginning this needful work in the dawn of life, and of the folly and hazard of neglecting it. It is a great happiness to be prevented from contracting those bad habits and connexions, which render a change in after years, like “cutting off a right hand or foot:” to avoid that injustice and mischief to others, which often distress the conscience to the end of life; to be secure from the danger of dying in sin, or of living to be hardened by its deceitfulness; or of having the great work of life to begin, when “the evil days come,” in which pains and infirmities destroy the comfort of every possession, and are a heavy load to bear; without the accumulation of so many sorrows, anxieties, and terrors, as must needs accompany a late repentance, in those *few* instances in which it takes place. Happy then are they, who serve God from their early youth, and are useful through their whole lives; who have divine consolations to refresh them, when other comforts are withdrawn or become insipid; who have “the rejoicing in the testimony of their consciences, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God they have had their conversation in the world; (*Note*, *2* *Cor.* i. 12—14, v. 12;) and who know, that “when flesh and heart shall fail, God will be the Strength of their heart, and “their Portion for ever!” If we are not previously cut off, a few years will terminate all that vigour, activity, or comeliness, about which we are so careful, and in which we are so apt to glory. The decay of our bodies will even obstruct the operations of our mental faculties: our dear friends and relatives will, one after another, be torn from our side: one pain and disease will succeed another; we shall become feeble and helpless as children; our limbs will totter under the weight of our bodies; every sense and organ will lose its power of giving pleasure; we shall not derive satisfaction from beautiful objects or prospects, from musick, from food, or from any of “the delights of the sons of men:” every undertaking will then excite terror, weariness, or disquietude; our sleep will be broken, and motion uneasy; and the trials of our patience may probably render us a trial to the patience of those around us. Every circumstance will then remind us, that we are speedily to remove to our long home, and that when the mourners have paid their customary tribute to us, we shall be little more thought of; whilst our bodies are mouldering in the grave, and our souls are fixed in an unchangeable state. Let us then seek the Lord and his salvation,

before the vital powers fail, and “the dust return to the earth as it was, and the soul to God who gave it.”

V. 8—14.

What a complicated vanity is life and all its pursuits, to that man whose treasure is on earth, and who has every thing to dread in a future world! But as it is a season to prepare for eternity, and to do good on earth, life is no vanity; and death to him who thus employs his days ought to have no terrors: here only can we find substantial good. To teach this knowledge is the work of every preacher: he who carefully attends to this, according to the Scripture, is wise, though his station be obscure and his abilities mean: and the man, who possesses superior rank and talents, cannot more honourably employ them, than in copying the example of this wise and royal preacher; in devising proper means, and in seeking out acceptable words, even those of uprightness and truth, set forth in the most convincing and persuasive manner. In order to bring men to seek and serve God. But indeed the pure word of God, however set forth in acceptable language, must disquiet the negligent and disobedient; for it is “quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword, “and it pierces” the sinner’s conscience, and fills it with terror and remorse. These are, however, faithful wounds, and intended to urge men forward in the way of salvation: and when they have produced their effect, peace and consolation will follow.—All, who are acceptably employed as “masters of assemblies,” or teachers of congregations, derive their authority abilities, and instructions, from the one “good Shepherd, who laid down his life for the sheep.”

Their endeavour should be to fasten divine truths, as nails, in the minds of their hearers, that they may abide with them, and make a durable impression: and the authority of him who sent them, ought to be recognized in them and their message. They should, however, keep close to their instructions; for if the plain truths of scripture do not produce the desired effect, nothing will. There is indeed no end of the volumes, which are written and read with immense labour and fatigue: (*Note, John xxi. 24, 25 :*) and instead of rendering men wiser, holier, or happier, they often increase their pride, and contempt of God’s word. But whether we consider honour, riches, pleasures, learning, or abilities; the man, who had them all in the greatest abundance, and tried them at the utmost advantage, pronounces them all to be vanity. Let us then be admonished by his words, and profit by his experience: let us learn from him the conclusion of the whole matter, that to “fear “God, and keep his commandments, is the whole of “man:” let us then cease “being careful, and troubled “about many things,” and attend to this “one thing need- “ful, and choose this good part that shall never be taken “from us:” (*Note and P. O. Luke x. 38—42 :*) let us now come to him as a merciful Saviour, who will soon appear as an omnipotent and omniscient Judge; when “he “will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and ma- “nifest the counsels of all hearts,” and “judge the secrets “of men:” then shall we all appear before his tribunal, “and receive according to the things done in the body, “whether they be good or evil.” “Let us therefore give “diligence, that we may be found of him in peace, “without spot, and blameless.”

THE SONG

OF

S O L O M O N.

THERE can be no reasonable doubt, that Solomon was the writer of this book, as well as of the two which precede it: ‘and that it was always looked upon as a holy book, treating of some spiritual and divine matter, appears from its being placed among the rest of that kind.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—It is evident, that it was received among the canonical books of the Jews, (probably by Ezra, an inspired writer,) soon after the Babylonish captivity; and that it formed a part of that sacred volume, which, in the time of Christ, was called “the Scriptures,” and “the oracles of God.”—It does not, indeed, appear that it was expressly quoted by any writer of the New Testament: yet the coincidence of its general argument, and of particular sentiments, with many passages in both the Old and New Testament, is well worthy of consideration. (*Ps.* xlv. *Is.* liv. 5. lxi. 10. lxii. 4, 5. *Hos.* ii. 16—20. *Matt.* ix. 15. xxii. 2. xxv. 1—13. *John* iii. 29. *2 Cor.* xi. 2. *Eph.* v. 23—27. *Rev.* xix. 7—9. xxi. 2. 9. xxii. 17.—Compare also i. 4. with *John* vi. 44.—iv. 7. with *Eph.* v. 27.—v. 2. with *Rev.* iii. 20.—vii. 1. with *Is.* lii. 7. *Eph.* vi. 15.—viii. 11, 12. with *Is.* v. 1—7. *Matt.* xxi. 33—43.—viii. 14. with *Rev.* xxii. 20.)—This coincidence, joined with the general testimony both of the Jewish and Christian church, through a long succession of ages, (with few exceptions, and those not peculiarly decided in respect of evangelical truth and piety,) gives the book a very high sanction, not only as genuine, but also as divinely inspired.—It may perhaps also appear to the attentive and serious reader, that the allegory itself is a kind of prophecy; and that particular passages, soberly explained, according to the known rules of interpreting allegories, are prophetic of the coming of Christ in our nature, the abolition of the Mosaic dispensation, the calling of the Gentiles, and the enlargement of the church; (*Notes*, ii. 8, 9. 16, 17. viii. 1, 2. 8, 9;) and more than this cannot be expected from the nature of the composition.—We learn from the sacred historian, that Solomon wrote above a thousand songs: (*Note*, *1 Kings* iv. 30—34, v. 32. *Ps.* cxxvii, *title*;) very few, however, of these have been preserved; of which this one is called, “The song of songs,” the most excellent of songs. As a poetical composition, it is allowed by the best judges to be finished in the highest style of elegance and beauty; yet the pious reader will probably think, that it was thus distinguished on another and superior account; namely, the excellency of the subject, and the admirable way in which it is treated.—Learned men have bestowed much pains in shewing the occasion on which Solomon wrote this sacred poem; and most of them imagine, that it was composed on his marriage with Pharaoh’s daughter: but this is very doubtful: (*Note*, i. 2:) nor is it certain that it was written so early in his reign; for some think that the tower of Lebanon was not built till a considerable time after that event. (vii. 4.)—In short, this Song is a divine allegory in the form of a pastoral, which represents the reciprocal love between Christ and his church, under figures taken from the relation and affection, which subsist between a bridegroom and his espoused bride; an emblem continually employed in scripture. It has some reference to the state of the Jewish church, as waiting for the coming of the promised Messiah; but it likewise accords to the reciprocal love between Christ and true believers in every age, and the communion which arises from it. In order properly to understand it, we must consider the Redeemer as loving and beloved of his church. The marriage contract is already ratified, but the completion of this blessed union is reserved for the heavenly state. Here on earth the believer loves and rejoices in an unseen Saviour, and seeks his happiness from his spiritual presence; Christ “manifests himself to him as he doth not unto the world;” and these visits are earnest and foretastes of heavenly joy. But they are interrupted, suspended, or varied, on many accounts; they are often lost by negligence or sin, and can only be recovered by humble repentance and renewed diligence: yet the love on both sides remains unchanged, as to its principle, though varied in the expression of it. These things are represented in a sort of dialogue; in which the church speaks of Christ, or to him; and he answers, and addresses the church: and the daughters of Jerusalem, (who may represent such as are enquiring after this salvation,) are frequently addressed, and reply: thus the varying experiences and correspondent duties of the believer are delineated in a very animating and edifying manner.—But the book should be read with great abstraction of mind from outward things, and with much prayer: lest the carnal passions should be kindled, instead of the spiritual affections invigorated. And, as it is impossible for any one to enter profitably into the full meaning of the inspired writer, who has no spiritual experience of the subject; so an ungodly man will seldom read it with advantage, or indeed without detriment: nor is it any objection to the excellency and usefulness of this sacred poem, to allow that it is peculiarly capable of becoming “a savour of death unto death,” to “those who wrest the other Scriptures also to their own destruction.” The spiritual meaning, that is, the instruction intended to be given by the Holy Spirit, speaking by Solomon, should

SOLOMON'S SONG.

then be principally enquired after: and too minute investigation of the external images, under which it is couched, or of the circumstances and arrangement of the poem, (according to the rules of modern criticism,) will, I apprehend, be found rather unfavourable to edification, than conducive to it.—No doubt, many things in it are very difficult to us, both as to the literal meaning, and the spiritual instruction intended by them, if such were intended: and some descriptions must not be judged by modern notions of delicacy, which, in a very vicious age, is apt to be fastidious: but the grand outlines soberly interpreted, in the obvious meaning of the allegory, so accord to the affections and inward experience of the lively Christian; that he will hardly ever read and meditate upon them, in a spirit of humble devotion, without feeling a conviction, that no other poem of the same kind, extant in the world, could, without most manifest violence, or even at all, be so explained, as to describe the state of his heart, at different times, and to excite admiring, adoring, grateful love to God our Saviour, in the same manner as this does.

B. C. 1014.

CHAP. I.

The title, 1. The church, or the believer, desires of Christ the tokens of his love, praises him, and expresses her delight in communion with him; confesses that her comeliness is very defective; complains that she had met with ill treatment, and prays to be directed to the resting place of his people, 2—7. He instructs her to follow the footsteps of his flock, and comforts her with commendations and promises, 8—

11. Mutual gratulations, and professions of love between Christ and the church, 12—17

THE ^a song of songs, which is ^b Solomon's.

2 Let ^c him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for ^d thy ^e love is better than wine.

^a Ps. xiv. Title.
Is. v. 1.
^b 1 Kings iv. 32.
^c v. 16. viii. 7.
Gen. xxvii. 28.
27. xxix. 11. xlv.
15. Luke xv. 20.
Acts xxi. 7.
1 Pet. v. 14.
^d 4. ii. 4. iv. 10.
vii. 6. 5. viii. 2.
Ps. xxxvi. 7.
lxiii. 3—5. Is.
xxv. 6. lv. 1, 2.
Matt. xxvi. 29.
* Heb. loves. vii. 12.

NOTES

CHAP. I. V. 1. Solomon wrote many songs, all of which were doubtless finished in the most poetical manner; but this sacred allegory has been preserved, and inserted in holy writ; while most of the others have been lost. (*Notes*, 1 Kings iv. 30—34, v. 32. Ps. cxxvii, title.) The preposition, which here assigns this Song to Solomon, is the same used in the Psalm referred to, and in many others, as shewing who composed them. It is also called "The Song of songs;" not only more excellent than all the rest of the songs of Solomon, but than any of those which had been composed by other writers: as it is wholly taken up with describing the glories and excellences of the divine Saviour, and the love which subsists between him and his redeemed people; which form the interior, most sublime, and heavenly part of true religion. (*Notes*, Ex. xv. 1—21. Judg. v. 1 Sam. ii. 2—10. 2 Sam. i. 19—27. xxii. Ps. xlv, title. Is. v. 1.) 'All the songs that had been formerly made 'by any prophetic person..., celebrated only some 'particular benefits; this the immense love of God, not 'only towards that nation' (Israel), 'but towards all mankind.' Bp. Patrick.—Probably, the superior excellency of this Song, over all poems extant in the world, except those contained in scripture, was intended; rather than a preference of one inspired Song above all others.

V. 2. In commenting on this book, I purposely omit most of that which many expositors have, with great labour and ingenuity, adduced, concerning the marriage of Solomon with Pharaoh's daughter; a marriage-feast of seven, or more, days' continuance; and various dramatical arrangements, adapted to these views of the subject: because it does not appear to me, that satisfactory proof has been given of any such intention in the writer.—Solomon indeed married Pharaoh's daughter, soon after his accession to the throne; (*Notes*, 1 Kings iii. 1. 2 Chr. viii. 11;) but

very little is said in the history concerning this transaction: so that the most of that which is confidently advanced about it, is mere conjecture, the fruit of a lively invention. The book itself does not give the smallest intimation about "Pharaoh's daughter:" for the mention of the horses in Pharaoh's chariot, and the spouse's coming up out of the wilderness, (a wilderness lying between Egypt and Canaan,) will hardly be considered as *arguments*, by impartial reasoners. We might as well insist on it that she came from Syria, or Moab, because the Bridegroom calls her to come from Lebanon and from Hermon. (*Note*, iv. 8.) No doubt many allusions are made to the customs then in use at marriages; and so there are in several places of the New Testament: (*Note*, Matt. xxv. 1—4:) but it has not yet been fully proved, that Solomon's marriage so much as gave occasion to this song, any more than that the marriage at Cana gave occasion to the parable of the ten virgins.—But, supposing it should be conceded that Solomon's marriage did give the occasion; the following questions would arise from the concession. Are we to consider his marriage as the *primary* subject, and the spiritual meaning as an *accommodation*? Or was the *spiritual* meaning eminently intended, and allusions made to the marriage, only in order to convey the spiritual instruction to greater advantage? On the former supposition, I should be apt to think, that the *primary* meaning alone was intended; and should have little inclination to dilate, in *accommodating* the circumstances of a mere epithalamium to spiritual purposes. On the latter, the *instruction* conveyed by the allegory, or parable, demands the expositor's chief attention; and the *circumstances*, just so far as they lead to the right interpretation, and no further. If it be a sacred poem, the meaning of the Holy Spirit is primarily to be enquired after; and nothing should be introduced, which carries away the attention from that principal subject; much less any thing, which indisposes the mind and heart

^e iii. 6. ^{iv.} 10. ^{v.} 5. 13. ^{Ex.} xxx. 23—38. ^{Ps.} xlv. 7, 8. ^{cxviii.} 2. ^{Prov.} xxvii. 9. ^{Ec.} vii. 1. ^{Is.} lxi. 3. ^{John} xii. 3. ^{2 Cor.} ii. 14—16. ^{Phil.} iv. 18. ^{Ex.} xxxiii. 12. ^{Ps.} lxxxix. 15, 16. ^{Is.} ix. 6, 7. ^{Jer.} xxiii. 5, 6. ^{Matt.} i. 21—23. ^{Phil.} ii. 9, 10. ^g 4. ^{vi.} 8. ^{Ps.} xlv. 14. ^{Matt.} xxv. 1. ^{2 Cor.} xi. 2. ^{Rev.} xiv. 4. ^{1 Jer.} xxxi. 3. ^{Hos.} xi. 4. ^{John} vi. 44. ^{xii.} 32. ^{Phil.} ii. 12, 13. ⁱ ^{Ps.} cxix. 32. ^{60.} ^{Heb.} xii. 1, 2.

3 Because of ^e the savour of thy good ointments, ^f thy name *is as* ointment poured forth, therefore do ^g the virgins love thee.

4 ^h Draw me, ⁱ we will run after

thee: ^k the King hath brought me into his chambers: ^l we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will ^m remember thy love more than wine: ⁿ the upright love thee.

^{ix.} 9. ^{Luke} ii. 10. ^{Phil.} iii. 3. ^{iv.} 4. ^{1 Pet.} i. 8. ^m 2. ^{Ps.} xlii. 4. ^{xlviii.} 9. ^{lxiii.} 1. ^{2 Cor.} xi. 23—26. ^{Rev.} i. 5. ^{* Or,} ^{they love thee uprightly.} 3. ^{John} xxi. 15—17. ^{Eph.} vi. 24.

^k ii. 3—5. ^{iii.} 4. ^{Ps.} xlv. 14, 15. ^{Matt.} xxv. 10. ^{John} xiv. 2, 3. ^{Eph.} ii. 6. ^{1 Ps.} xcvi. 4—9. ^{cxlix.} 2. ^{Is.} xxv. 8, 9. ^{xlv.} 24. ^{lxi.} 3. ^{10.} ^{Zeph.} iii. 14—17. ^{Zecl.} i. 13.

for it: and, as far as I have examined, the glowing language, even of those, who would be considered as most cautious in this kind of interpretation, is much more calculated to excite wrong ideas and carnal passions, than Solomon's own words are.—Firmly believing it to be a sacred allegory, I shall endeavour to explain it as such; and only mention the allusions to ancient customs, when they tend to illustrate the subject: and, it will appear as we proceed, that many particulars cannot, without much violence, be properly interpreted of those external circumstances, which are supposed to have given occasion to the book.—It is also requisite here to observe, that many learned and pious expositors confine the interpretation to the church as a collective body; in a way which seems to disallow the application of it to the affections and experiences of individual believers. Yet the church is nothing else but a company of individual believers; for hypocrites and formalists, whether in Israel, or among Christians, could never sincerely join in the fervent, and even rapturous expressions of holy love here used: so that the language of the church is in fact nothing more than the language of those individuals who compose the church, according to their several stations and circumstances, duties, trials, and varied affections; and the distinction, exclusively adhered to, seems only to embarrass the subject.—Some think that, in this verse, the ancient church expresses her earnest longings for the coming of the promised Messiah: but the fervent desires of believers after “fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ,” are at least equally intended. The church of established believers may therefore be considered, as speaking in the allegorical character of the *bride* or *spouse* of Christ; and ‘in the most passionate strain wishing for some token of love, which is expressed under the metaphor of a *kiss*. But there is no mention at all made of the name, condition, or beauty of the person, whose love is desired; nor any account of the beginning or progress of this desire: but he’ (Solomon) ‘makes her burst out on a sudden, and abruptly, into these words, “Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth;” that he might the more artificially describe the nature and force of divine love; which, when it possesses the mind, snatches it so from itself, that it is wholly in him that it loves. It thinks of nothing else, ... wishes nothing, speaks of nothing, but this alone; and imagines that every body else thinks of the same, and knows of whom it speaks.’ *Bp. Patrick*.—(Note, *John* xx. 11—17, v. 15.) “The kisses of his mouth” evidently mean those cheering assurances of reconciliation and endeared love, with which believers are from time to time favoured, especially when deeply humbled for their sins. In the midst of their fears and distresses, they obtain such discoveries of the Redeemer's glory and grace, and of his power and willingness to save, as dispel their sorrows, and fill them “with peace and joy in believing,”

and cause them “to abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost.” Of these sweet consolations the spouse here speaks, and longs for their renewal, increase, and continuance. And then, addressing herself to *him*, as if present, of whom she before spake as absent, she adds, “For thy love is better than wine.” The assurance, the pledges, the consolations, of the love of Christ, producing reciprocal love to him, give higher and more exquisite pleasures, than can flow from the exhilaration of wine, or from any animal indulgence. (*Marg. Ref.* c, d.—*Notes*, 4. ii. 4, 5. iv. 10. vii. 6—9. viii. 1, 2. *Ps.* lxiii. 1—8. *Matt.* xxvi. 29.)

V. 3. The glorious excellences of the Redeemer's person and character; the unction of the Holy Spirit without measure; the condescension and love of his undertaking in behalf of sinners; the suitableness and preciousness of his righteousness, atonement, and mediation, and of all the offices which he sustains for our benefit; render his name more pleasant to the believer's heart, than the most costly unguent or perfume could be to his senses. The more the truths concerning Christ are examined or explained, by the preaching of the gospel, or by reading and meditation, the higher delight in his excellences and more fervent love of him are excited; even as the fragrant of the ointment is most perceived, when by pouring it forth “the house is filled with its odour.” On these accounts, “the virgins,” meaning all *uncorrupt* and *upright* souls, love the Lord Jesus, in proportion to the degree of their purity, simplicity, and entire devotedness to the worship and service of God. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, 4. iii. 6. *Ps.* xlv. 6—8. *Is.* vii. 14. ix. 6, 7. *Jer.* xxiii. 5, 6. *Matt.* i. 20—23. *John* xii. 1—8, v. 3. *2 Cor.* ii. 15—17. xi. 1—6, vv. 2, 3. *Phil.* iii. 8—11. *Rev.* xiv. 1—5, vv. 4, 5.

V. 4. The thoughts of the excellency of Christ, may be supposed here to remind the spouse of her want of conformity to him; and she longs to follow him more nearly, and be more like him, and more drawn off from all other objects. But she feels also her inability to attain this, without his special grace; and therefore intreats him to “draw her” by the quickening influences of his Spirit; and then she will “run after him,” in the ways of holy obedience. Nay, she says, “we will run after thee;” intimating perhaps, that she should then be enabled to keep up with those believers, who now were far before her in love and holiness; or that she should be enabled to induce and encourage others to run in the same blessed course. Such expressions seem not to have any distinct or appropriate meaning, when literally interpreted.—‘The whole verse may be understood after this manner; that the first words “Draw me,” are the voice of the spouse; the next “We will run after thee,” the words of the chorus of virgins. And then she speaks again, “The King hath brought me into his chambers;” and then they again express their joy at it in the follow-

5 I *am* ^a black, but ^o comely, ^p O ye daughters of Jerusalem, ^q as the tents of Kedar, as the curtains of Solomon.

6 ^r Look not upon me, ^s because I *am* black, because the sun hath looked upon me: ^t my mother's children were angry with me; they made me

^u keeper of the vineyards; *but* mine own vineyard have I not kept.

7 ¶ Tell me, ^v O thou whom my soul loveth, where ^w thou feedest, where thou makest *thy* flock to rest at noon; ^x for why should I be as one that ^y turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?

1 John ii. 19, 20.

* Or, is veiled. 2 Cor. iii. 14—18.

ing words, "We will be glad and rejoice in thee." *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.* h, i.—*Notes*, Ps. cxix. 32. Jer. xxxi. 3—5, v. 3. Hos. xi. 3, 4. John vi. 41—46, v. 44. xii. 27—33, v. 32. Phil. ii. 12, 13. Heb. xii. 1.)—Some here consider the spouse as the ancient church of Israel, praying for the Saviour's coming; and the virgins (3), as converts from among the gentiles, who would then join themselves in vast numbers to the believers of the Jews, and with great alacrity follow him as his zealous disciples.—We learn from the other part of the verse, that the person before spoken of was the King, even that "King of Israel," whom Solomon in all his glory feebly represented. The spouse had experienced the comforts of his condescending love, and gracious presence; and expected still more endeared and intimate communion with him; and, with all her attendants, resolved to rejoice in him, "remembering his love" (or *loves*, the tokens and expressions of his love,) "more than wine." "Yea, not only we, but all "they "who uprightly love thee," will thus rejoice in thee." (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.* k—m.—*Notes*, 2, 3. 12—14. ii. 3—5. Ps. xlv. 1. 9—11. Is. lxi. 10, 11. Matt. xxv. 10—13, v. 10. 34—40, v. 34. John xxi. 15—17. 1 Pet. i. 8, 9.)

We will remember.] נִזְכֶּרֶת. "We will cause thy loves "to be remembered more than wine;" by attending on the memorials of thy love; (*Note*, Matt. xxvi. 26—28;) by our profession, worship, and instructing our children; we will do what we can to cause thy love to be remembered by others, both while we live and after our decease. (*Note*, 2 Pet. i. 12—15.)

V. 5, 6. "The daughters of Jerusalem" may here mean such persons as associate with believers, and favour the cause of the gospel, but are not yet established or experienced in the faith: though some consider them as part of the professed church of Israel; and others as 'foreign congregations,' which is not at all probable. (*Marg. Ref.* p.)—The spouse, however, aims to prevent them from being stumbled by what they witnessed of her circumstances or appearance. In some respects, she was blackish, as the weather-beaten tents of the Arabian shepherds: but in others, she was comely as the magnificent curtains in the palaces of Solomon. The original word for "black" signifies *dark as the early dawn*. The believer is indeed *black* by nature; but he is comely, as renewed in part by grace, to the holy image of God: still, however, he is deformed with great remains of sin; but comely, as "accepted in the Beloved," "and made the righteousness "of God in him." He is contemptible and base in the esteem of men, but honourable and excellent in the judgment of God. He is often poor, unlearned, of mean abilities, and employed in low occupations, for which men despise him: but he is "a king and a priest unto God,"

walks with him, and is his child and the heir of his eternal glory.—The *visible* church also is deformed by a large intermixture of hypocrites; and by manifold scandals, heresies, divisions, and controversies, which prevail in almost every part of it: yet the *invisible* church, which consists of the remnant of true believers, forms "a holy nation," "a peculiar people," "zealous of good works." (*Notes*, Tit. ii. 14. 1 Pet. ii. 8, 9.)—These things may here be implied: but it is more immediately meant, that the afflictions of believers, and the persecutions of the church, render them base in man's esteem, but comely in the eyes of the Lord. (*Marg. Ref.* n. o. q.—vi. 4—10. Ps. xlv. 9—11. Is. liii. 2, 3. Luke xv. 22—24. 1 Cor. iv. 9—13.) The spouse therefore advises the daughters of Jerusalem, not to look at her, either to disdain her on account of her infirmities or external meanness and distresses, or to take any prejudice against religion on that account. If they saw her black, it was because "the sun "had looked upon her;" that is, she had endured temptation and persecution for her relation to Christ. (*Marg. Ref.* r, s. Matt. xiii. 3—8, v. 6. 20, 21. Rev. vii. 13—17, v. 16.) Men, brethren to her by nature, or hypocritical professors, brethren in name, were enraged at her, because of the favour shewn her, and her attachment to her Beloved; and they had compelled her to endure the greatest hardships, and do the most unsuitable drudgery; and this, among other painful effects, had proved a temptation to her, to neglect, in some measure, her own duty, and the care of her soul, and thus had conducted in every way to mar her comeliness. (*Marg. Ref.* t.—*Notes*, Mic. vii. 5—7, v. 6. Matt. x. 34—36. Luke xii. 49—53. 2 Cor. iv. 8—12. Gal. iv. 21—31, v. 29.)—It would have been very strange, for king Solomon to introduce his favourite queen, speaking in this manner to her attendants. It has indeed been *imagined*, that Pharaoh's daughter, having early embraced the true religion, was persecuted by her brothers, and driven to the south of Egypt; where, by keeping the vineyards, she acquired a tawny colour, so that she neglected her own vineyard, that is, her beauty or her fortune: and that Solomon, hearing of her piety and sufferings, sent for her and married her. A lively invention may easily thus make *history*, or write *novels*: but the scripture is silent. The whole is highly improbable. "Solomon made "affinity with Pharaoh, and took Pharaoh's daughter." 1 Kings iii. 1. This looks more like a political transaction between Pharaoh and Solomon, than such a marriage of vehement and disinterested affection, as the supposition implies. (*Note*, 2.)

V. 7. The spouse next addresses herself to Christ, as desirous of distinguishing between his holy rest and consolations, and the false peace and confidence of hypocrites. She requests to be instructed, in what places he used to

^a 15. ii. 10. iv. 1.
⁷ 10. v. 9. vi. 4.
-10. vii. 1, &c.
^b Ps. xvi. 3. xlv.
11. 13. Eph. v.
27. Rev. xix. 7,
8.
^c Prov. viii. 34.
Jer. vi. 16. 1 Cor.
xi. 1. Heb. vi.
12. xi. 4, &c.
xiii. 7. Jam. ii.
21. 25. v. 10.
1 Pet. iii. 6.
^d John xxi. 15.
ii. 2. 10. 13. iv.
1. 7. v. 2. vi. 4.
John xv. 14, 15.
^e 1 Kings x. 28.
2 Chr. i. 14-17.
Is. xxxi. 1.
^f Gen. xxiv. 22.
47. Is. iii. 18-
21. Ez. xvi. 11-13.
iii. 4.

8 If thou know not, ^aO thou fairest
among women, ^bgo thy way forth
by the footsteps of the flock, and
^cfeed thy kids beside the shepherds'
tents.
9 ¶ I have compared thee, ^dO my
love, ^eto a company of horses in Pha-
raoh's chariots.
10 Thy ^fcheeks are comely with
rows of jewels, ^gthy neck with chains
of gold.

^g iv. 9. Gen. xli. 42. Num. xxxi. 50. Prov. i. 9. 1 Pet.

feed his flock, and to shelter them from the noon-day sun of persecution or temptation, that she might seek the same holy refuge; and not be tempted, or even appear inclined, to join those companies who followed corrupt teachers and held erroneous tenets; who indeed professed to be the "companions," or friends of Christ, but were rather his rivals, and set up an interest in opposition to him: 'Weary of wandering uncertainly after those who pretend to thy Spirit, but mislead such as are guided by 'them.' Bp. Patrick.—'Whom thou hast called to the 'dignity of thy pastors, and they set forth their own dreams 'instead of thy doctrine.' (Marg. and Marg. Ref. y, z.—Notes, Ps. xxiii. 1—3. Is. xl. 9—11. Mic. v. 3, 4. Zech. xiii. 7. John x. 1—5. 10—18. 26—31.)—Whom my soul loveth.] Marg. Ref. x.—See on Note, 3.—Notes, ii. 3. iii. 1—5. v. 10—16. Is. v. 1. John xiv. 15—17. 18—24. xxi. 15—17. 1 Cor. xvi. 21—24, v. 24. 2 Cor. v. 13—15. Eph. vi. 21—24, v. 24. 1 John iv. 19.

V. 8. It is evidently absurd, to suppose this verse to be the language of the attendant virgins, or unestablished converts; for how should they be able to instruct the spouse in her perplexity, and even to answer the request which she had addressed to her Beloved. No doubt the Bridegroom is here introduced, as counselling his faithful spouse, with an encouraging commendation of her spiritual beauty, as compared with the rest of Adam's fallen race. (Marg. Ref. a.—Notes, 15. iv. 1—7. 10. vi. 4—10. Ps. xlv. 9—15. Eph. v. 22—27, vv. 26, 27.) If she were at a loss, and feared lest she should mistake some company of hypocrites or hereticks for his chosen people; she could not do better, than to consider the examples of the most approved believers in the successive ages of the church, as recorded in the word of God, with the doctrines which they maintained; to follow their steps, without regarding those who pretended to new discoveries, and taught opinions, either unknown in other ages, or condemned as heresy; to mark such pastors, as simply kept the beaten track, the good old way; to attend on their ministry, with her children, or young converts; and to instruct such as were put under her care according to their example. (Marg. Ref. b, c.—Notes, Prov. viii. 34. Jer. vi. 16, 17, v. 16. Heb. xi. xii. 1. xiii. 7, 8.) The literal meaning of this, as applied to Pharaoh's daughter, is not especially stated by those who adhere to that mode of interpretation.

V. 9. Egypt was noted for beautiful and swift horses: those of Pharaoh's chariots would doubtless be the most excellent of the kind; and in their magnificent trappings

11 ^hWe will make thee borders of gold, with studs of silver.
12 ¶ While ⁱthe King ^ksitteth at his table, ^lmy spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.
13 A ^mbundle of myrrh is my well beloved unto me; ⁿhe shall lie all night betwixt my breasts.
14 My ^oBeloved is unto me as a cluster of ^pcamphire in the vineyards of ^qEn-gedi.

^h viii. 9. Gen. i. 26. Ps. cxlix. 4. Eph. v. 25—27. Phil. iii. 2.
ⁱ vii. 5. Ps. xlv. 1. Matt. xxii. 11. xxv. 34.
^k iv. 16. Matt. xxii. 4. xxvi. 26—28. Luke xxiv. 30—32. Rev. iii. 20.
^l iv. 13—16. John xii. 3. Phil. iv. 18. Rev. viii. 3, 4.
^m iv. 6. 14. v. 1. 5. 13. Gen. xliii. 11. Ps. xlv. 8. John xix. 39.
ⁿ ii. 7. iii. 5. viii. 3, 4. Eph. iii. 17.
^o See on 13. ii. 3.
^p Or, cypress. * 13, 14. p Josh. xv. 62. 1 Sam. xxiii. 29. xxiv. 1.

would appear to the greatest advantage. This allusion therefore may mean, that, in the judgment of Christ, believers are the excellent of the earth; and that the harmony, which subsists among them, renders them peculiarly pleasant to him, and fitted to be the instruments of promoting his glory. (Marg. Ref.—See on Note, 8.)—The simile, as applied to a beautiful female, though an instance or two not wholly unlike it may be found in ancient writers, seems not very apposite.—Company of horses.] Τη ἵππων μᾶ. (My mare.) Sept.—Equitatu, (cavalry), Robertson. This seems to be the proper meaning of the word.

V. 10. The spiritual gifts and graces, which Christ bestows upon his church and every true believer, and which render their professed faith, and their conversation among men, ornamental and becoming, seem to be here described by the external ornaments then in use: and not without reference to the ornaments used in the harnesses of horses, especially in the royal chariots. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 9. iv. 9. Ps. xlv. 13—15. Prov. i. 9. 1 Tim. ii. 8—10. 1 Pet. iii. 1—4.)

V. 11. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps. cxlix. 4. Ez. xvi. 9—14. Eph. v. 22—27, vv. 26, 27. Rev. xix. 7, 8. xxi. 1—4.) This verse is generally supposed to be the reply of the attendant virgins, who thus engaged to prepare for the spouse the ornaments, with which she was about to be decorated: but, as the increase and perfection of the church's spiritual adorning is the gift and work of God; it may be doubted, whether this language should not be considered, in respect of the new creation, as in some respects similar to the remarkable words of the Creator, when about to form our first parents. (Notes, Gen. i. 26, 27. Ec. xii. 1.)

V. 12—14. The spouse here again speaks. "Whilst 'the King sitteth at his table,' (or meets his people in those ordinances, in which they feast with him,) her spikenard, or precious ointment, sendeth forth its smell; that is, the grace, received from his fulness, springs forth into lively exercises of faith, love, gratitude, and adoration, which are pleasant, and honourable to him. (Marg. Ref. k.—Notes, iv. 16. Matt. xxvi. 26—29. John xiii—xvii. Rev. iii. 20—22, v. 20.) Yet Christ himself, and not his gifts, are most precious to her; and she resolves to lodge him near, or in, her heart, (as a bundle of myrrh or other fragrant gums are laid in the bosom,) "all the night," or during the darkness and troubles of life. For Christ was to her far more precious and delightful, than the most valued productions of the field, or vineyard.—'The most 'precious nard cometh from the spikes of a very small 'contemptible shrub; which may be considered as an em-

q See on 8—iv. 1.
7. 10. vii. 6.

* Or, my compa-
nion. Mal. ii. 14.

r iv. 1. v. 12.
2 Cor. xi. 2, 3.

s Eph. i. 17, 18.
ii. 3. v. 10—16.

Ps. xlv. 2. Zech. ix. 17. Phil. iii. 8, 9. Rev. v. 11—13.

15 Behold, 'thou *art* fair, * my love;
behold, thou *art* fair; ' thou *hast* doves'
eyes.

16 Behold, 'thou *art* fair, my Be-

'blem of the sweet odour of the gospel, which with such
'mean and despicable persons, as the apostles were in
'themselves, filled the whole world.' *Bp. Patrick. (Marg.
Ref. i.—Matt. xxvi. 6—13. Mark xiv. 3—9, v. 3. John
xii. 1—8. Phil. iv. 14—20, v. 18.)*—It is not certainly
known what the word rendered *camphire* signifies: but it
seems to have been some very costly perfume; and per-
fumes have always been immensely more in request in
those eastern regions, than they are at present in this
country. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. m—p.*)—The original
word, however, signifies also *an atonement*; and some Jew-
ish writers have rendered the clause, 'the man who propi-
tiates all things,' with apparent reference to the Messiah.
—*The King. (12) Marg. Ref. i.—See on Note, 4.*

V. 15. Here Christ again speaks, commending his be-
loved, as fair; especially, as having eyes like the dove,
which are gentle, loving, and pure. This may imply her
spiritual discernment and watchfulness, the purity and
simplicity of her affection for him, and her mild and harm-
less conduct in the world. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—See
on Note, 8.—Note, iv. 1—5, v. 1.)—My love.*] "My com-
panion." *Marg.—Note, Mal. ii. 13—16, v. 14.*

V. 16, 17. Here the spouse answers, professing her ad-
miring love and gratitude to the Saviour, and her delight
in her union with him. By their bed, or carpet, being
"green," may be meant the efficacy of his ordinances, to
render believers flourishing in holiness, and to convert
sinners: and the beams of cedar and rafters of fir, may
mean the stability of the new covenant, and the incor-
ruptible nature of those mansions, in which believers will
dwell with their Beloved for ever.—The eastern nations
generally sleep on carpets, and recline at meals on couches
covered with them. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—See on Note,
7.—Notes, viii. 8, 9. Ps. xlv. 2. cx. 3. John xiv. 2, 3. xvii.
20—24. Eph. ii. 19—22. 1 Pet. ii. 4—6. Rev. iii. 20—
22, v. 20.)*

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—6.

Those things, which are most intimately connected with
the person and love of the divine Saviour, have superemi-
nent excellency; for communion with him in faith and
love, is as the marrow of religion. Those who have
"tasted that he is gracious," long for renewed pledges of
his kindness; and the more they experience of his peace
and joy, the more fervent will be their desires. This sweet
experience of his grace gradually weans them from other
objects, and disposes them to renounce all for his sake, and
at his command.—The pleasures, which arise from the
most exquisite gratifications of every sense, convey to the
mind a very faint and inadequate idea of that delight, with
which the believer, in some favoured moments, contem-
plates the Redeemer's excellences, and his "love which
"passeth knowledge." This renders the preaching of the
gospel, the written word, prayer, praise, meditation, and
Christian conversation, so agreeable to him: then the name

loved, yea, pleasant: 'also our bed is green.

17 The "beams of our house *are*
cedar, and our [†] rafters of fir.

t iii. 7. Ps. cx. 3.
u vii. 9. 2 Chr. ii.
8, 9. Ps. xcii. 12.
1 Tim. iii. 16.
16. Heb. xi. 10.
1 Pet. ii. 4, 5.
† Or, galleries. vii.
5. Ez. xli. 15
xlii. 3.

of Christ becomes "as ointment poured forth;" and the
more the subject is discussed, the more glorious and lovely
he appears. These are "joys with which a stranger inter-
"meddleth not;" but every holy creature in heaven and
earth loves the incarnate Saviour, in proportion to his love
of the Father, and of his righteous law and holy service:
and the further we are removed from all inordinate love of
created objects, the more precious will Christ be to our
hearts. (*Note, 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.*) But the more clearly we
discern his glory, the more deeply sensible shall we be of
our inability to love and follow him in a suitable manner;
and at the same time we shall become the more desirous
of doing it: thus experiencing "that we cannot do the
"things that we would," our prayers for the effectual
drawings and aids of his grace will become more fervent
and frequent; and we shall not only desire to run after
him ourselves, but to animate others to do the same. Every
sweet season of near communion with Christ will endear
him more to our souls, and increase our joy and gladness in
his favour and worship: we shall recollect with regret the
comforts, which we do not at present possess, and long and
wait for their renewal, far more than sensualists do for the
return of their unsatisfying joys. Our honourable thoughts
of Christ will always be productive of lowly thoughts of
ourselves, so that nothing will appear estimable or amiable
in us, except as interested in his righteousness, and par-
takers of his holiness: and these we shall deem a comeli-
ness preferable to all the external glory which surrounded
king Solomon.—It is indeed lamentable that so many
things should be visibly defective in the church; as they
harden some in prejudices, and are stumbling-blocks to
others. Yet "it must needs be that offences come; but
"woe be to them by whom they come!" (*Note, Matt.
xviii. 7—9.*) We should therefore endeavour so to explain
these subjects, as to prevent the effects of undeniable ble-
mishes; and caution enquirers not to look on us, to form
their judgment of Christianity, but on the example, pre-
cepts, and truths of Jesus, where they may view it uncor-
rupted. All that supposed deformity of the church, how-
ever, which results from want of wealth, learning, or se-
cular power, or from her afflicted and persecuted condition,
is in fact her "glory and beauty:" nay, the Saviour him-
self has "no form or comeliness" to the carnal mind,
that it "should desire him."—But it seldom happens, that
we are much tempted or persecuted, without in some mea-
sure deviating from our duty, and intermeddling with dis-
putes or employments not properly belonging to us: thus
Satan prevails with us to keep other men's vineyards, and
to neglect our own. And how dreadful is it, when those,
who should be labourers in the Lord's vineyard, are so taken
up with worldly employments, as to neglect the care of
their own souls, as well as the souls of those committed to
them! Indeed even such ministers, as are busy in their
proper work, should be very watchful over themselves; or
their own vineyard will perhaps be worse tended than those
of their congregations. (*Notes, 1 Tim. iv. 11—16. vi. 11,
12. 2 Tim. ii. 20—22. Tit. ii. 7, 8.*)

CHAP. II.

The glory of Christ, the excellency of the church, and the mutual actings of love between them, 1—7. The church hears the voice of her Beloved, and has discoveries of his glory, 8, 9. His gracious invitations and encouragements; and his command to guard against subtle and mischievous enemies, 10—15. The church glories in her relation to him, and longs for the completion of the sacred union, 16, 17.

V. 7—17.

If the Lord Jesus be indeed “our Beloved,” we shall be greatly afraid of being drawn aside and imposed upon; and have constant need to beseech him, as “the great” and “good Shepherd,” to guide us into his fruitful pastures and pleasant resting-places: nay, we shall fear even seeming to belong to those false teachers, who beguile unstable souls, and draw away disciples after them; who pretend to be the friends, but in truth are the rivals of the Bridegroom. (*Note, John iii. 27—36, v. 29.*) If we seek his direction in order to follow it, he will express his approbation, and preserve us from delusion; he will guide us in the path, which is beaten with the footsteps of his flock in every age; and satisfy us, that we are “followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises:” (*Note, Heb. vi. 11, 12:*) he will shew such as humbly ask him, who are those pastors, that he employs to feed his sheep and lambs; and he will teach them to attend on their instruction, and to bring their families to partake of it also; and to assist their weaker brethren in forming their judgment in these important matters.—The more humble and diffident of ourselves we are, the better will the Lord approve of us: he delights in the graces which he confers, and applauds the good which he enables us to do: he will perfect his own good work where it is truly begun; and continually add to the spiritual adorning of those, whom he is “beautifying with salvation.” Communion with Christ transforms us into his image; the lively exercise of spiritual affections has a fragrant of the same kind, with “the savour of his good ointments poured forth.” But he himself is every thing to zealous and fruitful Christians: they desire, that “Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith” and love, and prepare them for himself by renewing them fully to his own likeness. The increase of this disposition renders them more and more the objects of his delight: and he especially approves of the meekness, purity, and holy love, which they derive from the dove-like Spirit of God. Thus the sacred flame is fanned and fed; and the soul having daily “fellowship with the Father and the Son,” by the Spirit, grows in holiness, and enjoys “a lively hope of an incorruptible, undefiled, and unfading inheritance” in the blessed world above. O Lord, visit our souls more and more with this salvation!

NOTES

CHAP. II. V. 1, 2. It is most obvious to suppose that the Bridegroom here speaks, and declares his own preciousness and condescending love. The rose is considered

I AM^a the rose of Sharon, and the^b lily of the valleys.

2 As the^c lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

3 As^d the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is^e my Beloved among the sons. * I^f sat down under

^a Ps. lxxxv. 1¹. Is. xxxv. 1, 2. ^b 16. vi. 3. Is. lvii. 15. ^c Is. lv. 13. Matt. vi. 28, 29. x. 16. Phil. ii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. ii. 12. ^d viii. 5. Is. iv. 2. Ez. xvii. 23, 24. John xv. 1—8. ^e v. 9, 10. 16. Ps. xlv. 2. lxxxix. 6. John i. 14—18. iii. 29—31. Heb. i. 1—6. iii. 1—6. vii. 23—26. xii. 2. ^f Judg. ix. 15. 19, 20. Ps. lvii. 1. xci. 1. Is. iv. 6. xxv. 4. xxxii. 2. 1 John i. 3, 4. * Heb. I delighted and sat down, &c.

as the chief of flowers; and it is probable that Sharon was eminent for roses of beautiful hue, and peculiar fragrant. Thus Christ, in his person, character, and mediation, combines every excellency in the highest degree; and is most delightful and refreshing to the souls of his people.—The lily, which adorns the lowly valleys, is an apt emblem of his humiliation in assuming our nature, and his lowliness of heart; of his dwelling and communing with the “poor of this world,” and “the poor in spirit,” in this vale of sin and sorrow; and likewise of his spotless purity. His church too is “as the lily among the thorns.” ‘They that believe in Christ partake of his excellencies.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—They cannot resemble him in his majesty or mediatorial excellency; but they do, in a measure, as to his lowliness and purity. Yet in this world they are like a lily surrounded, crowded, and wounded, by worthless thorns; an emblem of the character of the wicked, of the injuries which they do to believers, and of their fitness for the fire of destruction.—Christ describes his church under the emblem of a beautiful woman, whom he has espoused, and she describes him as one of the Sons of men: and the rest of mankind are called “the daughters” and “the sons;” being indeed originally of the same family; but bearing a very different character, and having formed a contrary alliance. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Ps. lxxxv. 10—13. Is. xxxv. 1, 2. lv. 12, 13. lvii. 15, 16. Zech. ix. 17. Matt. x. 16—18. Rom. viii. 28—31.—P. O. Rev. v. 1—7.*)

V. 3. The Spouse here speaks. The apple-tree (or citron-tree, as some suppose,) is not so stately as the cedar or the fir-tree, but its fruit is peculiarly valuable.—Christ appeared on earth in exterior meanness, but that covered over the most transcendent preciousness and glory; and the fruits of his abasement and sufferings endear him to every believer, immensely above all the most admired characters in the world.—A traveller, scorched by the noon-day sun, would gladly shelter himself under the branches of a spreading apple-tree, or citron-tree, and refresh himself with its fruit. Thus the believer remembers many seasons, when remorse of conscience, and fear of deserved wrath, with the temptations of Satan, and the injuries of the world, dismayed or distressed him, and left him without any conceivable refuge, except that revealed in Christ Jesus. To this he fled with earnest desires, and under it he sat down, or sheltered himself; while the pardon and peace, which it afforded him, were delightful to his heart: and the consolations of the Spirit of adoption, as fruits from this Tree of life, were “sweet to his taste,” in proportion to his former terror, humiliation, and affliction, and to the degree in which he was weaned from earthly objects. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, 5. v. 10—16. viii. 5. Ps.*

g 5. Gen. iii. 22—his shadow with great delight, and ^s his
24. Ez. xlviii. 12. fruit *was* sweet to my ^t taste.

h 1. 4. v. 1. Ps. 4 He ^h brought me to the ^t banquet-
10. John xiv. 21. ing house, and ⁱ his banner over me
—23. Rev. iii. 20.

† Heb. house of *was* love.

i vi. 4. Job i. 10. 5 ^k Stay me with ⁱ flagons, ^t comfort
Ps. lx. 4. Is. xi. me with apples; ^m for I *am* sick of
10. Rom v. 8—love.

k Ps. iv. 6, 7. xlii. 1, 2. lxiii. 1—3. 6 His ⁿ left hand *is* under my head,
8. Is. xxvi. 8, 9. and his right hand doth embrace me.
Luke xxiv. 32. Phil. i. 23.

l 2 Sam. vi. 19. 7 I ⁱ charge you, ^o O ye daughters

† Heb. straw me. m v. 8. 2 Sam. xlii. 1, 2. Ps. cxix. 130, 131. n viii. 3. Is.
liv. 5—10. lxii. 4, 5. Jer. xxxii. 41. Zeph. iii. 17. John iii. 29. Eph. v. 25—29.
§ Heb. adjure. Matt. xxvi. 63. o i. 5. v. 8. 16.

of Jerusalem, ^p by the roes, and by ^q the hinds of the field, that ^r ye stir
not up, nor awake *my* love, till he
please.

8 ¶ The ^r voice of my beloved! be-
hold, he cometh ^s leaping upon ^t the
mountains, skipping upon the hills.

9 My beloved *is* ^u like a roe, or a
young hart: behold, ^x he standeth be-
hind our wall, he looketh forth at the
windows, ^y shewing himself through
the lattice.

ger to faint; and, being applied to Christ and his church,
sets forth his readiness to succour us in all our needs, by
the power of his Spirit. *Bp. Patrick.*—Christ, though
absent as to sight and full fruition, is present to the faith
of his people; and the spouse here thankfully acknow-
ledges, that he graciously comforted her, when ready to
faint with earnest longings after him, or when under trou-
bles and temptations. (*Marg. Ref.*)

V. 7. According to our translation, these are the words
of the spouse, concerning her Beloved, who “rested in
his love” as one asleep, while employed in supporting
and comforting her. In this sense, the verse implies, that
she, afraid of terminating his gracious visit by any dis-
turbance, charges the daughters of Jerusalem not to awake
him.—We grieve the Spirit of God by wrong tempers;
and others may ruffle and discompose us by their unseason-
able intervention. The comforts of communion with God
are but short-lived on earth; but care is required not to
terminate them prematurely: and every thing should be
avoided, which molests devotion, or damps the exercise of
faith and love.—But many suppose that the verse is the
language of Christ concerning the spouse: and the original
certainly favours this interpretation.—“Christ chargeth
them, which have to do in the church, as it were by a
solemn oath, that they trouble not the quietness thereof.”
—The roes and hinds of the field are gentle and pleasant
creatures, but exceedingly timorous; and so are introduced
as witnesses to the charge here given; which is indeed a
solemn adjuration, not *by* them, but as *in their presence*.
(*Gen. xxi. 30, 31.*—*Marg. and Marg. Ref.*—*Note, 8, 9.*)

V. 8, 9. The Spouse here again speaks.—Her Beloved
had withdrawn; but with rapture she again hears his voice,
and perceives the token of his return, “leaping upon,” or
over “the mountains, skipping upon the hills.” This may
apply to the ancient believers’ expectation of the promised
Saviour coming in the flesh: they heard his voice by the
prophets, and every age gave fuller intimations of his ap-
proach. Though he seemed to delay, yet he was coming
with speed and alacrity: nor could any obstructions pre-
vent or retard his approach; but he would surmount them,
as the hart does the mountains and hills. In this sense,
“the wall” behind which he stood, “the windows” through
which “he looked,” and “the lattice” through which he
shewed some glimpses of his glory, represent the types
and ceremonies of the law, and the prophecies especially
relating to that event: these in part revealed him, yet so
that he was concealed from unbelievers; and but dimly

lxxxvii. 4—9. *P. O. Notes, Is. iv. 2. xxxii. 1, 2. liii. 2. John*
i. 10—14. Rev. xxii. 2—5.)—Some explain this of the true
God, as pre-eminent above all the idols of the heathen;
and of the comforts of true religion: but it is only in
Christ that the true God is the Refuge and Comforter of
sinners; and the simile is far more apposite, if applied to
the Lord Jesus, in whom the carnal eye “sees no form or
“comeliness,” but faith discerns every thing glorious and
precious.

V. 4. The image is here varied. Christ is “the Author
“and Finisher of our faith,” as well as the Ransom for our
sins. He brings the soul to seek and enjoy the comforts,
that are communicated through his ordinances, which are
as a “banqueting house” where his saints feast with him,
(*Marg. and Marg. Ref. h.*—See on *Note, i. 4.*)—When
the standard is erected, and the banner displayed, the sol-
diers resort to it, and by keeping near it perform their duty
to their leader, and best consult their own safety. “The
“love of Christ,” manifested in his humiliation unto
death, is the banner which he displays by his word. To
this the believer resorts, and by it is directed and encour-
aged; and thus he obtains the benefits of salvation, is
animated to resist every enemy, and finds effectual protec-
tion. (*Marg. Ref. i.*—*Notes, vi. 4. Ps. lx. 4. Is. xi. 10.*
Rom. v. 6—10. viii. 28—39. 2 Cor. v. 13—15. 1 John iv. 19.)

V. 5. The spouse, being overcome with love, cries out
for refreshments and supports; for cordials, perfumes, or
cooling fruits. “Stay me with those flagons, comfort me
“with those apples,” or citrons; namely, the flagons in
the banqueting-house, and the fruit of the tree before
mentioned.—The love of believers for the unseen Saviour
can never be satisfied by any thing short of the fruition of
him in heaven: this renders the world an uneasy place to
them; and when grace is in lively exercise, they become
even faint and sick through love to him; “desiring to
“depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.”
But their hunger and thirst are “stayed” with foretastes of
that felicity, in the fulfilment of the promises, which are
as flagons full of rich wine, as apples or citrons from “the
“Tree of life:” and nothing but these cordials and pro-
visions can allay their spiritual appetite; for these there-
fore they most earnestly seek and pray. (*Marg. and*
Marg. Ref.—*Notes, v. 8. Ps. iv. 6—8. lxiii. 1—4. lxxxiv.*
1, 2. cxix. 81—83. 131. Phil. i. 21—26.)—*Flagons.*
וַיִּשְׁתֶּה: 2 Sam. vi. 19. 1 Chr. xvi. 3. Hos. iii. 1. Heb.

V. 6. “This is a representation of the tenderest affec-
tion of a husband for his wife, when he sees her in dan-

y 8. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. Ps. lxxxv. 8. Jer. xxxi. 3. z 13. iv. 7, 8. v. 2. Gen. xii. 1—3. Ps. xlv. 10, 11. Matt. iv. 19—22. ix. 9. 2 Cor. vi. 17. 18. xi. 2. Rev. xix. 7—9. xxii. 17.

10 ¶ My Beloved ¹spake, and said unto me, ²Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

11 For, lo, ^athe winter is past, the rain is over *and* gone;

12 The ^bflowers appear on the earth; the ^ctime of the singing of *birds* is come, and the voice ^dof the turtle is heard in our land;

13 The ^efig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines *with* the tendrils are abouted; and the olive-tree is in leaf, and the date-tree is in fruit, and the fig-tree is in fruit, and the vines are abouted; and the olive-tree is in leaf, and the date-tree is in fruit, and the fig-tree is in fruit, and the vines are abouted.

seen by believers; yet his eyes were upon them, and they became in some degree acquainted with him. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. x.—Notes, viii. 13, 14. Matt. xiii. 16, 17. 2 Cor. iii. 12—16. Heb. xi. 39, 40. 1 Pet. i. 10—12.*)—It is equally applicable to his coming at death to receive the believer's soul to glory, and at judgment to complete our salvation: and in this sense, the same expressions represent our communion with him by faith, and through his word and ordinances; and the partial and transient views, which we have of his glory, compared with those of the saints in light. It may also be explained of his spiritual visits to his people, who are mourning for his absence, and for their sins which occasioned it; and in this sense, the latter verse means, that Christ is near to watch over his people, and to give them some tokens of his favour, when they have not the full "joy of his salvation." (*Notes, 16, 17. John xiv. 21—24.*)

V. 10—13. This most poetical description of the approach of spring, in which the spouse speaks of Christ, as inviting her to walk abroad with him, may be variously applied. It may have some reference to the abrogation of the more dark and discouraging dispensation of Moses, for that of Christ: but it seems also to mean the sinner's conversion. Christ invites the new convert, by the discoveries of his love, to arise from sloth and despondency; and to leave sin and worldly vanities, for the sake of holy and joyful communion with him.—The *winter*, that is now past, may either mean the years spent in ignorance and sin, unfruitful and uncomfortable; or the gloomy season, attended with storms and tempests, which followed his conviction of guilt and danger, and preceded his peace and joy in believing. "The flowers" may denote the opening blossoms of holy affections and desires; "the time of the singing of birds" may mean his first grateful songs of praise; "the voice of the turtle," then first heard in the land, may signify, the first comforts of the witnessing, sealing Spirit of God; "the green figs, and tender grapes," or *buds*, which are pleasant to the smell, represent the first immature fruits of righteousness, which promise a future valuable increase; and all these encouraging tokens and evidences of divine favour, are employed as motives to the soul, to follow Christ more entirely. The passage may also be accommodated to the believer's renewed comforts, after a season of temptation and discouragement; to the renewed peace of the church, after sore persecutions; and to the completion of the happiness of all true believers in heaven. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 8, 9. iv. 7, 8. vi. 2. vii. 10*

der grape give a *good* smell. ^fArise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

14 ¶ O ^gmy dove, ^hthat art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret *places* of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, ^klet me hear thy voice; ^lfor sweet is thy voice, and ^mthy countenance is comely.

15 Take us ⁿthe foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines; for our vines *have* ^otender grapes.

Is. li. 3. Rev. iv. 8—10. vii. 9, 10. m i. 5. 8. vi. 10. Ps. xlv. 11. cx. 3. Eph. v. 27. Col. i. 22. 1 Pet. iii. 4. Jude 24. n Ps. lxxx. 13. Ez. xiii. 4—16. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3. Rev. ii. 2. o .3. vii. 12.

—13. *Gen. xii. 1—3. Ps. xlv. 9—11. Is. lv. 1—3. 6, 7. 2 Cor. v. 18—21. vi. 1, 2. 14—18, vv. 17, 18. Rev. xxii. 16, 17.)*

V. 14. Christ is still the Speaker. The spouse conscious of her unworthiness, and ashamed of her former sins, her remaining depravity, and the imperfection of her present services, had hidden herself "in the clefts of the rock," or in some retired place, as declining his gracious invitation. 'Thou that art ashamed of thy sins, come and shew thyself unto me.' In this is represented a mixture of humility and unbelief, common in the experience of true but unestablished believers. Yet Christ speaks to her as his dove, gentle, harmless, loving, and faithful; and urgently invites her to come forth: for he took great delight in her, as a true penitent; he deemed her countenance comely, and was well pleased to behold it; and her voice sweet, and delighted to hear it, when employed in confession, prayer, and grateful praise.—Some, however, understand the verse, of the church, or believers, fleeing from persecution, into the most retired places; (as the dove flees into the recesses of the rock from the birds of prey;) yet there encouraged to present her worship, as assured of the tender affection and gracious acceptance of her Beloved, though despised and hated by the world.—The faithful and loving dove is an apt emblem of the true church, as espoused to Christ; and by her conformity to him, through the sanctification of the Spirit, she is well-pleasing in his sight. (*Marg. Ref.—See on Note, i. 8.—Notes, v. 2. vi. 8, 9. Ex. xxxiii. 20—23. Prov. xv. 8, 9. Dan. ix. 18—23. Acts ix. 10—14, v. 11. 1 Pet. iii. 8—12.*)

V. 15. The new convert had before been represented as a vine with tender grapes (13): and the foxes, it seems, used to injure the vines, and destroy the grapes by trampling on them. 'Foxes...are observed by abundance of authors, to love grapes, and to make great devastations in vineyards. Insomuch that Aristophanes...compares soldiers to foxes, spoiling whole countries, as they do vineyards. ...I require all those, that act by authority from me, and to whom I have committed the care of my church, to use their early diligence to discover and confute the sophistry of deceivers, who craftily insinuate their false doctrines into weak and incautious souls, and thereby seduce those who are newly converted, and but infirm in the faith.' *Bp. Patrick.*—False prophets are, by Ezekiel, compared to *foxes*; and in many particulars, false teachers and hereticks resemble this artful creature. (*Note, Ez. xiii. 1—4, v. 4.*) Yet the inroads which they make on

p vi. 3. vii. 13. Ps. xlviii. 14. Jer. xxxi. 33. 1 Cor. iii. 21—23. Gal. iii. 20. Rev. xxi. 2, 3. q 1. i. 7. vi. 3. r iv. 6. *Take i. 78.* Rom. xiii. 12. 2 Pet. i. 19. s Heb. viii. 5. x. 1.

16 ¶ My ^p Beloved *is* mine, and I *am* his: ^q he feedeth among the lilies.
17 Until ^r the day break, and ^s the

shadows flee away, turn, my ^t Beloved; and be thou like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains of ^{*} Bether.

* Or, *division*.

the church, and the destruction which they occasion, seem too formidable, to be described by young foxes: and those, who consider the verse, as exclusively a command of Christ to his servants, to oppose hereticks, appear reduced to some difficulty to exclude the idea of persecution.—Perhaps, in general, it is a caution against every thing, however plausible, or considered as a small matter, which tends to hinder the prosperity of the church and the fruitfulness of believers, and against heresy in particular. Whatever wastes time, squanders money, or engrosses a large share of attention, and tends to the neglect of the means of grace, is of this kind: and even when the pursuit, or study, (such as of musick, painting, and various other things of the same nature,) is not directly criminal in itself; it spoils the vine, and mars its tender grapes, with the unsuspected subtlety of the fox. The first rising of sinful thoughts and desires, and the beginnings of those trifling pursuits, are like “the little foxes,” which, if not taken, will spoil the vines. Trifling visits, which waste much time, incur expense, put the mind out of frame for devotion, and intrude on the hours that should be employed in meditation, self-examination, searching the scripture, and secret prayer, are peculiarly injurious in this respect: and no good can arise, from such unnecessary intercourse with worldly people; or with superficial professors of the gospel, whose company is still more prejudicial. Specious deviations from the truth, which make a *little* allowance for the pride, avarice, vanity, or indolence of our hearts, and admit of some measure of conformity to the world, and to the discourse of those, who are ever asking, What harm is there in this, or in that? or, What need of this or that measure of diligence? are *little* foxes, which spoil the vines; and which must be taken, and removed out of the way, by private Christians and publick teachers, who desire to be, or to see their people, fruitful branches of the living Vine. Even lawful and needful pursuits and recreations, when attended with excess or inexpediency, “choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful;” “for our vines have tender grapes.” (*Notes, Rom. xvi. 17—20. 2 Thes. iii. 10—15. 2 Tim. ii. 14—18. 2 Pet. ii. 1—3.*)—This caution, (whether of the Bridegroom, or the attendants,) must be allowed to come in very abruptly if our attention be fixed on the external arrangement of a dramatick dialogue.

V. 16, 17. The Spouse here again speaks, as one assured that Christ and all his blessings, are become her's by faith; of which her love to him, and her unreserved surrender of herself to be his, devoted to his service, in body and soul, formed the sure evidence: and she rejoices, in experiencing that he takes pleasure in visiting and communing with his people, who resemble him in lowliness and purity, and in feeding them in the green pastures of his ordinances; and she prays that he will continue to favour her with those visits, “till the day break, and the shadows flee away.” This may refer to the shadows of the Mosaick dispensation, which were dispelled by the breaking of the gospel-day, and the rising of “the Sun of Righteousness;” or to the darkness and shadows of our

state on earth, which will shortly be changed for heavenly light and substantial felicity. The word *Bether* signifies *Division*; (*marg.*) and may intimate the removal of every thing, which now divides our souls from Christ, or excludes us from the beatifick vision. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 8, 9, i. 7. iv. 6. vi. 3. viii. 13, 14. Ps. xlviii. 14. lxxiii. 23—28, vv. 25, 26. 1 Pet. i. 8, 9. 2 Pet. i. 19. 1 John iv. 19.*)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

The most distinct and *apparently* opposite excellences, centre in our divine Redeemer; and he appears as glorious in his deepest abasement and sufferings for us, and in his condescending communion with us, as in his essential majesty and holiness. His people also are excellent, in proportion as they are conformed to him: and the small degree, in which the meanest believer on earth resembles Christ, renders him more honourable and amiable, than the most accomplished unbeliever; even as the lily is preferable to the prickly thorn. We should, however, remember among whom we dwell, expect to be injured by them, and endeavour to suffer with meekness.—The believer, as his judgment matures, will admire the whole and every part of the Redeemer's character: but he is commonly first attracted, by perceiving the suitableness and preciousness of the fruits of his mediation. None of those eminent persons, whose characters and exploits are celebrated by historians, orators, and poets, can pretend to heal a wounded conscience or a broken heart; or to deliver a trembling sinner from the wrath of God and the power of Satan. They may be stately, as the cedars of Lebanon; but the lowly Jesus, whose merits and grace bring relief in the hour of deep distress, is unspeakably more lovely in the eyes, and precious to the heart, of the true Christian. Every time that he finds deliverance from guilt, fear, temptation, and distress, by faith in his name; and every experience, of the sweetness of “peace and joy in believing,” and of the hope and comfort, which the Spirit of adoption communicates, increases his love to the Author of his eternal salvation.—Let us then come, and “sit down under his shadow,” and abide there: we shall find great delight in so doing, and “his fruit will be sweet to our taste;” for none despise these joys, but those who never experienced them, and who have no desire after them, through their eager pursuit of the vanities of the world. The Lord Jesus has prepared the feast, by the sacrifice of his death upon the cross; (*Note, Is. xxv. 6—8;*) and his ordinances are appointed, that we may in them partake of it: and the same love, which allures us to him, and protects us in communing with him, animates us to venture and suffer for his sake; and with that banner before our eyes, or over our heads, we shall valiantly encounter and surely overcome all our enemies. In proportion as we relish heavenly consolations, our longings after them will increase; and earth would become intolerable to us, were we not stayed with those cordials and first-fruits of glory, until our course be finished. These we should earnestly seek for ourselves

CHAP. III.

The Spouse relates the pains she took to recover the company of her Beloved ; her success, and care not to lose his gracious presence, 1—5. Her companions admire her zeal and heavenly affections, 6. All the company unite in admiring the glory of the Beloved, 7—11.

^a Ps. iv. 4. vi. 6. xxii. 2. lxiii. 6—8. lxxvii. 2—4. Is. xxvi. 9.
^b i. 7. v. 8. John xxi. 17. 1 Pet. i. 8.
^c v. 6. Ps. cxxx. 1, 2. Is. lv. 6. Luke xiii. 24.
^d v. 5. Is. lxiv. 7. Jon. i. 6. Matt. xxvi. 40, 41. Rom. xiii. 11. 1 Cor. xv. 34. Eph. v. 14.
^e Prov. i. 20, 21. viii. 2, 3. 34. Luke xiv. 21—23.

BY ^anight on my bed I sought ^bhim whom my soul loveth: ^cI sought him, but I found him not.

² I ^dwill rise now, and go about the city in ^ethe streets, and in the broad ways I will seek him whom my soul

loveth: 'I sought him, but I found him not.

³ The ^gwatchmen that go about the city found me; *to whom I said,* ^hSaw ye him whom my soul loveth?

⁴ *It was* but a little that I passed from them, ⁱbut I found him whom my soul loveth: ^kI held him, and would not let him go, until ^lI had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me.

⁵ I ^mcharge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the

^f Ps. xxii. 1, 2. xlii. 7—9. xliii. 2—5. lxxvii. 7—10.
^g v. 7. Is. xxi. 6—8. 11, 12. lvi. 10. lxii. 6. Ez. iii. 17. xxxiii. 2—9. Heb. xlii. 17.
^h John xx. 15.
ⁱ Prov. viii. 17. Is. lv. 6, 7. Jer. xxix. 13. Lam. iii. 25. Matt. vii. 7.
^k vii. 5. Gen. xxxii. 26. Prov. iv. 13. Hos. xii. 3, 4. Matt. xxviii. 9. John xx. 16, 17.
^l Is. xlix. 14—18. liv. 1—3. Gal. iv. 26.
^m ii. 7. viii. 4.

and for each other, that we may not faint through the troubles of our way. Even when our consolations do not abound, we have cause to acknowledge, that we have many gracious supports and unmerited mercies from the Lord's presence with us. Nor should we expect uninterrupted comfort on earth; for the Lord will, when he pleases, leave us to feel how miserable and helpless we should be without him: but it becomes us to be careful not to bring this trial on ourselves, by sins and negligences, or to occasion it to others; for, as a small noise will drive away the timorous hart, so a little misconduct will "grieve the holy Spirit of God," and interrupt our spiritual consolations. We may therefore rather wonder, that we have so many precious pledges of divine love, than that we so often mourn and are disconsolate, when we reflect on our own want of watchfulness and circumspection.

V. 8—17

If the Christian so longs for the Lord's manifested presence and love, and receives every intimation of it with such exultation; and if ancient believers so rejoiced in the prospect of his appearance on earth in our nature; how should we anticipate the complete salvation, which will come to our souls at the hour of death, and to our bodies also at the glorious resurrection! For these purposes our Redeemer will come quickly, and we shall soon be with him, and "see him as he is, and be like him," and share his glory. In the mean time our mortal flesh, as a wall, intercepts our view of him: but his eye is upon us; and every glimpse, which we have of him by faith, is intended to render us willing "to be absent from the body, that we may be present with the Lord." If we have experienced the blessed change which takes place in conversion; if we have obeyed the call of Christ, to arise and follow him, and to leave the world and sin behind, that we may enjoy his love; if we have thus found peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and if the blossoms and fruits, (though but tender and green,) of true holiness appear in our lives: we need not fear to follow him, through any trials and temptations; nor have we any cause to dread his last call by death, to arise, and come away to the full fruition of his love. Even the unripe fruits of holiness are pleasant unto him, whose grace has produced them: and when we are humble, and ashamed of our services, he will approve and commend them. But we should not allow

unbelief to tarnish our self-abasement: our Lord accounts that countenance comely which is furrowed with tears of godly sorrow, and those prayers sweet which are the language of a broken heart: and the contrite and penitent are always welcome guests at his table, and supplicants at his throne of grace, and should not decline his gracious invitations. Whilst we live here, our desire should be to bring forth plenteously the fruits of righteousness: and careful observers will perceive, that the little despised foxes do more harm to the branches of the living vine, than the dreaded wild-boars. Plausible errors, trivial omissions, compliances, and indulgences, are more general hindrances to our progress and usefulness, than gross transgressions, or distressing temptations: and Satan and his emissaries do us more harm, as subtle unsuspected deceivers, than as furious persecutors. (Notes, Acts xx. 29—31. 2 Cor. xi. 13—15.) We should then watch against the first occasions and feeble beginnings of evil, and suppress the first risings of sinful inclinations; destroying "the little foxes," before they become capable of important mischief. This circumspect conduct conduces greatly to our full assurance of hope: and when it becomes evident, that we love Christ and are his willing people, we may be sure that he is our loving Saviour. (Note, v. 9—16.) He will also delight in us, as the lilies that he has planted; and we shall be solaced with his gracious visits, and wait in humble patient hope, till these earthly shadows flee away, and he come swiftly over every separating mountain to take us home unto himself.

NOTES.

CHAP. III. V. 1—5. The circumstances of this narration, (and of one in some respects similar in the fifth chapter,) are so improbable, if applied, in the literal meaning, to the newly espoused queen of king Solomon; that, to avoid the difficulty, and to maintain the consistency of a dramattick poem on occasion of Solomon's marriage, it has been considered merely as a *dream* of the spouse. But the narrative gives not the least intimation of this.—Some interpreters suppose, that the spouse seeking her Beloved, "by night, on her bed," denotes a season of darkness and drowsiness, of dim apprehensions, languid affections, and heartless services. Others accommodate it to a season of affliction. 'The church, by night, that is, in troubles, seeketh to Christ, but is not incontinently' (immediately)

hinds of the field, that ye stir not up,
nor awake *my* love till he please.

6 ¶ Who is ⁿthis that cometh out
of the wilderness ^olike pillars of smoke,
perfumed with myrrh and frankin-
cense, with all powders of the mer-
chant?

ⁿ viii. 5. Jer. ii.
2. xxxi. 2. Rev.
xii. 6. 14.
^o Ex. xiii. 21, 22.
Joel ii. 29—31.
Acts ii. 18—21. P
Col. iii. 1, 2
p i. 3. 13. iv. 12
—14. v. 5. 13.
2 Cor. ii. 14—16.
Phil. iv. 18.

‘heard.’ But perhaps solitude and retired meditation are principally intended; as David “remembered God on his “bed, and meditated on him in the night-watches,” which shewed the fervency of his love. (*Marg. Ref. a.—Notes, Ps. iv. 3—5, v. 4. xlii. 6—8. lxiii. 5—7. Is. xxvi. 8, 9.*) Yet the circumstance of the spouse not finding her Beloved, till she sought him in another manner, gives some ground to the opinion, that a degree of slackness and self-indulgence was also intended.—Being, however, alarmed, and grieved at her ill success, she was excited to more decided endeavours to recover the comforts of communion with him. “The streets, and broad ways of the city,” seem rather to imply earnestness in all the means of grace, in which sweet communion with the Lord should be sought; than to mark the distinction between publick, social, and private duties.—Thus the spouse is represented as seeking her Beloved in every part of the city. But still she did not succeed for a time; since it was proper that she should be further humbled, proved, and quickened.—She therefore next applied to the *watchmen*, that went about the city, who in this place denote the prophets and faithful ministers of religion, who could give proper directions to distressed souls, and earnest enquirers after the Saviour. But upon opening her case to them, and enquiring whether they had seen, and could direct her to her Beloved, she did not receive immediate satisfaction. This may intimate, that we must not rest in any means, but apply immediately to Christ, by faith and prayer, if we would succeed. At length, however, perhaps through their direction and counsel, she found her Beloved, and then she “held him, “and would not let him go,” being afraid of losing the comfort of his presence; “until she had brought him into “her mother’s house, &c.” The church at large may be called the mother of believers; the publick ordinances are the chambers, in which they are born of God: and the Spouse, bringing her Beloved into this house and these chambers, may signify the believer’s open profession of his faith, and joining himself to the Lord and his people; with a declaration, expressed or implied, of his intention to walk with them in love and holy obedience. Those of old, who were born Israelites, and circumcised in infancy, did this by a constant attention to all their sacrifices and sacred solemnities: and the Lord’s supper especially answers this purpose to Christians.—The Spouse, being now happy in communion with Christ, renews the charge before given to the daughters of Jerusalem. (*Note, ii. 7.*)

‘I charge you all, ye earthly toys,
‘Approach not to disturb my joys;
‘Nor sin nor hell come near my heart,
‘Nor cause my Saviour to depart.

* * * * *
‘Nor let a motion, nor a word,
‘Nor thought arise to grieve my Lord.’ *Watts.*

(*Marg. Ref.—Notes, v. 2—8. Gen. xxxii. 26. Prov. i. 20*

7 Behold ^qhis bed, which is Solo-
mon’s: ^rthreescore valiant men *are*
about it, of the valiant of Israel.

8 They ^sall hold swords, *being* ex-
pert in war: every man *hath* his
sword upon his thigh, ^tbecause of fear
in the night.

^q 9. *Marg. l. 16.*
^r 1 Sam. viii. 16.
xiv. 52. xxviii.
2. 1 Kings ix.
22. xiv. 27, 28
Heb. i. 14.
^s Ps. xlv. 3. cxlix.
5—9. Eph. vi
16—18.
^t Neh. iv. 21, 22.
1 Thes. v. 6—8.

—23. *Is. lv. 6, 7. Jer. xxix. 11—14. Hos. xii. 3—6, vv. 3, 4. Rom. xiii. 11—14. Eph. iv. 30—32. v. 8—14, v. 14. Heb. xiii. 7, 8.)*

V. 6. These seem to be the words of “the daughters “of Jerusalem,” expressing their admiration at the zeal and fervent love of the Spouse. They enquire “who this “is, that cometh out of the wilderness;” perhaps alluding to the wilderness through which Israel passed, and from which they went up to possess the promised land. But a *wilderness* is a known emblem of this vain world: the believer comes out of it, when he renounces its friendship, and is delivered from the love of it; and when he leaves its sinful pleasures and pursuits, and refuses compliance with its customs and fashions, that he may seek happiness in communion with God through Jesus Christ. (*Marg. Ref. n.—Notes, iv. 8. viii. 5. Ps. lxiii. 1—4. cvii. 1—7. Jer. ii. 2—6. xxxi. 2. Rev. xii. 3—6.*)—“Pillars of smoke” ascended towards heaven, whilst the sacrifices were consumed on the altar of burnt-offering; and sweet gums and spices of the merchant were burnt upon the golden altar of incense. This may represent the lively affections, and fervent prayers and praises, and other spiritual sacrifices of believers, ascending to heaven before God, through the atonement and intercession of Christ. (*Marg. Ref. o, p.—Notes, i. 12—14. iv. 12—14. v. 5, 6. Ex. xiii. 21, 22. xxx. 34—38. 2 Cor. ii. 14—17. Phil. iv. 14—20, v. 18. Heb. xiii. 15, 16. 1 Pet. ii. 4—6.*)—The last clause may be rendered, “*more precious* than all the powders of the “merchant.” Gold dust might be one of these powders.

V. 7, 8. The Spouse seems to call on her companions, not to admire her feeble graces and imperfect services; but to behold her Beloved. As the bed and bedchamber of Solomon was guarded by a number of well armed soldiers, lest he should be disturbed or assaulted in the night: so a guard of angels continually protects the church from the assaults and terrors of her enemies, in the darkest hours, whilst she maintains communion with her Beloved; yea, the Lord himself is her Keeper by day and night. ‘Be- ‘hold the love, which the great King hath to her, having ‘prepared all things for her reception into society with ‘himself; of whose royal person and happiness, Solomon ‘himself, in all his glory, is but a figure. ... Valiant per- ‘sons ... encompass him night and day; ... but are not ‘comparable to the power and force and multitude of that ‘heavenly host, which secure the church in her enjoy- ‘ments, and take care of her continual safety.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—This supposes the verse to be a continuation of the admiring language used by the daughters of Jerusalem, concerning the zeal and happiness of the spouse. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, i. 17, 18. Neh. iv. 19—22. Ps. xlv. 3—5. xci. 1—13. cxxi. 3—8. Rom. viii. 32—39. Eph. vi. 10—13. Heb. i. 13, 14.*)

^{Or, a bed. 7.} 9 King Solomon made himself ^a a chariot of the wood of Lebanon.
^{2 Sam. xxiii. 5.} 10 He made ^u the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple; ^x the midst thereof being paved with love for the daughters of Jerusalem.

^u Ps. lxxxvii. 3.
¹ Tim. iii. 15,
16. Rev. iii. 12.
^x Rom. v. 2. Eph.
iii. 18, 19. Rev.
i. 5.

11 ^y Go forth, O ^a ye daughters of Zion, and ^a behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith ^b his mother crowned him ^c in the day of his espousals, and ^d in the day of the gladness of his heart.

^z i. 5. ii. 7. Ps. ix. 14. xlviii. 11.
^a Is. ix. 6. Matt. xii. 42. Phil. ii. 9-11. Heb. ii. 9. Rev. xix. 12.
^b viii. 5. Col. i. 18. Rev. v. 9, 10.
^c Is. lxii. 5. Jer. ii. 2. Hos. ii. 19.
^d Is. liii. 11. Jer. xxxii. 41. Zeph. iii. 17. Luke xv. 6, 7, 23, 24.
20. Rev. xix. 7.
32. John xv. 11.

V. 9, 10. Here Solomon is the type of Christ, the King of Israel, and our Prince of Peace. The chariot of cedar, or carriage, which Solomon had made, for himself and his royal spouse to appear in publickly, may mean the gospel of Christ; or the everlasting covenant, which he has mediated in our behalf, in which his glory and our felicity are united: the "pillars of silver" may denote the precious promises and engagements, which are the support and ornament of this covenant, and the security of all believers: "the bottom of gold," and "the covering of purple," may mean the rich blessings and royal privilege conferred on every believer: and "the midst thereof being paved with love," shews that all these blessings spring from the love of God in Christ Jesus to fallen sinners, "according to the eternal purpose, which he hath purposed in himself;" and centre in it. "What is this to the wonderful love of God, and to the riches of his grace, in his great and precious promises, ... which the gospel calls us not only to behold, but to enjoy?" Bp. Patrick. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Ps. xlv. 3—5. lxxxvii. 3. Is. lv. 1—3. Rom. v. 6—10. viii. 32—39. Eph. iii. 14—19. 1 Tim. i. 12—16. 1 John iii. 1—3. iv. 9—12. Rev. i. 4—6.) The clause rendered "for the daughters of Jerusalem," may mean "by, or from, the daughters of Jerusalem." Solomon's chariot was adorned by their needle work, and the figures, whatever they were, wrought by them, are no unapt emblem of Christians "adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things." (Note, Tit. ii. 9, 10.)

V. 11. This verse contains the most express allusion to the marriage of Solomon, of any in the whole book; but it is not said whether to Naamah the Ammonitess, his first wife as far as we know, or to Pharaoh's daughter, or to some other of his wives. (Preface.—Notes, i. 2. 1 Kings iii. 1. xiv. 21.) It seems, that it was customary in ancient times, for the bridegroom, or bride, or both, to wear a nuptial crown; and it may be supposed that Solomon's, on such a joyful occasion, would be very magnificent. It was put on his head by his mother Bathsheba.—"O ye daughters of Zion, ... look upon king Solomon, as he sits solemnly crowned in the day of his greatest royalty and triumph; and compare his highest pomp with the divine magnificence of my Saviour, in that day when his blessed marriage shall be fully perfected above, to the eternal rejoicing of himself and his church; and see whether there be any proportion between them." Bp. Hall.—When the sinner finds "peace and joy in believing," and makes an open profession of his faith and love; especially when large multitudes thus join themselves to the Lord, (as was the case on the day of Pentecost;) the happy season may be called the day of the heavenly Bridegroom's espousals, and "the day of the gladness of his heart:" for espousals are not a secret transaction; but

the recognition, before proper witnesses, or publickly, of the mutual consent of the two contracting parties to be united in marriage. (Marg. Ref. c.—Notes, Is. lxi. 10, 11. Jer. ii. 2, 3. Hos. ii. 18—20. 2 Cor. xi. 1—6. v. 2, 3. Rev. xix. 1—8. xxi. 1—4.) The church is the mother of Christ, as to his human nature, that is, he was born within the church; and she crowns him, when, through ordinances administered in her, sinners are converted, and believers thus espoused to him. Then his power and grace are displayed; he "sees of the travail of his soul," and the purchase of his blood, "and is satisfied;" and these are the trophies and monuments of his glorious victories, over the world, sin, Satan, and death. Angels in heaven rejoice over one penitent sinner; saints on earth rejoice and celebrate the Redeemer's praises, when this event is made known to them: he himself rejoices over the redeemed sinner, as "in the day of the gladness of his heart:" and the daughters of Zion, (every one who is disposed to seek this salvation,) should go forth to behold these things; that they may be encouraged to believe and to make profession of their faith, by observing how glorious our King appears in saving sinners. (Marg. Ref. y—b. d.—Notes, viii. 5. Is. liii. 11, 12. lxii. 1—5, v. 5. Zeph. iii. 14—17. Luke xv. 3—10. P. O. 1—10. Notes, Phil. ii. 9—11. Heb. xii. 2, 3.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—5

Remaining sinfulness, the snares of Satan, and the fascinations of the world, may lull even true believers into comparative negligence: yet, if indeed Christ be our Beloved, we shall not utterly intermit our search of him. If, however, at any time our affections become cold, and our attendance on ordinances remiss and infrequent, it is salutary for us to lose our assurance, and to be distressed with fears and doubts. This gentle rebuke of our folly and ingratitude, which merit far severer punishment, is intended to excite us to seek him more earnestly: nor can a true believer deliberately rest in any thing short of the enjoyment of the love of Christ. When we are stirred up to use diligence, in attending on all the means of grace, yet do not immediately succeed, the delay should not discourage, but humble us; and lead us to closer self-examination, and more frequent and earnest prayer: nor can either new converts, or returning backsliders, expect to find peace and comfort in any other way.—Those who are troubled in mind, should open their case to the faithful and experienced watchmen of the holy city, and desire their assistance in seeking Christ and the joy of his salvation: but such as are not experimentally acquainted with him themselves, cannot point him out to others.—We should use, but not depend on, instruments and means: and though the Lord will prove our faith and love; yet he will be found of all, who seek him with humble and persever-

CHAP. IV.

Christ commends the comeliness of the spouse by various similes, invites her to accompany him, and shews the warmth of his affection, 1—15. The Spouse desires supplies of divine influences, to invigorate her holy affections, 16.

- ^a 9, 10. i. 15. ii. 10. 14. Ps. xlv. 11. 2 Cor. iii. 18.
^b v. 12. Matt. xi. 29. Phil. ii. 3—5.
^c v. 11. vi. 5. 7. vii. 5.
^d Or, eat of, &c.
^e Num. xxxii. 1. 40.
^f vi. 6. Jer. xv. 16. John xv. 7. Col. i. 4—6.
^g 1 Thes. ii. 13.
^h 2 Pet. i. 5—8.

BEHOLD, ^athou art fair, my love; behold thou art fair; ^bthou hast doves' eyes within thy locks: ^cthy hair is as a flock of goats that ^dappear from ^emount Gilead.

2 Thy ^eteeth are like a flock of sheep that are even shorn, which came

ing diligence. Days, weeks, months, nay years, of sorrowful waiting, will soon be compensated by the joy of having found him whom our souls love: and not only will that joy be proportioned to our desire after his favour, and our regret for having forfeited the comfort of it; but our future watchfulness will be increased in the same measure.—We should inform all, who fear God, “what he hath done for our souls;” that they may praise him on our account, and be encouraged by our example: and we should aim, by every means, to bring others to partake of our privileges and comforts. Our faith ought to be declared by an open confession: and when we find our hearts enlarged in joy and gratitude, we should not delay joining ourselves to the Lord and his people, at his table; that we may have the benefit of Christian communion, and of the prayers and counsels of our brethren. And we should still call upon ourselves and each other, to beware of grieving our holy Comforter, and provoking the departure of our Beloved.

V. 6—11.

Lively Christians, leaving the world and sin behind them, and setting their affections on things above; offering the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, with fervent love, joy, and gratitude, through the influences of the Holy Spirit; and presenting every service through the mediation of Christ, form a lovely and edifying sight. Such persons adorn the gospel, and often convince enquirers and undecided persons, that there is an excellency and happiness in religion, which cannot be attained without great diligence. But the believer will never think highly of himself; and will always direct those who notice him, to “look unto Jesus” and his glory and grace: and the more we rejoice in his “unsearchable riches,” the greater earnestness shall we express in recommending them to others. In this respect our love is without selfishness; as we know that there is sufficient to enrich and felicitate all who come, be they ever so numerous.—The protection and security, arising from armed and valiant guards, are a feeble shadow of the peace and safety of those who trust in the Lord: and if our minds were always “stayed upon him,” and communing with him, we should not fear in the darkest night of temptation, or even in the gloomy hour of death. (Notes, Ps. xxiii. 4. lxxxiv. 11, 12. Is. xxvi. 3, 4. 1. 10, 11.) Blessed be God for the everlasting gospel of our King of righteousness and peace; for

up from the washing; whereof every one bear twins, and none is barren among them.

3 Thy ^glips are like a thread of scarlet, and thy speech is comely: thy temples are like a piece of a pomegranate within thy locks.

4 Thy ^hneck is like the tower of David, builded for an armoury, whereon there hang a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men.

5 Thy ⁱtwo breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies.

n i. 13. vii. 3. 7. viii. 1. 10. Prov. v. 19. Is. lxvi. 10—12. 1 Pet. ii. 2.

- Ex. xxiii. 23
 Deut. vii. 13, 14.
 11. v. 13. 16. vii. 9.
 Ps. xxxvii. 30. xlv. 2. cxix. 13. Prov. x. 13. 20. 21. xvi. 21—24. Matt. xii. 35. Luke iv. 22. 2 Cor. v. 18—21. Eph. iv. 29. Col. iii. 16, 17. iv. 6.
 Lev. xiv. 4. 6. 49—52. Num. iv. 8. xix. 6. Josh. ii. 18. Heb. ix. 19.
 i. vi. 7. Gen. xxxii. 10. Ezra ix. 6. Ez. xvi. 63.
 k i. 10. vii. 4. 2 Sam. xxii. 51. Eph. iv. 15, 16. Col. ii. 19. 1 Pet. i. 5.
 l Neh. iii. 19.
 m 2 Chr. ix. 15, 16. xii. 9—11. o ii. 16. vi. 3.

the precious promises and inviolable security of the new covenant; for the rich and royal privileges to which believers are now admitted, and are taught hereafter to expect; and especially for that unfathomable love, from which they proceed. May that “love constrain us to live to him, who died for us and rose again,” and “to love one another with a pure heart fervently.” And blessed be God that, whilst believers may know, that he has “loved them with an everlasting love,” and will never leave them nor forsake them: sinners may be assured, “that every one that seeketh findeth.” No affectionate bridegroom so rejoices over his bride, on the day of his espousals, as the Lord Jesus rejoices over the poor sinner, who comes to trust in his mercy and salvation. Nor did ever Solomon appear so glorious, when arrayed in royal majesty, with a crown of pure gold upon his head; as our Redeemer does, when converted sinners acknowledge their obligations to him, and join themselves unto his people. This is the crown which he most values! Poor, dejected, trembling sinner, go forth, and behold him, how he is glorified, and how he rejoices in saving the meanest and the vilest; and be encouraged to hope, that he will be glorious in saving thee also, as drawn and taught to seek and long for his salvation.

NOTES.

CHAP. IV. V. 1—5. By the spouse, as here addressed by her Beloved, with most tender affection and high commendations, we may understand either individual believers, or the church collectively: and the induction of several particulars, may shew in general, that the church and the believer partake of every kind of spiritual excellency; though we may not be able satisfactorily to apply the several allusions. The “doves’ eyes within her locks,” may denote the modesty with which believers conceal their good works, which spring from holy and gentle love: or the chaste eyes shaded by locks of hair, may mean an indisposition to gaze abroad, and an unwillingness to be gazed on. The “hair like a flock of goats that appear from mount Gilead,” which are noted for their orderly following the he-goat, may signify the believer’s intelligent profession of faith, and his regular conversation, the result of sound knowledge and judgment. (Marg. and Marg. Ref. a—d.—Notes, i. 9, 10. v. 10—16, v. 11. vi. 5—7, v. 5. vii. 5. Phil. ii. 1—4. 5—8, v. 5.) “The teeth,” which pre-

11. 17. Mal. iv. 2. Luke i. 78. 2 Pet. i. 19. 1 John ii. 8. Rev. xxii. 16. Heb. breathe. q Ex. xx. 24. xxx. 8. 23—26. xxxvii. 29. Deut. xii. 5, 6. Ps. lxvi. 15. Is. ii. 2. Mal. i. 11. Luke i. 9, 10. Rev. v. 8.

6 Until the 'day *break, and the shadows flee away, I will get me 'to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.

7 Thou art 'all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.

8 ¶ Come 'with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me 'from Lebanon: s i. v. 16. Num. xxiv. 5. Ps. xlv. 11. 13. Eph. v. 25—27. Col. i. 22. 2 Pet. iii. 14. Jude 24. Rev. xxi. 2. ii. 13. vii. 11. t Deut. iii. 25.

pare the food for digestion, being compared to "a flock of ewes, newly washed," or after they are shorn, each accompanied by two lambs, &c. may denote the believer's teachable disposition, his regular attendance on instruction, and its beneficial effect upon his conduct, rendering him very fruitful in good works. But some apply this to the ministers, who prepare the spiritual food for the nourishment of the church; and to the harmony and purity of their doctrine, and its efficacy in the conversion of sinners, and the sanctification of believers. (*Marg. Ref. e, f.—Notes, vi. 5—7, v. 6.*) The "lips like a thread of scarlet," and the pleasant voice," evidently mean the profitable improvement of the gift of speech, in edifying conversation, in preaching the gospel, and in worshipping God. (*Marg. Ref. g, h.—Notes, v. 10—16, vv. 13. 16. Ps. xxxvii. 29—31. xlv. 2. Prov. xv. 4. xxv. 11, 12. Is. l. 4. Eph. iv. 29. Jam. iii. 3—12.*)—The "temples, like a piece of pomegranate, within the locks," may be interpreted of humiliation before God, for defects or sins that he alone sees; or, of the modesty, as well as prudence, with which ministers should attend their work; or of those excellences in the church and the believer, which Jesus Christ peculiarly approves, but which are concealed from the view of the world. (*Marg. Ref. i.—Notes, vi. 5—7. Ps. xlv. 13—15. 1 Pet. iii. 1—4.*)—"The neck," which unites the head and the body, is commonly explained to mean *faith*, by which the union of believers with Christ our Head is formed; and which is a shield, to ward off and quench the fiery darts of the wicked one; and which puts the soul under the Lord's protection, as in a well fortified and defended tower. (*Marg. Ref. k—m.—Notes, vii. 4. 1 Kings x. 15, 16. Eph. iv. 14—16. vi. 14—17, v. 16. Col. ii. 18, 19.*)—"The two breasts, like two young roes, &c." if we accommodate them to the believer, may denote simplicity of affection for Christ, and the delight, which Christ reciprocally takes in him; as the husband in the affections of the wife of his bosom: or the connexion that there is in the distinct exercises of spiritual graces, which are as twins: and the idea of young roes, which feed among the lilies, may denote conformity to Christ, who is thus described. (ii. 16.) The believer delights in communion with Christ and his people, as he delights in them. But the two breasts, applied to the body of the church, may also denote the two Testaments, or the writings of the prophets and apostles, those "breasts of consolation," which are pleasant as the young roes, and twins in doctrine; whence ministers deduce all their instructions; whence converts, as new-born babes, draw the "sincere milk of the word" "that they may grow thereby;" and established Christians not only deduce continual improvement, but learn those things, which they usefully communicate to others. (*Marg. Ref. n, o.—Notes, vii. 6—8. viii. 1, 2, 8, 9. Prov. v. 15—19. Is. lxvi. 10—14. 1 Pet. ii. 1—3.*) Some of these expressions do not seem aptly descriptive of feminine beauty: and I take it for granted, that they have a spiritual meaning, though far from being confident. that the exact im-

port of each allusion is pointed out. But these seem the more probable opinions which have been formed on the subject.

V. 6. "The mountain of myrrh and the hill of frankincense," may mean the mountain on which the temple was built, and where the incense was burnt, and where the people at the same time worshipped the Lord. This was his peculiar residence, where he would "wait to be gracious" till the shadows of the legal dispensation were dispersed, by the breaking of the gospel-day, and the rising of "the Sun of Righteousness;" and thither believers resorted to meet him in his ordinances. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. p, q.—Notes, ii. 16, 17. Hos. v. 15. Mal. i. 9—11, v. 11. iv. 2—6. John iv. 21—24.*) At present he dwells in human nature, and is gone into the true holy place, to present the worship of his people before the throne, with the incense of his intercession: and though Christ, in respect of his human nature, is absent from his church on earth, and will continue to be so, till the heavenly day break, and these earthly shadows flee away; yet in heaven, he is maintaining our cause, and he is *spiritually* present in his ordinances, and with his people; as he said, when he ascended, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (*Notes, Matt. xviii. 19, 20. xxviii. 19, 20. Heb. ix. 24—28.*)

V. 7. 'Thou art exceeding beautiful, O my church, 'in all parts of thee: for all thy sins are done away, and 'thine iniquity is covered; and lo, I present thee to my 'Father, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such deformity. 'Eph. v. 27.' *Bp. Hall.*—The apostle, however, in the passage alluded to, evidently intended the perfect sanctification of the church, when admitted into the heavenly state, which is the completion of her sacred union with her Beloved.

'Defiled and loathsome as we are,
'He makes us white, and calls us fair;
'Adorns us with that heavenly dress,
'His graces, and his righteousness.' *Watts.*

(*Marg. Ref.—Notes, 1—5. i. 8. Ps. xlv. 9—11. Eph. v. 22—27, vv. 26, 27. Col. i. 21—23. Jude 22—25, v. 24.*)

V. 8. 'Christ promiseth his church, to call his faithful 'from all corners of the world.'—'Here now begins a new 'representation; as appears by this, that the style wherein 'the Bridegroom speaks is altered; she who hitherto hath 'been called his *love* or *friend*, being now called his 'spouse," and never before, though very frequently in 'the following part of the song. ... We may look upon 'this as a description of the church, coming out of the 'state of persecution, and receiving greater testimonies of 'her Saviour's love than ever. For, coming from the top 'of high mountains, where there were lions' dens, and 'where leopards inhabited, cannot well signify any thing 'else, than coming from places where they were in danger 'to be devoured by their persecutors. ... As Senir and 'Hermon were parts of the same mountain; so Amana 'was a part of Libanus: ... and though the lower parts of

^a Deut. iii. 9. look from the top of Amana, from the
Josh. xii. 1.
^x Ps. lxxvi. 1. top of ^u Shenir and Hermon, ^x from
the lions' dens, from the mountains
of the leopards.

^y 10. 12. v. 1, 2. Gen. xx. 12.
Matt. xii. 50.
1 Cor. ix. 5. ⁹ Thou hast ^{*} ravished my heart,
Heb. ii. 11—14. ^y my sister, ^z my spouse; ^a thou hast
ravished my heart, ^b with one of thine
eyes, with ^c one chain of thy neck.

^z iii. 11. Ps. xlv. 9. ^y my sister, ^z my spouse; ^a thou hast
Is. liv. 5. lxii. 8.
5. Ez. xvi. 8. ¹⁰ How fair is thy [†] love, my sister,
Hos. ii. 19, 20. ¹¹ my spouse! ^d how much better is thy
John iii. 29. ¹² love than wine! and ^e the smell of
2 Cor. xi. 2. ¹³ thine ointments than all spices!
Rev. xix. 7, 8. ¹⁴ Thy ^f lips, O my spouse, drop as
xxi. 2, 9, 10. ¹⁵ the honey-comb: ^g honey and milk are
^a vi. 12. vii. 5. ¹⁶ Thy ^f lips, O my spouse, drop as
6. 10. Prov. v. 19, 20. Zeph. iii. 17.
b i. 15. vi. 5. ¹⁷ the honey-comb: ^g honey and milk are
c i. 10. ¹⁸ Thy ^f lips, O my spouse, drop as
† Heb. loves. i. 2. ¹⁹ the honey-comb: ^g honey and milk are
mag.
d i. 2. 4. ²⁰ Thy ^f lips, O my spouse, drop as
e i. 3. 12. iii. 6. ²¹ the honey-comb: ^g honey and milk are
v. 5. 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. Gal. v. 22, 23. Phil. iv. 18. Rev. v. 8. f 3. v. 13. vii. 9. Ps. lxxi.
14, 15, 23, 24. Prov. xvi. 24. Hos. xiv. 2. Heb. xiii. 15. g v. 1. Prov. xxiv.
13, 14. Is. vii. 15.

¹¹ Thy ^f lips, O my spouse, drop as
the honey-comb: ^g honey and milk are
¹² Thy ^f lips, O my spouse, drop as
the honey-comb: ^g honey and milk are
¹³ Thy ^f lips, O my spouse, drop as
the honey-comb: ^g honey and milk are

' this mountain, Libanus, were very pleasant; yet the top
' of it, which is here spoken of, was horrid, and inhabited
' by wild beasts.' *Bp. Patrick*.—The original is future, not
imperative; and implies, not merely an invitation, but also
a promise, that the true church shall be brought out of
every scene of danger and suffering, to the enjoyment of
consummate felicity in the presence and full favour of her
Beloved. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, ii. 10—14. *Ps.* xlv. 9—11.
lxxvi. 4. *Is.* xxxv. 8—10. 2 *Cor.* vi. 14—18.) In what
sense could Pharaoh's daughter be called to come to Solo-
mon, after their espousals, from the horrid tops of these
mountains? And what had she, even before her marriage,
to do, either on the savage wilds of Lebanon, the northern
boundary of Canaan; or on the top of Hermon, to the
east of Jordan?—Egypt lies south-west of Canaan.

V. 9. Christ here expresses the vehemency of his love
to his church. He calls her his "sister," as well as his
"spouse:" (10. 12:) he bears our nature as the Son of
man, and he makes us partakers of the divine nature, as
the children of God. His spouse had "ravished," or taken
away, "his heart, with one of her eyes:" that is, by look-
ing to him, in the simplicity of faith and love; and "with
"one chain of her neck," or by every exercise of those
harmonious graces, and practice of those holy duties,
which are the ornament of the believer and of his profes-
sion. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes*, i. 10. 15. v. 1, 2. vi.
5—7, v. 5. *Matt.* xii. 46—50, v. 50. 1 *Cor.* ix. 4, 5. *Heb.* ii.
10—13. 2 *Pet.* i. 5—7.)

V. 10. The believer's holy love to Christ and to his
people, is highly valued by him: he greatly delights in it,
as the fruit of his own Spirit, and the reflection of his own
image. As believers prefer the love of Christ to all earthly
joys; so Christ prefers their love and grace, to all the
sacrifices and incense of the temple, to the choicest pro-
ductions of the whole earth, and to the most admired cha-
racters which have inhabited it. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—*
Notes, i. 2. 4. iii. 6. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 1—7. 2 *Cor.* v. 13—15.
Gal. v. 1—6, v. 6. 22—26, vv. 22, 23. 1 *John* iv. 7, 8. 13
—17.)

V. 11. The prayers, praises, thanksgivings, open pro-
fession of the truth, and pious conversation of believers,
with the faithful and zealous preaching of ministers, are
pleasant to the gracious Redeemer, as the pure honey

under thy tongue; and ^h the smell of
thy garments is like the smell of Le-
banon.

12 A ⁱ garden [†] inclosed is my sis-
ter, my spouse; a spring shut up, a
fountain ^k sealed.

13 Thy plants [†] are an orchard of
pomegranates, with ^m pleasant fruits;
[†] camphire, with ⁿ spikenard,

14 Spikenard and saffron; ^o calamus
and ^p cinnamon, with all ^q trees of
frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with
all ^r the chief spices:

15 A ^s Fountain of gardens, ^t a Well

q 6. Num. xxiv. 6. r vi. 2. Gen. xliii. 11. 1 Kings x. 10. 2 Chr. ix. 9. Mark
xvi. 1. s 12. Ec. ii. 6. t Ps. xxxvi. 8, 9. xli. 4. Jer. ii. 13. xvii. 13. John
iv. 14. vii. 38. Rev. xxii. 1.

that drops from the honey-comb: every expression is to
him, as if "honey and milk were under their tongue,"
while they speak from the abundance of their hearts: and
their whole conduct, whilst they rely on his merits and
copy his example, is fragrant unto him above the most
delightful spots on earth. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, vii. 9. *Ps.*
xlv. 8. lxxi. 22—24. *Prov.* xvi. 24. *Hos.* xiv. 1—3, v. 2.
4—8. *Heb.* xiii. 15, 16.)

V. 12—14. The world is a wilderness: but the church
is "a garden," inclosed by divine grace, and stored with
every valuable plant, which is well cultured and flourish-
ing. It has within itself a spring, or fountain, whence
every part of it is abundantly watered; i. e. the fertilizing
influences of the Holy Spirit. But this "spring is shut
"up," this "fountain is sealed." The world knoweth
not these "wells of salvation:" nor can any opposer stop
up or corrupt this fountain, or prevent the course of its
healing streams. The effects men may perceive, the cause
they cannot discover: for the believer's "life is hid with
"Christ in God." Some by the plants suppose young
converts to be intended, and by the inclosing of the garden
and spring, the exclusion of the wicked from the sacred
ordinances of the Church. The single attachment and
fidelity of the true church to him who has espoused him to
himself, seems also to be intended. (*Marg. and Marg.*
Ref.—Notes, i. 12—14. v. 1. vii. 10—13. *Ps.* xlv. 4.
Prov. v. 15—19. *Is.* xii. 1—3, v. 3. xli. 17—20. lxi. 10,
11. *John* iv. 10—15. *Col.* iii. 1—4.)

V. 15. These words seem to be spoken by the spouse,
rendering to Christ the praise of all the good which he had
commended in her. He is "the Fountain," which makes
these gardens fruitful; even "a Well of living waters,"
from whom all heavenly graces flow, (as streams from the
declivities of Lebanon,) to water every part of his church.
—'The church confesseth that all her glory and beauty
' cometh of Christ, who is the true Fountain of all grace.'
(*Notes*, *Ps.* xxxvi. 5—9. *Jer.* ii. 13.)—Many, however, sup-
pose the verse to be a continuation of the preceding com-
mendation; and to imply, that the church is not only pure
and pleasant in herself, but so abundantly replenished with
gifts and graces, as to be capable of communicating bless-
ings to all around. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, *John* iv. 10—15,
vii. 37—39. *Rev.* xxii. 1.)

den, *that* ^y the spices thereof may flow ^y out. ^z Let my Beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

sidered, and contrasted with the rest of mankind ; when the regular administration of divine ordinances, and profession of the sacred truths of God's word ; the diligence, faithfulness, holy lives, patient sufferings, and usefulness of true ministers ; their continual instruction of the people from the sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, in every thing relating to doctrine and practice ; the spiritual worship of numerous individuals and assembled congregations, throughout the earth, all ascending before the throne of God, through his intercession, who is gone before to be our Advocate : I say, when these things are candidly considered, we shall perceive the propriety of the expression, " Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." But we must by no means think, that mere professors of any description form a part of this " chosen generation, this peculiar people." The church, of which we speak, consists of those persons, who are " washed, and sanctified, and justified, in the name of " the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God : " in whom there is " no spot ; " no sin unrepented of, unpardoned, or unsubdued ; no part which is not beautified with salvation, in a measure which continually tends to perfection. (Note, Ps. cxlix. 4. P. O.)

This she calls for, that her services might be more pleasant and honourable to her Beloved, and ensure to her his constant presence. (*Marg. Ref.* y, z.—*Notes*, 12—14. v. i.)

V. 1-7.

The church of Christ, and every true believer, are not only greatly beloved by him, and regarded with a condescension which cannot be expressed or conceived ; but they actually possess great excellency and spiritual beauty, derived from his grace, and forming the reflection of his holiness. The illuminated understanding, the spiritual judgment, the submissive will, the holy affections of love and gratitude, the regulated passions, the blameless conversation, and the unostentatious usefulness of real Christians are very valuable. Their daily exercise of repentance, with genuine sorrow and self-abasement before God, on account of such failures and defects as others think nothing of, and with which he alone is acquainted ; their continued dependence on the blood of Christ, and on the promised assistance of the Holy Spirit ; their constant opposition to sin ; their delight in the word and ordinances of God, and in speaking of his love and grace ; and their habitual endeavours to lead others to an acquaintance with their beloved Saviour : these, and other parts of the Christian temper, are very good in themselves, and pleasing to the Lord : and he would have them know how much he approves of them, that they may be encouraged amidst difficulties and temptations, and excited to greater watchfulness, diligence, and gratitude. He would also have the distinction strongly marked between real and pretended disciples ; and the mistake, of those who imagine that the doctrine of his free salvation tends to laxity in morals, effectually confuted. And when the whole church is con-

The Redeemer calls us to forsake earthly objects, and to set our affections on things above, whither he is gone before, and “where he sitteth on the right hand of God.” For every scene here below is full of trouble and danger; Satan and his emissaries, go about as lions and leopards, “seeking whom they may devour:” (*Note, 1 Pet. v. 8, 9:*) and a proper sense of our situation will not only lead us to a willingness to count all but loss, that we may win Christ; but will reconcile us to his call to depart hence, that we may go to be with him in heaven, where there are neither sins nor temptations. (*Note, Phil. i. 21—26.*) All our salvation springs from the Lord’s compassionate love to us as sinners: but he beholds, with complacency and delight, our faith, and love, and endeavours to walk in his ordinances and commandments; he glories in his relation to us, as our Brother and most endeared Friend; and surely we shall never be ashamed of it! And if he speak, in such encouraging terms, of our scanty measure of fruitfulness; how should we admire and extol his excellences, and the “savour of his sweet ointments,” in his righteousness, his mediation, and his sacred word! As Christians, we are his garden, which he has inclosed from the wilderness of fallen man, and stored with precious plants from the paradise above; and which he waters from the Fountain of life, that “springeth forth from the throne of God, and of the “Lamb;” that we should be “filled with all the fruits of “righteousness, which are through Jesus Christ to his “praise and glory.” This garden is indeed *inclosed*, this fountain is shut up and sealed; so that the world can neither become acquainted with their value, nor do it any real injury: but, though ungodly men cannot understand our principles, or comprehend the way in which our hearts are

CHAP. V.

Christ visits his garden, expresses his delight in it, and invites his friends to feast with him, 1. The spouse relates her drowsiness and vain excuses, when visited by her Beloved; and that he was withdrawn when she arose to open to him, 2—6. The hard usage she met with from the watchmen, 7. She charges her companions to inform her Beloved that she was sick of love, 8. They enquire after her Beloved; and she describes his manifold excellences, 9—16.

a iv. 16. vi. 2. 11. viii. 13. Is. v. 1. ii. 3. lviii. 11. lxi. 11. lxvi. 14. John xiv. 21—23.
b iv. 9—12. viii. 1. Heb. ii. 12—14.
c iv. 13, 14. Ps. cxlvii. 11. Is. liii. 11.

I AM ^a come into my garden, ^b my sister, *my* spouse: ^c I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten

directed, influenced, and renewed from above; they can form a judgment of our conduct: and we should endeavour to convince them, that the holiness of our lives is far superior to the general practice of the world; since we profess to maintain communion with God, and to receive communications from him, to which they are strangers. We should keep separate from them as “a garden inclosed,” and avoid conformity to them: and whilst we render all the glory to him, who alone “hath made us to differ;” we should earnestly pray that this difference may be every day rendered more evident and decided. These commendations of true believers may well humble each of us, in a consciousness how little we are entitled to them; and stir us up to be more fervent in seeking for the convincing and sanctifying Spirit of Christ, to bring every holy affection into more vigorous exercise; that our worship and obedience may be more consistent with our character, privileges, and relation to the holy Jesus; that he may take more delight in manifesting his presence to our souls, and may be more glorified in our whole conduct. Nor should we confine our prayers to our own cases and wants; but pray without ceasing, that the same Spirit of life, holiness, and comfort may breathe on all the assemblies of the saints, and render their worship more spiritual, their love and joy more lively, and their fruits of righteousness more abundant, to the Redeemer’s glory, and the honour and spread of his gospel in the world.

NOTES.

CHAP. V. V. 1. This verse, which should have been joined to the former chapter, is the gracious answer of Christ to the petition of the spouse. (Note, iv. 16.) He had so prepared his garden that he could come into it with satisfaction. The worship presented in his church was pleasant to him, as fragrant gums and spices. He delighted in the spiritual services of believers, as honey and the honey-comb. He also “drank the wine and the milk;” the most minute as well as the more costly oblation being acceptable to him, as coming from an upright heart. “O my sister, my spouse, I have received those fruits of thine obedience, which thou offerest unto me. I have accepted not only of thy good works, but thy endeavours and purposes of holiness, which are pleasant to me as honey and the honey-comb.” *Bp. Hall.* (Marg. Ref. a, b, d.—Notes, iv. 10—15. vi. 2. P. O. Ex. xxxv. Notes, Ps. cxix. 103. Is. v. 1. lv. 1—3. Mark xii. 41—44. xiv. 3—9, v. 8. 2 Cor.

my honey-comb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: ^d eat, O ^e friends; drink, ^f yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.

2 ¶ I ^g sleep, but my heart waketh: *it is* ^h the voice of my Beloved that ⁱ knocketh, saying, ^j Open to me, my sister, my love, ^k my dove, my unfilled: for ^l my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.

xxvi. 40, 41. Luke ix. 32. Eph. v. 14. g ii. 8. 10. John x. 4. i Ps. xxiv. 7—10. lxxxi. 10. Prov. xxiii. 26. k ii. 14. vi. 9. Ps. cxix. 1. Rev. iii. 4. xiv. 4. l viii. 7. Gen. xxix. 20. xxxi. 40, 41. Is. i. 6. lli. 14. liii. 3—5. Matt. viii. 17. xxv. 35—45. Mark i. 35. Luke vi. 12. xxii. 44. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Gal. ii. 20.

d Deut. xvi. 13—17. xxvi. 10—14. 2 Chr xxxi. 6—10. Ps. xvi. 3. Is. xxiii. 18. lxii. 8, 9. lxxv. 13. lxvi. 14. Matt. xxv. 40. Acts xi. 29. 2 Cor. ix. 11—15. Eph. v. 18. 1 Thes. iii. 8, 9. e Luke xii. 4. xv. 6. 9. John iii. 29. xiv. 14, 15. f Or, and be drunken with loves. Zech. ix. 15—17. g iii. 1. vii. 9. Dan. viii. 18. Zech. iv. 1. Matt. xxv. 4, 5. h Rev. iii. 20. i Rev. iii. 20. j Rev. iii. 20. k Rev. iii. 20.

viii. 10—15, v. 12.) He then added an invitation to his friends and beloved people, to eat and drink abundantly. The acts of worship, in which they honour him, are means of communicating grace to them. The good works, which they perform to adorn his gospel, evidence the reality of their grace, and make way for their consolation: it is his will, that they should rejoice in the provisions of his grace, whilst they live to his glory: those who would entertain Christ, must also entertain his poor disciples: and though their goodness cannot profit him, it may be useful to his beloved people; as a man has an orchard or garden, which he delights to see stored with every valuable production, and yet he does not use them himself, but disperses them among his friends. (Marg. and Marg. Ref. d, e.—Deut. xii. 5—7. Ps. xvi. 2, 3. Prov. ix. 1—6. Is. xxv. 6—8. Matt. xxvi. 26—29. 2 Cor. ix. 12—15. Rev. iii. 20—22, v. 20. xxii. 16, 17.)—The word rendered “drink abundantly,” signifies, *be inebriated*. (Marg.—Notes, Gen. xliii. 34. Zech. ix. 13—17. John ii. 6—11. Eph. v. 15—20, v. 18.) “Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit.”—Some think that the martyrs, who laid down their lives from love to Christ, are meant by “the myrrh and spice,” as peculiarly pleasing and honourable to him: and that the joy of angels and saints in heaven over the conversion of sinners on earth, is intended by the concluding invitation.—“Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep that was lost.” (Notes, and P. O. Luke xv.)

V. 2. A new scene here opens; and the spouse relates her conduct on a particular occasion, when she evidently acted improperly and was rebuked for it. To cover over all the improprieties of a literal interpretation, concerning Solomon and Pharaoh’s daughters, immediately after their espousals; the whole has been confidently stated to have been a dream; because it is said “I sleep, but my heart waketh.” This expression, however, admits of a very different and instructive interpretation, if the spiritual meaning of the allegory be attended to: and there is no other intimation that it was a dream; or reason why it should be considered as such, except to keep up the imaginary consistency of a dramatick poem on the marriage of Solomon with Pharaoh’s daughter, which has little or no foundation in scripture, and cannot be clearly made out by internal evidence. (Preface.—Notes, i. 2. iii. 1—5.) Waving therefore the consideration of the passage, in respect of these external circumstances; we here learn that the spouse,

in Prov. iii. 28.

xiii. 4. xxii. 13.

Matt. xxv. 5.

xxvi. 38—43.

Luke xi. 7.

Rom. vii. 22.

23.

n i. 4. Ps. cx. 3.

Acts xvi. 14.

2 Cor. viii. 1, 2.

16. Phil. ii. 13.

o Gen. xliii. 30.

1 Kings iii. 26.

1s. xxvi. 8, 9.

1 John iii. 16, 17.

a Or, (as some read,) in me.

p 2. Luke xii. 36.

Eph. iii. 17.

Rev. iii. 20.

q 13. iii.

6. iv. 13, 14.

2 Cor. vii. 7. 9—11.

3 I ^m have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?

4 My Beloved ^a put in his hand by the hole of the door, and ^o my bowels were moved ^{*} for him.

5 I ^p rose up to open to my Beloved; and ^a my hands dropped with

† Heb. *passing, or, running about.*

Ps. xxx. 7. 1a.

viii. 17. xii. 1. l.

2. liv. 6—8. Hes.

v. 6. 15. Matt.

xv. 22—26. Rev.

iii. 19.

2. 4. Gen. xlii.

28. 2 Sam. xvi.

10. Ps. lxi. 3.

lxxvii. 3. Is. lvii.

16. Matt. xxvi.

75. Mark xiv.

72. Luke xxii.

61, 62.

t iii. 1, 2. 1 Sam.

xxviii. 6. Ps.

xxii. 1, 2. xxviii.

xxii. 1, 2. xxviii.

1. lxxx. 4. lxxxviii. 9—14.

Is. lviii. 2—4. 7—9.

Lam. iii. 8.

Zech. vii. 13.

myrrh, and my fingers *with* [†] sweet-smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock.

6 I opened to my Beloved: ^r but my Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: ^s my soul failed when he spake; ^t I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer.

subsequent to the commendations which had been bestowed on her, fell into a drowsy and heartless frame of mind.—“I sleep, but my heart waketh.” She is very dull, yet not utterly inattentive to her spiritual concerns. Her judgment and choice are the same; but her affections are cold, and her services formal: a case, which alas! often occurs in the believer’s experience. (*Notes, Matt. xxv. 5—9, v. 5. Rev. ii. 2—5.*) ‘I take it to be a description of the ‘dulness, which is sometimes apt to creep upon the most ‘excellent minds.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—In this situation she recognizes the voice of her Beloved, and hears him knock and request admission. This represents the warnings, reproofs, and invitations given to a Christian, when in this drowsy frame; the convictions excited by the Holy Spirit; and the ineffectual desires felt, and the half purposes formed, on such occasions. He perceives that he is faulty and ought to be more earnest; he is gently admonished of his folly and ingratitude; yet he yields to inactivity, despondency, or lukewarmness. (*Note, Rev. iii. 20—22, v. 20.*) The words of Christ, as here stated, are replete with tender affection, and introduced by the most endearing compellations, without the least anger or reproach: yet he complains, that “his head is filled with dew, and “his locks with the drops of the night;” implying the hardships and sufferings, which he had endured in coming for the salvation of his people; and that it is very unkind and ungrateful if they are not ready to admit and entertain him. As if a tender husband, having gone a long and wearisome journey, solely for the benefit and comfort of his wife; and having travelled very late in the night, through the cold or rain, out of love to her company, should at length be shut out of doors, and obliged to continue all night in the street!—The night-dew in those countries is very heavy and chilling. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, ii. 8—13. vii. 9. viii. 6, 7. Gen. xxxi. 40. Matt. xxvi. 40, 41. John xv. 3—5, v. 4. Rom. xiii. 11—14. 2 Cor. v. 13—15. Eph. iv. 30—32, v. 30.*)

V. 3. The vain and frivolous excuses, urged by the spouse, denote the unprepared state of the believer’s heart, when he has remitted his watch, grown negligent of his work, fond of ease and indulgence, and averse to exertion or inconvenience. In such a frame, every thing forms a mighty difficulty; and delays and omissions of duty are admitted on the most frivolous pretences.—Backwardness to shew our love to Christ, by self-denying and expensive kindness to his afflicted and suffering people, may also be intended.—‘Let us learn from hence what mischief sloth ‘and laziness doeth, and in what troubles and pains it engages us. For the spouse here excusing herself, and not ‘being willing presently to rise to the Bridegroom, is

‘compelled a little while after, not only to rise and to run ‘down to the door, but to run through the city, and wander ‘about the streets, and fall among the watchmen, and by ‘them to be wounded; and after all could scarcely find her ‘Beloved; to whom if she had presently hearkened, and ‘obeyed his heavenly call, she had avoided all these inconveniences.’ *Theodoret*, quoted by *Bp. Patrick.* (*Marg. Ref.—Notes, Prov. iii. 27, 28. xiii. 4. Matt. xxvi. 42—46. Luke xi. 5—13, v. 7. xiv. 15—24, vv. 18—20. Rom. vii. 18—25.*)

V. 4. This verse leads us to imagine some private aperture in the door, through which the person without, (being acquainted with it) might put in his hand and unbolt it; or, as some think, make signs of his displeasure. This seems, however, to represent the effectual influence of the Spirit of Christ upon the heart, exciting sharp convictions and vigorous exercises of faith and grace; which caused the spouse’s “bowels to be moved for him;” that is, it excited fervent desires after Christ and communion with him, attended with poignant sorrow, and shame, and great inward perturbation and alarm, for having behaved so ungratefully towards him. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, i. 4. iv. 16. Ps. cx. 3. John xvi. 8—11. Acts xvi. 13—15, v. 14. Heb. iv. 1, 2. Rev. ii. 14—16, v. 16. iii. 18, 19.*)

V. 5, 6. The spouse, rising up to open to her Beloved, represents the renewed exercise of repentance and faith of those believers, who have become negligent: by which they rise from drowsiness and self-indulgence, applying by fervent prayer for the consolations of the love of Christ, and diligently removing every hindrance to communion with him. These actings of the soul are represented by “the “hands and fingers dropping with sweet-smelling myrrh “upon the handles of the lock;” as being in themselves gracious, suited to the circumstances, and acceptable to the Lord. (*Note, 2 Cor. vii. 9—11.*) But notwithstanding this, the spouse perceived that “her Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone;” for the comforts of communion with God are easily forfeited, but not so readily recovered. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. p, q.—Notes, iii. 6. iv. 12—15. Ps. xxx. 6—8. li. 11—13. cxxx. 1, 2.*)—“Her “soul failed her when he spake:” either she now recollected his former most tender and affectionate call, which she had resisted; or he spake a reproving word as he withdrew, which filled her with extreme distress. (*Marg. Ref. r, s.—Notes, 2. Ps. lxxvii. 3, 4. Is. lvii. 15—18.*) She, however, set herself, without further delay and with all earnestness, to seek him: but she “could not find him: “she called him, but he gave her no answer.” That is, the believer in this case must expect to use every means of grace, with the utmost diligence, without experiencing the

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u iii. 3. Is. lvi. 10. t. Hos. ix. 7. 8. Acts xx. 29. 30. 2 Cor. xi. 13. x John xvi. 2. Acts xxvi. 9, 10. Phil. iii. 6. Rev. xvii. 5, 6. y viii. 11. Is. lxi. 6. Matt. xxi. 33. —41. xxiii. 2. 29. —36. z Luke vi. 22. Acts v. 40, 41. 1 Cor. iv. 10—13. Heb. xi. 36. 37. xii. 2. 1 Pet. iv. 14—16. a See on ii. 7.—viii. 4. b Rom. xv. 30. Gal. vi. 1, 2. Jam. v. 16. * Heb. *what*. c Ps. xlii. —3. lxxiii. 1—3. lxxxvii. 1—3. cxix. 81—83. d Is. liii. 2. Matt. xvi. 13—17. xxi. 10. John i. 14. 2 Cor. iv. 3—6. e i. 8. vi. 1, 9, 10. Ps. lxxxvii. 3. f ii. 1. Deut. xxxii. 31. Ps. xlv. 17. Is. lxxvii. 19. Heb. vii. 26. † Heb. *a standard bearer* Is. x. 18. lix. 19. h Dan. ii. 37, 38. Eph. i. 21, 22. g Rom. ix. 5. Phil. ii. 9—11. Col. i. i vii. 5. Dan. vii. 9. Rev. i. 14. ‡ Or, *curled*.

7 The ^a watchmen that went about the city found me, ^z they smote me, they wounded me: ^y the keepers of the walls ^z took away my veil from me.

8 I ^a charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, ^b if ye find my Beloved, ^c that ye tell him, that ^c I am sick of love.

9 ¶ What ^d is thy Beloved, more than another beloved, ^e O thou fairest among women? what is thy Beloved, more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?

10 My ^f Beloved is white and ruddy, ^g the ^g Chiefest among ten thousand.

11 His ^h head is as the most fine gold, ⁱ his locks are ⁱ bushy, and black as a raven.

12 His ^k eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and ^l fitly set.

13 His ^m cheeks are ^m as a bed of spices, as ⁿ sweet flowers: ⁿ his lips like lilies, ^o dropping sweet-smelling myrrh.

14 His ^p hands are as gold-rings set with the beryl: ^q his belly is as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires.

15 His ^r legs are as pillars of marble, set upon ^r sockets of fine gold: ^s his countenance is ^s as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars:

16 His ^t mouth is ^t most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is ^u my Beloved, and this is my ^u Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

Ps. xix. 10. cxix. 103. Jer. xv. 16. x i. 16. ii. 1. 3. Ps. xlv. 2. lxxxix. 6. cxlviii. 12. Is. ix. 6, 7. Phil. iii. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7. y ii. 16. vi. 3. Gal. ii. 20. 20. Marg. Hos. iii. 1. Jam. ii. 23. iv 4. z Jer. iii.

comfort in them, which he formerly did; until he be sufficiently rebuked and humbled for his offence. (*Marg. Ref. t.*—See on *Note*, iii. 1—5.)

V. 7. “The watchmen,” and “keepers of the walls,” in this place, seem to represent those nominal ministers, who may indeed guard the outworks of religion, but are destitute of the experimental knowledge of its power. Such persons generally treat those with harshness and contempt, who speak of their inward distresses and conflicts; and call them hypocrites, enthusiasts, or even lunatics. The most violent persecutions have in every age been excited by characters of this description, who, under pretence of guarding the walls of Zion, have treated the most humble and spiritual believers as the vilest of the human species; and have accompanied other injuries by the trial of cruel mockings and reproaches: “smiting, and wounding them, and “taking away their veil,” that they might be considered as infamous and shameless. (*Marg. Ref. u—z.*—*Notes*, iii. 3—5, v. 3. Is. lvi. 9—12. lxii. 6, 7. Ez. iii. 17—19. John xvi. 1—3. Acts iv. 23—28.)—It may, however, also intimate that even pious ministers are apt sometimes to mistake the case of tempted and distressed souls; and to treat them with harshness as hypocrites, instead of that tenderness which their case requires. (*Notes*, 2 Cor. ii. 5—11. Gal. vi. 1—5, vv. 1, 2.)

V. 8. This charge of the spouse to “the daughters of Jerusalem” seems to mean the distressed believer’s desire of the prayers of the feeblest Christian, or the new convert who has just formed an acquaintance with the Saviour. If they saw her Beloved, they were to be sure to inform him, that her love was so vehement, that it even caused her to sicken, from a longing desire of reconciliation, and from sorrow that she had behaved so foolishly and ungratefully: and that, as a sick person, she could not relish any other comfort; but must continue to mourn and pine after his presence, till he forgave her and renewed his gracious visits. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.*—See on *Notes*, ii. 5. 7.)

V. 9. “The daughters of Jerusalem,” who are supposed to regard the spouse as one of matchless beauty,

perceiving her great earnestness in seeking her Beloved, desire to know more of his distinguished excellences, above all those whom others loved. Some think that they propose this question, as deriding the vehemency of her affection and sorrow; and others, that they mean to alleviate her distress, by leading her to expatiate on so pleasing a subject: but these things seem out of character for *enquirers* in religion, as we suppose the daughters of Jerusalem to be. They are rather to be considered, as impressed with a conviction that there must be far more preciousness in Christ, and comfort in communion with him, than they had hitherto supposed or conceived of. (*Marg. Ref.*—*Notes*, i. 3. Is. liii. 2, 3. John i. 14. 2 Cor. iv. 3—6.)

V. 10—16. In this description some reference is supposed to be had by the sacred writer to his father David, who was “ruddy and of a fair countenance;” and who was celebrated, as having “slain his ten thousands;” for the word rendered “chief among” (10), may signify, *lifting up a standard over ten thousand*. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. f, g.*—*Notes*, ii. 1, 2. 1 Sam. xviii. 6—9. Rom. ix. 4, 5. Phil. iii. 8—11. Col. i. 15—20.)—His “head, as fine” or wrought “gold,” is explained of the crown of gold worn by him, from under which his jetty and bushy hair hung down on his brow and neck. His eyes sparkled, yet with mildness, like those of doves, when highly delighted, at the river’s side, as some think the original means. The words “washed with milk,” are supposed to relate to the doves, which were so white, that they appeared as if washed in milk. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref. h—k.*—*Notes*, i. 15. iv. 1—5, v. 1. vii. 5. Dan. vii. 9—12, v. 9. Rev. i. 12—20, v. 14.)—“The lovely down upon his cheeks, is no less grateful, rising there like spices when they first appear out of their beds; or like the young buds of aromatic flowers..., where the purple lilies are not more beautiful than his lips, from whence flow words more precious and more pleasant than the richest and most fragrant myrrh.” *Bp. Patrick*.—Purple lilies are found in those countries, and highly esteemed.—*Marg. and Marg.*

CHAP. VI.

The daughters of Jerusalem purpose to seek Christ :

Ref. 1—n.—*Notes*, i. 10. iii. 6. iv. 11. vi. 2. *Ps.* xlv. 2. *Is.* 1. 4. *Luke* iv. 16—19, v. 18.)—Some think that by “hands as gold-rings set with the beryl,” the *ornaments* of his fingers and wrists are meant; that “his belly” or *body*, as bright ivory overlaid with sapphires, refers to the colour of the robe which he wore. Others imagine a reference to the rich garments of the high priest, and the jewels in his breast-plate and on his shoulders, as an emblem of the high priesthood of Christ. (*Notes*, *Ex.* xxviii. 2. 6—14. 29.) These things, however, are very doubtful: and the richness and beauty of garments can hardly be considered as necessarily conveying an idea of pre-eminent personal comeliness and beauty. It must not indeed be supposed, that a naked body is described: yet, if raiment were exclusively intended, the most *uncomely* form, as well as the most *comely*, might be thus distinguished. But personal beauty may be perceived, though covered with garments. Similar allusions are supposed to be made to the covering of the legs, thighs, and feet, in the clause, “His legs are as pillars of marble upon sockets of fine gold.” (*Marg.* and *Marg. Ref.* r, s.—*Notes*, ii. 14. vii. 1—4. *Ps.* xlv. 3—5. *Is.* ix. 6, 7. lii. 13—15. *Hos.* xiv. 4—8, v. 7. *Rev.* i. 12—20, v. 16.)—“His aspect ... is no less stately and great than the ‘forest of Lebanon, whose goodly cedars do not more excel ‘all other trees, than he doth all other men.’ *Bp. Patrick.*—In short, “he is altogether lovely,” or *desirable*.—But what instruction is conveyed under this description of the comeliness and majesty of the Beloved? No doubt the spiritual excellency and glory of Christ, in his person, mediation, and kingdom, are intended: but, while in some things the meaning is evident, others must be allowed to be more doubtful.—“He is white and ruddy;” this naturally suggests to the mind, his spotless purity and his atoning blood: and it may also denote his mercy to believers, and his terrible vengeance upon his enemies. “He is the chiefest among ten thousand.” “By him kings reign.” He is the king of saints, and of angels; and among ten thousand rivals, he alone is worthy of our whole heart and affections, and capable of doing us effectual and eternal good. “His head, as the most fine gold,” may denote the perfect righteousness and inestimable benefits of his glorious kingdom, “as Head over all things to his church:” “his locks, bushy, and black as a raven,” may denote the vigour of his administration; full and black hair being an emblem of youth, as white hair is of old age and wisdom. (*Rev.* i. 14.) “His eyes, as the eyes of doves, by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and ‘fitly set,’ may denote his infinite knowledge, connected with purity and love, pleasant to his people, whom he watches over continually, and for whom he orders every thing in perfect wisdom and kindness.—“His cheeks,” that is, those glimpses of his glory which we have by faith, and when he lifts up the light of his countenance upon us, are refreshing as the most fragrant spices or flowers. His gracious words from his lips, are pure and pleasant like the lily, and distil upon the soul like the sweet-smelling myrrh. His hands, whether stretched forth to communicate bless-

the spouse answers them, and professes her faith in him, 1—3. Christ repeats his commendations, declares his fervent love, shews his conduct, and describes her character, 4—13.

ings to us, or to uphold and defend us, or in any of the operations of his power, are “as gold-rings, set with the ‘beryl,’ all well timed and placed, very precious, beneficial, and regulated in perfect wisdom and love. His *belly*, or *bowels*, (the known description of compassion and tenderness,) being “as bright ivory, overlaid with sapphires,” may denote the glory of “his mercy, which endureth for ever;” and the unsearchable riches and invaluable privileges, which are conferred with it on all true believers. “His legs as pillars of marble set upon sockets of fine ‘gold,’ such as might form the support and ornament of some magnificent temple, may denote the firmness, power, and majesty, with which he supports his church, and maintains his cause in the world, against all the opposition of earth and hell. “His countenance as Lebanon, excellent ‘as the cedars,” denotes the unspeakable glory of his person and work, as fully displayed to the blessed inhabitants of heaven, of which, whilst on earth, we only obtain a few glimpses by faith. “His mouth being most sweet,” seems to mean the expressions and pledges of his love, with which his people are favoured. (*Note*, i. 2.) But indeed, concludes the spouse, “He is altogether lovely.”—All created and uncreated excellences are found in Emmanuel’s person; no defect or excess; no holy disposition intrenching on any other; every thing in perfect harmony and exact proportion; and every thing, in his mediatorial character and work, which suits the case of the sinner in the most absolute manner. (*P. O. Rev.* v. 1—7.) This glorious and gracious Redeemer is the Beloved of every believer, who is favoured with reciprocal affection, and may be assured of his inviolable friendship and glory. (*Note*, *John* xv. 12—16.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—8.

The Lord is ever ready to hear the prayers of his people; and he graciously accepts that worship or obedience, which they present in humble faith, through the influences of his Holy Spirit, notwithstanding its imperfection. When he is honoured by our fruits of holiness, we shall find them comfortable and profitable to ourselves; and they will do much good to others, especially to the household of faith: and if we do not abundantly feast on the provisions of his grace, the fault lies in ourselves; for his invitations are as liberal and pressing, as the feast is plenteous and magnificent.—But alas! very often, when he stands at the door, and knocks for admission, that he may enter in and feast with us, we are half asleep: and even the riches of his condescending love and gracious consolations prove *occasions*, through our remaining depravity, to supineness: so that he is not only treated with ungrateful neglect by his enemies, but even by his friends! They are not indeed quite asleep; their “heart is awake” they hear, and know his voice, in his word and providence, and acknowledge him as their Beloved: yet they treat his most endearing compellations with inexcusable disregard; and notwithstanding his gracious invitations, and admonitions, and gentle reproofs,

^a 4. 9 ^{10.} 1. 8. ^{ii.} a **W**HITHER is thy Beloved gone,
^{2.} v. 9 O thou fairest among women? whi-

they still gave way to sloth; nay, they “quench his Holy Spirit,” and refuse to comply with his suggestions when he shews them their duty, and their obligations to attend on it. Alas! what frivolous excuses do we often make for neglecting prayer and meditation, for absenting ourselves from publick worship, the preaching of the word, and the Lord’s Supper! How we shrink from any duty, which is attended with fatigue, self-denial, expense, or reproach! How unprepared are we often for attending to the Lord’s commands, and for performing the work of our station in his church! These are the shameful effects of former negligence, and yet we urge them as reasons for our present omissions: and if we were left to ourselves, we should gradually grow more secure and carnal, till we entirely returned back to sin and to the world. Yet the gracious Saviour will not forsake his people, but will rebuke and chasten them. When he powerfully touches the heart, our drooping graces revive and our spiritual affections are re-kindled: then we have done with delays and excuses, and set ourselves in good earnest to use the means of grace, and to remove all obstacles to communion with him. But though these renewed exercises of repentance, faith, and love are accepted; yet he sometimes sees good to prevent our comfort in them: and they, who wilfully “quench the Holy Spirit,” will often be left for a time to use every means of recovering his gracious consolations, without any apparent success, and even to pray without any tokens of being heard and answered. But if they truly love him, they will seek until they find: and the more diligently they persevere under discouragement, the sooner they will in general succeed. They should be reminded, however, that they will often fail of finding help from man: they need not wonder, if many, who appear as the watchmen of Zion, persecute, ridicule, or revile those who are earnest in “seeking Jesus that was crucified:” nay, should any disconsolate soul, who is waiting for some token of his love to him, meet with rebukes and sharpness even from a pious minister; let him remember that Jesus is far more compassionate than any of his servants, and “will not quench the smoking flax, or break the bruised reed.”—In all our distresses, we should seek an interest in the prayers of God’s people, without excepting those of the weakest believer; we should ever be ready to pray for those who are troubled in mind: and they, whose earnest desires after communion with Christ spoil their relish of all other pleasures, will find this *sickness* a considerable step towards the true *health* of the soul.

V. 9—16.

There are many who deem pious Christians “the excellent of the earth;” yet know not how to account for the energy of their language, when they speak of their love to Christ and fervent desires after him, not being duly aware how immensely *their* Beloved excels all those, whom the world admires and idolizes. But did they know the whole of his personal and mediatorial excellency, they would only wonder, that the love and gratitude of his most

ther is thy Beloved turned aside: ^b that we may seek him with thee. ^{i.} 4. Ruth i. 16; ^{17.} ii. 12. ^{Is.} ii. 5. Zech. viii. 21 —23. Acts v. 11 —14.

zealous disciples are so cold, and their desires so languid. Words indeed can never do justice to such a subject, or convey suitable ideas of it to the carnal mind: and, at our highest attainments in knowledge and experience, we only “see through a glass darkly.” We should, however, endeavour, as we can, to shew forth his praises; in hopes that the Lord will stir up others to enquire after him and trust in him. For this end we may enlarge on the perfection of his righteousness, and the preciousness of his blood; his pre-eminence in wisdom, truth, and goodness, to all in heaven and earth; the glory of his kingdom, his power to save and to destroy; the vigour of his rule; the perfection of his knowledge and holiness; his compassion for sinners, and his tender care of his people. We may speak of the comforts of his manifested presence, his exhilarating promises, his instructive words; of the bounty of his donations, and the exact regularity of all his operations and dispensations, for the good of his people; of his glorious and everlasting mercy, and all the blessings, which we derive from his tender compassion; of his power, as exercised in perfect truth and faithfulness; of his majesty and glory, as far excelling all the sons of the mighty; and only equalled by his condescension, and the sweet tokens of his love with which he favours the meanest believer. But after all we must confess, that we cannot describe his glorious excellency; though we are assured, that he is “altogether lovely.” (Note, Zech. ix. 17.) Surely then we ought to love him far more than we do; as he is not only most entirely worthy of it, for his own excellency, but for his love to us and all its astonishing effects; and as he is the unchangeable Friend of all his people, and died for them when enemies, that he might reconcile them to God by his blood. But let us not be satisfied in expressing our love by words, and glorying in him as our Beloved and our Friend: may “his love constrain us to live to his glory:” this will best recommend his salvation to all around us, and lead them to enquire after him and trust in him, when they see what a holy and happy people we are made by his saving grace.

NOTES.

CHAP. VI. V. 1. (Notes, v. 9—16.) The description, which the spouse had given of her Beloved, is represented, as having excited her companions to a determination of seeking him with her; and to an enquiry whither he was withdrawn, seeing she mourned his absence.—This may be pointed out, as one among many passages, which seems to have little propriety in a literal meaning: for conjugal love is jealous, and does not readily allow of rivals; but those who love Christ would have all the world love him too.

- ‘When strangers stand and hear me tell
- ‘What beauties in my Saviour dwell;
- ‘Where he is gone they fain would know,
- ‘That they may seek and love him too.’ Watts

(Marg. Ref.—Notes, i. 4. *Is.* ii. 3—5. Zech. viii. 20—23. *1 John* i. 3, 4.)

^c 11. iv. 12—16. ^v 1. Ec. ii. 5. ^{1a} lviii. 11. ^{1xi} 11. Matt. xviii. 20. ^{xxviii} 20. ^d v. 12. ^e i. 7, 8. Is. xl. 11. Ez. xxxiv. 23. Zeph. iii. 17. ^{John} iv. 34, 35. ^{Rev} vii. 17. ^f ii. 2. Is. lvii. 1. ^{John} xiv. 3. ^{xvii} 24. ^{Phil} i. 21—23. ¹ Thes. iv. 13, 14. ^g ii. 16. ^{vii} 10. ^k Heb. viii. 10. ^{Rev} xxi. 2—4. ^h ii. 16. ⁱ 19. ii. 14. ^{iv} 7. ^v 2. Ez. xvi. 13. ¹ l. Eph. v. 27. ^k 1 Kings xiv. 17. ^{xv} 21, 33. ¹ Ps. xlviii. 2. ^{Lam} ii. 15. ^{Rev} xxi. 2. ^m 10. Num. xxiv. 5—9. ^{Ps} cxliv. 4—8. ^{Zech} xii. 3. ² Cor. x. 4. ^{Rev} xix 14—16. ⁿ Gen. xxxii. 26—28. ^{Ex} xxxii. 10. ^{Jer} xv. 1. ^{Matt} xv. 27, 28. ^{*} Or, *puffed me up*. ^o iv. 1.

2 My Beloved is 'gone down into his garden, to 'the beds of spices, to 'feed in the gardens, 'and to gather lilies.

3 I am ^s my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine: ^h he feedeth among the lilies.

4 ¶ Thou art ⁱ beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, ¹ comely as Jerusalem, ^m terrible as an army with banners.

5 Turn ⁿ away thine eyes from me, for they have ^{*} overcome me: ^o thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead.

^m 10. Num. xxiv. 5—9. ^{Ps} cxliv. 4—8. ^{Zech} xii. 3. ² Cor. x. 4. ^{Rev} xix 14—16. ⁿ Gen. xxxii. 26—28. ^{Ex} xxxii. 10. ^{Jer} xv. 1. ^{Matt} xv. 27, 28. ^{*} Or, *puffed me up*. ^o iv. 1.

V. 2. The spouse, on this enquiry, immediately recollected where Christ was to be found; though she herself had been seeking him in vain. (Note, v. 1.) Doubtless he is present with his church and assembled saints, which are as "beds of spices," whence their spiritual worship ascends with acceptance. Here he feeds with delight; or, as a Shepherd he feeds their souls by the supply of his Spirit. He also adds true converts to them, and continually gathers one and another into his heavenly kingdom. Christ goes down to this garden; which notes both his condescension, and the lowliness and low estate of his people. 'He was still in his church and in every part of it, though sometimes they were not sensible of it. For so Theodoret well observes, here is distinct mention of a garden and of gardens; i. e. of the catholick church which is but one, and of the several parts thereof. For sometimes St. Paul mentions only the church in the singular number, and sometimes the several churches even in the same nation. (1 Cor. xiv. 34. Gal. i. 2.) ... The whole denotes, that communion with Christ is only to be sought in the church.' Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 10, 11. iv. 12—16. Matt. xviii. 19, 20, v. 20. xxviii. 19, 20, v. 20. John xiv. 2, 3. Acts vii. 54—60, v. 60.)

V. 3. 'Now she seems to have so perfectly recovered out of the slumber, ... as to have regained her former sense of him and of her interest in him, repeating those words which we met withal before, ii. 16. ... He (Christ) is said to feed among the lilies, as in the Revelation, to walk in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; that is, there to have his convocation, to take up his abode with them, &c. as he ... says (John xiv. 23,) ... he would with those who "love him and keep his commandments." Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, ii. 16, 17. vii. 10—13. John xiv. 21—24. Phil. iv. 8, 9.)

V. 4. The spouse having been suitably humbled, and persevering in the exercise of faith and holy love, Christ again manifests himself to her, and renews his commendations of her.—Tirzah was afterwards the palace of the kings of Israel, and was no doubt situated very pleasantly; for its name signifies pleasant, or amiable: (Marg. Ref. k:) and Jerusalem was the holy city, the capital of Canaan. This therefore implies, that all the real excellence and holiness on earth centres in the church. She is also said to be "terrible as an army with banners:" a very singular

6 Thy ^p teeth are as a flock of sheep ^p iv. 2. which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them.

7 As ^a a piece of a pomegranate are ^q iv. 3. thy temples within thy locks.

8 There are ^r threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. ^r 1 Kings xi. 1. ² Chr. xi. 21.

9 ^s My dove, my undefiled is but ^s ii. 14. v. 2. 'one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her. "The daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her. ^t Num. xxiii. 9. ^{Ps} xlv. 9. ^{Gal} iv. 26. ^{Eph} iv 3—6. ^u Deut. iv. 6, 7. ^{xxxiii} 29. ^{Ps} cxxvi. 2. ^{Prov} xxx. 28. ² Thes. i. 10. ^{Rev} xxi. 9, 10.

commendation of feminine beauty! But the church of God, when beautified in holiness and united in love, is very terrible to her enemies. Each believer, in his proper place, is the soldier of Christ, enlisted under his banner and a part of his army; by which he goes forth subduing his enemies, and rendering his truth triumphant over error and iniquity: whilst every one of them gains daily victories over the world, the flesh, and the devil. 'Every part of this verse seems to me to be a new proof, that Solomon speaks not in this book of one single person, (whom some fancy the Shulamite, others Pharaoh's daughter, whom others take for one and the same,) under the name of the spouse; but of a body or society of men: for none else can be fitly compared to cities, nay, to great armies drawn up under their banners.' Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 10. Ps. xlviii. 2, 3. lxxxvii. P. O.)

V. 5—7. When the spouse looked on her Beloved, his affection was so strong, that he was wholly overcome by it, and could no longer retain any resentment for her late unkindness. When the Lord said to Moses, "Let me alone, that I may destroy this people," it was the greatest conceivable encouragement to continue pleading for them: and this expression is equally animating to the desponding believer, to persevere in "looking unto Jesus" seeing he is sure of thus prevailing. To intimate an entire reconciliation, Christ uses the same expressions for substance, in commending the spouse, as he had before done. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, iv. 1—5, vv. 1—3. Gen. xxxii. 25, 26. Ex. xxxii. 7—10.)

V. 8, 9. Some think that Solomon here alludes to the wives and concubines, and virgins attending them, which he had at this time in his court: but he seems rather to refer to the general custom of the eastern monarchs, which afterwards he himself imitated, nay, in which he exceeded them all. The language, however, implies, that though the earth abounds with such as are deemed honourable, and amiable; yet true believers alone possess the beauty of holiness, with which no other can compare. Being united unto Christ, and born of God as the children of the church; being justified, sanctified, and approved as holy persons; the whole company forms one body, and possesses one excellence, being of "one heart and judgment" in the grand concerns of religion: and when their real character is discovered, it must be admired and commended, even by

x ⁱⁱⁱ 6. viii. 5. Is. lxi. 1. 10 * Who is she *that* ^v looketh forth
y 2 Sam. xxiii. 4. as the morning, * fair as the moon,
Job xi. 17. Prov. iv. 18. Is. lvi. 1. a clear as the sun, and ^b terrible as an
8. Hos. vi. 5. army with banners?

z Job xxxi. 26. 11 I went down into * the garden of
Eph. v. 27. nuts ^d to see the fruits of the valley;
a Mal. iv. 2. and to see whether the vine flourished,
Matt. xiii. 43. xvii. 2. Rev. x. 1. xii. 1. xxi. 23. xxii. 5.
b 4. Rom. viii. 37. and the pomegranates budded.

c 2. iv. 12—15. v. 1. Gen. ii. 9. Ps. xcii. 12—15. d vii. 12. Is. v. 2—4. Mark xi. 13. Luke xiii. 7. Acts xv. 36.

those, who seem the most to rival them, or to be eclipsed by them. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, ii. 14. Num. xxiii. 9. Deut. iv. 6—8. Ps. xlv. 9—15. Jer. xxxii. 39—41. John xvii. 20, 21. Acts iv. 32—35, v. 32. Eph. iv. 1—6. v. 22—27. Rev. xix. 7, 8.)

V. 10. Either Christ here continues his discourse, as in admiration of the spouse; or this is the commendation of the queens, concubines, and virgins, mentioned in the preceding verse. As applied to the church, it may be descriptive of the gradual dawning of the gospel-day, from the first promise to fallen Adam, till the rising of “the Sun of Righteousness” and the calling of the gentiles, or till “the fulness of the gentiles shall come in.” On earth, the church, reflecting the light of Christ, is *fair as the moon*: in heaven, the fuller view of him and conformity to him will render her *clear as the sun*: and both in her militant and triumphant state, she is “terrible as an army with banners.” The believer also, from his first conversion to his complete victory and salvation, may be represented by the same illustrations. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 4. 2 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4. Prov. iv. 18, 19. Is. xxx. 26. lx. 1—3. 15—22. Zech. xiv. 6—9, vv. 6, 7. Mal. iv. 2, 3. Matt. xiii. 36—43, v. 43. Rev. xii. 1, 2, v. 1. xxi. 22—27. xxii. 2—5, v. 5.)

V. 11, 12. Christ here seems to confer with the spouse concerning his departure and return. (*Note*, v. 1—6.) Being grieved at her neglect, he had left her: but he went down into his “garden of nuts;” he was still present in his church, and taking care of his people; especially he was present to note and accept “the fruits of the valley;” the good works of the humble and discouraged; and to observe the flourishing of established Christians, and the first buddings of new converts. But his eye was on his spouse, on the offending mourner, whom he had rebuked by his frown and absence: and, beholding her inconsolable and prepared for renewed comfort, he could no longer refrain; but was suddenly, as by strong and fervent affection led to return to her, “like the chariots of Amminadib,” who probably was a chieftain noted for driving with great rapidity.—The original may signify *my willing* or *noble* people. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 2. iv. 12—15. vii. 10—13, v. 12. Ps. xcii. 12—15. Is. v. 2—4. Luke xiii. 6—9. John xv. 1—8.)

V. 13. The spouse, ashamed of her misconduct, and conscious of her unworthiness, is represented as reluctant to believe that her Beloved is fully reconciled; or as not venturing to approach him with her former confidence, and as retiring from the company: but the daughters of Jerusalem, with great earnestness call on her to return, that they might behold her. The term, “the Shulamite,” may be derived from Solomon the peaceable king, or rather from

12 * Or ever I was aware, * my soul * Heb. I knew not.
† made me *like* the chariots of Amminadib. e Jer. xxxi. 18. 20. Hos. xi. 8. 9. Luke xv. 20. † Or, set me on the chariots of my willing people. f ii. 14. Jer. iii. 12—14. Hos. xiv. 1—4. g i. 6. Luke vii. 44. xv. 10. 2 Thes. i. 10. h Gen. xlix. 10. Ps. lxxvi. 2. Is. viii. 6. John ix. † Or, Maha-

13 Return, † return, O Shulamite; return, return, that we may look upon thee. * What will ye see in the ^b Shulamite? † As it were the company of ‡ two armies.

7. Heb. vii. 2. i John x. 16. Rom. iii. 29. Eph. ii. 14—17. naim. Gen. xxxii. 2. Rom. vii. 23. Gal. v. 17. Eph. vi. 10—19.

Salem the city of peace; and it seems to mean *the peaceable*, or *the reconciled one*. (*Notes*, Gen. xiv. 18—20. Heb. vii. 1—3.)—The spouse then enquires, what Christ, or the companions, can see in her worthy of attention: to which it is answered, “As it were the company of two ‘armies.’” This may denote the Old and New Testament churches; or the church militant and the church triumphant, as two armies: or it may refer to the believer’s constant internal conflict between inbred depravity and implanted holiness, which by turns prevail in his experience; and be supposed to refer to the spouse’s late misconduct and repentance. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes*, i. 5, 6. Gen. xxxii. 1, 2. xlix. 10. Rom. vii. 22—25. Gal. v. 16—18, v. 17. Eph. ii. 14—18. vi. 10—17.) But the word rendered *company*, signifies a *band* or *chorus of dancers*, or such as exult for joy; and some think the hosts of angels are meant, (with reference to Jacob’s vision,) who rejoiced and sang praises at the Saviour’s birth, and rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. (*Notes*, Luke ii. 8—14. xv. 3—10.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

V. 1—7.

The Lord commonly blesses the cordial praises of his people, to quicken others to desire his salvation, and to enquire how and where they may seek him with them.—The experienced believer, even when uncomfortable in his own soul, is both able and willing to direct enquirers to find the Saviour. By faith he apprehends his gracious presence in his church, and in all places where his ordinances are spiritually administered: these he knows to be the valued plantations of his grace, which he delights to tend, and where he raises those precious productions, which will continue in heaven for ever, to the glory of his name. Nor is the death of a believer any thing more, than the owner of the garden plucking a favourite lily, which his immortal hand will preserve from withering, yea, cause to flourish for ever with increasing beauty.—The discouraged believer frequently recovers his assurance of faith and hope, by expatiating on the preciousness of Christ, in recommending him to others. The recollection of his mercy and grace, thus excited, encourages our souls to rely on them; and the consciousness that we speak from our heart, when we express a high valuation of him, tends to satisfy us, that he is “our Beloved,” that we are his people, and that he is “our Friend” and Portion.—The Lord will also honour those who thus honour him; he will not contend with his people any longer, when they are sufficiently humbled; and with the pardon of their sins, he will shew his approbation of their general conduct and character. (*Note*, Is. lvii. 15, 16.)—The magnificent palace, the holy temple,

CHAP. VII.

The church commended under various similitudes, 1—5. Christ expresses his love to her, and delight in her company, 6—9. The church expresses her delight in him, and seeks more intimate communion with him, 10—13.

and “the army terrible with banners,” are faint emblems of the comeliness and honour of the church, and of true believers. They are all enlisted under one commander, and arranged under his banners: they are well disciplined and armed, and courageous in faith and hope; and they fight assured of victory: yet this consists with the greatest lowliness, meekness, and love; and their victories are chiefly gained by faith and prayer, by patience and integrity, by holy lives and the faithful preaching of the word: and if these do not change their enemies into friends, they will be more awfully destructive to them, than the most terrible weapons of war.—When the penitent believer lifts the weeping eyes of humble faith and fervent love to the Lord Jesus, he is sure to prevail: and if the Saviour seem to frown, it is only an introduction to his manifested love; and his most forbidding words, rightly interpreted, encourage us “to pray always and not faint.” (*Notes and P. O. Matt. xv. 21—28.*)—The Lord will not upbraid us with any of those sins of which we truly repent; and therefore we should not upbraid each other. The tokens of his approbation and acceptance should encourage us with renewed diligence to follow after holiness, and to attend on his ordinances, that we may be more fruitful and useful.

V. 8—13.

Whatever is most admired in the world is mean, compared with “the beauty of holiness:” some true Christians are more adorned with it, than others; but this singular glory and excellency belongs, in a measure, to every member of that one body, of which Christ is the living Head. Washed in his blood, and sanctified by his Spirit, they are “undefiled,” “the children of God,” and of his church, “without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse” world, in which they shine as heavenly lights; and they will extort commendation even from prejudiced spectators on some occasions, and at length all nations shall call them blessed.—Praised be God, the coming of Christ, and the conversion of the Gentiles, have brought forward this day of heaven upon earth: may the universal success of the gospel extend the blessings of it to those nations that yet sit in darkness!—But what is the fairest light of the moon, to the brightness of the sun? and what is the most glorious time of the church, or the happiest hour of a believer on earth, to the glory and felicity of the heavenly world? Then death will be swallowed up in victory; and every soldier of our Captain’s host will triumph in the final perdition of all his foes. In the mean time, though we often mourn the Redeemer’s absence from our souls, he will never withdraw from his church: he tends the fruits of his grace which spring in the lowliest valleys, and marks the first buddings in the new convert, or the feeble believer. He will never be so employed about some of his people, as to neglect others; and he will return with unspeakable tenderness to those, who mourn for the sins

HOW beautiful are ^a thy feet with shoes, ^b O Prince’s daughter! ^c the joints of thy thighs are like jewels, ^d the work of the hands of a cunning workman.

^a Luke xv. 22.
Eph. vi. 15.
Phil. i. 27.
^b Ps. xiv. 13. 2 Cor. vi. 18.
^c Dan. ii. 32.
Eph. iv. 15, 16.
Col. ii. 19.
^d Ex. xxviii. 15.
xxxv. 35.

which urged his departure from them. But such humble and tender spirits can hardly be persuaded of their own happiness; and as they see so much evil in themselves, they can hardly think, that the Lord delights in them. But he is peculiarly pleased even with this their humility: he marks their constant opposition to their evil propensities: he compassionates them when struggling with strong temptations; and even when foiled and wounded by them, yet arising and resuming the conflict. He distinguishes between a saint militant, and a saint triumphant: and notwithstanding all defects and failures, he as much loves those who are strenuously fighting the good fight of faith, as those who through his grace have already obtained the victory.

NOTES.

CHAP. VII. V. 1. This verse, and those which follow, seem to be the language of the daughters of Jerusalem to the spouse, who was now returned to them. They call her “the Prince’s daughter;” as the church is called the “King’s daughter,” by the Psalmist: (*Marg. Ref. b.—Note, Ps. xlv. 13—15:*) for believers are the children of God, by regeneration, adoption, and union with the Only Begotten of the Father. The word rendered “feet” more generally signifies *goings*, (as it is translated in the old version,) or *footsteps*, implying the spouse’s becoming walk or motion. The shoes or sandals, in which she moved so gracefully, are explained by the apostle to mean “the preparation of the gospel of peace,” by which believers are enabled to walk with becoming alacrity in the ways of holy obedience. (*Marg. Ref. a.—Notes, Luke xv. 22—24. Eph. vi. 14—17, v. 15.*)—Some render the next clause, “the cincture,” or girdle, “of thy loins is like jewels, &c.” as rather denoting the beautiful garments or girdle worn by the spouse, than her graceful proportion and form of body: and, if we dwell on the external meaning, this may perhaps be requisite: (*Notes, 2. v. 10—16:*) and the believer “having his loins girt about with truth,” may refer to this interpretation. (*Eph. vi. 14.*) But the language of the apostle, seems to point out the true meaning of the sacred allegory. “The whole body, fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” (*Marg. Ref. c.—Notes, Eph. iv. 14—16. Col. ii. 18, 19, v. 19.*) How greatly the due formation and proportion of “the joints of the thighs,” (namely, the knees and the hip-joints,) tend to the firmness and gracefulness of motion, every one knows. Thus every part of the church, even the meanest, is beautiful and useful, well-proportioned, and compacted, and fitted to glorify God. And every believer, in proportion to his faith and grace, is prepared to fill up his station in a becoming manner, and to walk in the ways of God with firm-

e Prov. iii. 8.
 * Heb. mixture.
 f v 14. Ps. xlv. 16.
 Is. xlv. 3. Jer.
 l. 5. Rom. vii.
 4
 g iv. 5. vi. 6.
 h i. 10. iv. 4.
 i v 14. 1 Kings x.
 18. 22. xxii. 39.
 Ps xlv. 8. cxliv.
 12.
 k iv. 1. 9. vi. 5.
 Eph. i. 17. 18.
 iii. 18. 19.
 l Num. xxi. 25. k
 Is. xv. 4.

2 Thy ^e navel *is like* a round goblet
which wanteth not ^f liquor: ^g thy belly
is like an heap of wheat set about with
 lilies.

3 Thy ^h two breasts *are* like two
 young roes *that are* twins:

4 Thy ⁱ neck *is* as a tower of ^j ivory;
 thine eyes *like* the fish-pools in ^k Hesh-

bon, by the gate of Bath-rabbim: ^m thy
 nose *is* as ⁿ the tower of Lebanon,
 which looketh toward ^o Damascus:

5 Thine ^p head upon thee *is* like
^q Carmel, and ^r the hair of thine head
like purple: ^s the King *is* ^t held in the
 galleries.

Rev. i. 14. r i. 17. marg. Gen. xxxii. 26. Ps. lxxxvii. 2. Matt. xviii. 20. xxviii.
 20. † Heb. bound.

ness and vigour. For “we are the body of Christ, and
 “members in particular.” (1 Cor. xii. 14—27.)

V. 2. Here again the decorations, rather than the per-
 son, of the spouse, are by some thought to be intended:
 and curious ornaments of embossed work, in the figure of
 a round goblet with liquor, or a heap or sheaves of wheat,
 surrounded with lilies, carved on them, have been imagined
 and described. But the original words, in other places, as
 much mean the “navel,” and the “belly” or the *womb*,
 as the next words do “the two breasts.” (Note, 3.)
 Certainly comeliness of person, not richness of attire or
 ornament, is intended: otherwise the commendations would
 be equally appropriate to the most deformed, if splendidly
 attired, as to the most beautiful: nor is there any need to
 remove the garments, in order to distinguish a very well
 proportioned and comely person from others, in the most
 ordinary intercourse of life. Either men or women may
disguise themselves by decoration: but becoming raiment
 sets off the form of those who wear it. In fact, the al-
 lusion to that part of the female body, in which the in-
 fant is marvellously fashioned by the power of God,
 (Notes, Ps. cxxxix. 13—16;) seems intended as an alle-
 gorical representation of a sinner, by regeneration of the
 Holy Spirit, through the word of “truth,” being brought
 to believe in Christ; and then advancing gradually in the
 divine life, to serve God “in newness of Spirit,” (Notes,
 1 Pet. i. 23—25. ii. 1—3, v. 3,) or, in general, in holy
 dispositions and affections, and thus into holy practice:
 and also the provision, in the ordinances of the church, for
 the regeneration and conversion of sinners, and ripening
 them into established believers, the children of God our
 Saviour, and of his espoused church. The “belly,” or
bowels, may likewise be explained of the merciful and com-
 passionate disposition of believers, which renders them
 useful in relieving the distresses of the needy, “like an
 “heap of wheat;” and is ornamental to their profession,
 as if the heap “was set about with lilies.”—We cannot,
 however, be confident, as to minute circumstances, in ex-
 pounding these allegories; though the general meaning is
 plain. But we should not forget, that many other things
 in scripture, as well as this description, do not accord to
 the refined and perhaps fastidious delicacy of modern times:
 yet we have every reason to believe that gross vice was
 much less general in those ages, among the Israelites at
 least, than it is among nominal Christians at present. Nor
 does it become us to explain away the words of the sacred
 oracles. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, v. 10—16, v. 14.
 Ps. xlv. 16. Prov. iii. 7, 8.)

V. 3. (Note, iv. 1—5, v. 5.) “The two testaments
 “which are thy two full and comely breasts, (by whose
 “wholesome milk thou nourishest all thy faithful children,
 “once born into the light,) are for their excellent and per-

fect agreement, and their amiable proportion, like two
 “young roes.” Bp. Hall.

V. 4. The word “ivory,” added to the similitude of
 “a tower” for defence, may allude to the manifold pre-
 ciousness of faith, in its various exercises. (Marg. Ref. h,
 i.—Note, iv. 1—5, v. 4.) “Eyes like the fish-pools in
 “Heshbon,” which probably were remarkable for clear
 and bright water, may denote distinct knowledge and pene-
 tration, and heavenly wisdom, especially in the teachers
 of the church. (Marg. Ref. k, l.—Notes, Eph. i. 15—23,
 vv. 17—19. Phil. i. 9—11, v. 9. Col. i. 9—14, v. 9. iii. 16,
 17, v. 16. Jam. iii. 13—18.)—“The nose as the tower of
 “Lebanon” may denote spiritual sagacity, the result of a
 holy relish for divine things, and an experimental acquaint-
 ance with them. The sense of smelling is, as it were, the
 guardian of the stomach, and decides that this and the
 other viand is in a state unfit for food: so they, who have
 their spiritual “senses exercised by use to discern good
 “and evil,” will distinguish between truth and specious
 error, between duty and specious transgression. (Note,
 Heb. v. 11—14.) And thus the believer, or the teachers
 of the church, will perceive at a distance the approach-
 ing danger of false doctrine or seducing temptation;
 as the watchmen from the tower of Lebanon, would
 see at a distance the enemies, who should march that
 way from Damascus or its environs, where the Syrians,
 the formidable enemies of Israel, dwelt. (Marg. Ref.
 m—o.)

V. 5. “Thine head upon thee,” is supposed by some
 to mean, the covering or ornament of the head: and the
 word, rendered “hair,” to signify a *fillet* or *ribband*, by
 which the hair was collected together. The word (רֶשֶׁת) is
 not used in any other place.—Carmel was a very high,
 pleasant, and fruitful mountain.—Some understand “thine
 “head upon thee,” as that heavenly hope, which springs
 from faith, and towers above earthly objects, and excites
 increasing vigour in following after holiness: and “the
 “hair-ribbon like purple,” (the colour of kings and rulers,)
 may mean the dignity of every action, which is influenced
 by this high and purifying hope. But Christ himself, the
 Head of the church, and the honour conferred on the
 meanest believers by their union with him, may perhaps
 be intended. (Marg. and Marg. Ref. p, q.—Notes, iv. 1—
 5, v. 1. v. 10—16, v. 11.)—In short, so pleasant is the
 church, and every true member of it, that “the King,” the
 Lord of Hosts, is “held in the galleries,” or has such
 delight in the ordinances and assemblies of his saints, that
 he is not able as it were to withdraw from them. “When
 “he walks in his palace royal, and beholds her beauty, he
 “stands still, and cannot take his eyes off from her, being
 “captivated with it.” Bp. Patrick. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.
 —Notes, i. 16, 17. Rev. ii. 1.)

^s 10. i. 15, 16. ii. 14. ^t 7. 10. Ps. xiv. 11. Is. lxii. 4, 5. Zeph. iii. 17.

6 ¶ How ' fair and how pleasant art thou, O love, for delights !

^t Ps. xcii. 12. Jer. x. 5. Eph. iv. 13.

7 This ' thy stature is like to a palm-tree, and ' thy breasts to clusters of grapes.

^u 3. 8. i. 13. iv. 5. viii. 8. Is. lxvi. 10, 11. Eph. iii. 17—19.

8 I said, ' I will go up to the palm-tree, I will take hold of the boughs thereof; now also thy breasts shall be as clusters of the vine, and ' the smell of thy nose like apples;

^x iv. 16. v. 1. Jer. xxxii. 41. John xiv. 21—23.

^y i. 3. ii. 3. 2 Cor. ii. 14.

^z ii. 14. v. 16. Prov. xvi. 24. Eph. iv. 29. Col. iii. 16, 17. iv. 6. Heb. xiii. 15.

9 And ' the roof of thy mouth like ' the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down ' sweetly, causing the lips of ' those that are ' asleep to speak.

^{* Heb. straightly.}
^{† Or, the ancient.}

b v. 2. Rom. xiii. 11. 1 Thes. iv. 13, 14. Rev. xiv. 13.

10 ¶ I am ' my Beloved's, and ' his desire is toward me.

11 Come, my Beloved, ' let us go forth into the field; let us lodge in the villages.

12 Let us ' get up early to the vineyards; ' let us see if the vine flourish, whether ' the tender grape ' appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there ' will I give thee my loves.

13 The ' mandrakes give a smell, and ' at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, ' new and old, which ' I have laid up for thee, O my Beloved.

^{23.} Eph. v. 9. Phil. i. 11. ^m Matt. xiii. 52. ⁿ Is. xxiii. 18. ^{lx.} 6, 7. Matt. xxv. 40. Rom. xv. 25—27. 1 Cor. xvi. 2. 2 Cor. viii. 8, 9. Col. iii. 17. 1 Pet. iv. 11.

^c ii. 16. vi. 3. Acts xxvii. 23. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. Gal. i. 20.

^d 5, 6. Job xiv. 15. Ps. cxlvii. 11. John xvii. 24.

^e i. 4. ii. 10—13. iv. 8.

^f Prov. viii. 17. Ec. ix. 10.

^g vi. 11. Prov. xxiv. 30, 31. Acts xv. 36. 2 Cor. xiii. 5. 1 Thes. iii. 5, 6. Heb. xii. 15.

^h ii. 13. 15. Is. xviii. 5.

ⁱ Heb. open.

^j 6. iv. 16. Ps. xliii. 4. lxiii. 3—8. lxxiii. 25. Ez. xx. 40, 41. Rom. v. 11. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Eph. vi. 24.

^k Gen. xxx. 14.

^l iv. 16. v. 1. John xv. 8. Gal. v. 22.

^{18.} lx. 6, 7. Matt. i. 16. vi. 3. Acts xxvii. 23. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. Gal. i. 20.

V. 6—8. The Bridegroom is here supposed to enter; and to speak to the spouse, in the language of admiration and strong affection.—'How beautiful, and pleasant art thou, O Love, for me to delight in!' (Marg. Ref. s.—Notes, ii. 14. Ps. xlv. 9—11. Is. lxii. 1—5, vv. 4, 5. Jer. xxxii. 39—41, v. 41. Zeph. iii. 14—17. John xv. 9—11, v. 11.)—He then proceeds to compare the stature, or person, of the spouse, to the lofty and spreading palm-tree; whilst her breasts, (her entire love to Christ, and the obedience resulting from it, and the doctrine of the scriptures, the prophets and apostles, professed and maintained by her,) are like "clusters of grapes," the precious fruit of the vine. So that when, according to his purpose, he went up to take hold of the branches of the palm-tree, he found them loaded with the most precious fruits, every way delightful to him; or, he engaged by his presence and grace to render her still more fruitful and useful, that he might still more "rejoice over her to do her good." (Marg. Ref. t—y.—Notes, 2, 3. i. 3. ii. 3. iv. 1—5, v. 5. viii. 8, 9. Is. lxvi. 10—14, vv. 10, 11. 2 Cor. ii. 14—16.)

V. 9. "The roof of the mouth" is employed both in distinguishing tastes, and in articulating words: and the verse may mean, that the believer, having a relish for spiritual things, discourses upon them experimentally and pathetically. This is pleasant and refreshing, as "the best wine," to those who are beloved by Christ; and he also delights in it, because they are comforted and edified by it: nay, such conversation tends to enliven aged and infirm believers; and even to awaken sleeping sinners, to enquire after Christ and to shew forth his praise.—'The delivery of 'my word, by the mouths of my ministers, is like to the 'most excellent and pleasant wine; being both well accepted of that God in whose name it is taught, and most 'sweetly relished by the receivers; which is of such wonderful power, that it is able to put words, both of repentance and praise, into the lips of him that lies asleep 'in his sins.' Bp. Hall.—It is thought by some, that the word rendered *asleep*, may mean *old men*. 'The most 'generous wine, of which when we have tasted, we say, 'let it be sent to the best of my friends, is not more 'comfortable to the bodily spirits, tho' it be so powerful 'as to make old men brisk, nay, to enliven those that are 'at the point of death, than thy words are to raise and restore the souls of those, who imbibe the sense of them

'into their minds.' Bp. Patrick. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, ii. 14. Is. lxii. 8, 9. Jer. xxxi. 23—26, v. 26. Zech. ix. 13—17, v. 15. 17. Rom. xiii. 11—14, v. 11. Eph. iv. 29. v. 8—14, v. 14. 15—20, v. 19. Heb. xiii. 15, 16.)

V. 10. Here the spouse answers, as one assured of her relation to her Beloved, and of his endeared love to her.—'Seeing such is the desire of my Beloved towards me, that he first loved me when averse to him; he 'recalled me when I wandered; he pardoned me when I 'offended; he studiously conferred benefits on me, and 'finally he gave himself to me.'—'There seems to be an 'allusion here to Ps. xlv. 11; ... unto which, Solomon, as 'I take it, hath a respect all along in this poem.' Bp. Patrick. (Marg. Ref.—Notes, 6—8. ii. 16, 17, v. 16. Ez. xvi. 3—14. John xvii. 24. Acts xxvii. 20—26, v. 23. Rom. xiv. 7—9. Eph. ii. 4—10. Tit. iii. 4—7.)

V. 11—13. The Spouse desires to go forth with her Beloved into the fields, and to lodge in the villages; by which some suppose places newly enlightened by the gospel to be intended. Assured hope and fervent love influence true believers to be weary of the noise and bustle of a vain world; and to value leisure, and opportunity for retirement, communion with Christ, and an undisturbed attendance on his ordinances. They would be, as much as they can, employed in examining the growth of grace and fruitfulness in themselves; and the interests of religion, the conversion of sinners, and the sanctity of their brethren are dear to their heart. They want to know if the vine flourishes; and whether awakened sinners give hopeful proof of becoming "fruitful in good works." There, with the church of Christ, in his house, at his table, and at the throne of grace, they would profess and manifest their love to Christ, and give themselves up without reserve to that holy, reasonable, and pleasant affection. Among such Christians, living retired from the world, and in communion with their Lord and each other, all kinds of ornamental, pleasant, and useful fruits are produced, from faith and love, for his glory and the benefit of his church: and these are not only the first-fruits, immediately after conversion, which may afterwards be called "old;" but also "new" services are performed, and *new* degrees of grace are exercised, more and more even to the end. (Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes, 6—8. ii. 10—13. iv. 8.

CHAP. VIII.

The spouse desires to be instructed by her Beloved, and to have near communion with him; and charges the virgins not to disturb him, 1—4. She is beheld with admiration, as “coming up from the wilderness leaning on her Beloved,” 5. She owns her obligations, desires to continue in his love; and shews the strength and vehemency of love and jealousy, 6, 7. The calling of the Gentiles requested, and foretold, 8—10. Solomon’s vineyard and its fruits, 11, 12. The concluding words of Christ, and of the spouse, 13, 14.

Ec. ix. 10. *Matt.* xiii. 51, 52. xxv. 34—40. *John* xv. 1—8. *Phil.* i. 9—11, v. 11. *Col.* iii. 16, 17, v. 17. *Heb.* xiii. 15, 16. 1 *Pet.* ii. 4—6. iv. 9—11.)—It is not certainly known what the *mandrakes* were: perhaps they were melons. (Note, *Gen.* xxx. 14.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

The Lord Jesus is the true Fountain of honour; and his favour confers nobility, yea, royal dignity: for what are all the pompous titles of the world compared with this distinction, “The sons and daughters of the Lord almighty?” “Such honour have all his saints;” and, having “put on Christ,” they are equally distinguished by their beautiful and glorious apparel. When their “feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;” and when, supplied with renewed strength from their great Head, through the intervention of ministers and Christians, each stationed in this mystical body with divine skill, they walk with increasing vigour and alacrity in the ways of holiness; every motion is graceful, and they “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.” (Note, *Tit.* ii. 9, 10.) The holy desires of their hearts are brought to good effect, “by the supply of the Spirit of Christ;” and their compassion and liberality relieve the wants of the indigent, and “abound in many thanksgivings unto God.” (Note, 2 *Cor.* ix. 12—15.) Faith worketh by love of God and of man, which (like “two young roes that are twins,”) produce a tenour of conduct, that accords to the example of their “Beloved and their Friend.” This precious faith and love, “abounding in knowledge and all judgment,” and regulated by sagacity, the result of experience and a spiritual mind, tend to the assurance of hope, the increase of holiness, and “patient continuance in well doing.” And the edifying discourse of such consistent believers honours Christ, recommends the gospel, silences gain-sayers, animates other Christians, and tends to convince and awaken sinners; and it will surely meet with the gracious commendation of the Lord. Wherever they meet together to worship, and to commemorate his love, Christ will be, as it were, “held in the galleries,” by his delight in them and their services: and to mark the difference between them and formalists, he even expresses his admiration of the fruits of his own grace in them. They may also assure themselves, that he will be with them in their afflictions; and their resignation and patient hope, under sharp sufferings, is peculiarly pleasant and honourable to him. But when professors of the gospel do no credit to

OH, ^athat thou wert as my Brother, ^bthat ^csucked the breasts of my mother; ^dwhen I should ^efind thee without ^fI would kiss thee; ^gyea, ^hI should not be despised.

2 I would lead thee, and ⁱbring thee into my mother’s house, ^jwho would instruct me: ^kI would cause thee to drink of ^lspiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.

^a *Is.* vii. 14. *Is.* 6. *Hag.* ii. 7. *Zech.* ix. 9. *Mat.* xiii. 1. *Matt.* xiii. 16, 17. *Luke* ii. 26—32. *38.* *x.* 23, 24. 1 *Tim.* iii. 16. ^b *Is.* lxvii. 11, 12. *Gal.* iv. 26. ^c *John* i. 14. *iii.* 13. *viii.* 42. *xiii.* 3. *xvi.* 28. *Heb.* ii. 9—14. *ix.* 26—28. ^d *i.* 2. *Ps.* ii. 12. *xlvi.* 10, 11. *Luke* vii. 45—48. *ix.* 26. *xii.* 8. *John* vii. 46—52. *ix.* 25—38. ^e *Ps.* li. 17. *cii.* 16, 17. *Mark* xii. 42—44. *xiv.* 6—9. ^f *Heb.* they should not despise me. *Is.* lx. 14. *Luke* x. 16. *xviii.* 9. 1 *Cor.* i. 28. ^g *Gal.* iv. 26. ^h *Luke* xvi. 29—31. *John* v. 39. 46, 47. *Acts* xvii. 11, 12. 2 *Tim.* iii. 15. 1 *Pet.* i. 10—12. 2 *Pet.* i. 19. *Rev.* xix. 10. ⁱ *Prov.* ix. 2. ^j *Is.* iv. 10—16. *v.* 1. *vii.* 9, 12.

it in their lives, they drive him from their assemblies, and often deceive their own souls.—In proportion as we are sure that Christ is “our Beloved,” and that we aim and desire to be devoted to him; we may also be sure that he is our Salvation, and that “his desire is towards us.” And again, when this assurance is genuine, it will cause us more and more to count all but loss for him; and as far as it consists with our duty in the community, to go forth with him to some sequestered humble retreat, where we may commune with him and his people, and “with our own hearts.” If then we have tasted his grace, let us seek his assistance in examining ourselves, to see how the vine flourishes, and to take heed that no subtle foxes spoil the tender grapes: let us shew our love to Christ by love to his cause; and whilst we add new fruits of holiness to all those which we have already produced, let us not much regard whether men approve our conduct or not, provided our Beloved accept us and be honoured by us. Let us improve our talents and employ our influence, in observing how believers grow in grace, and young beginners put forth their tender buds; that we may exhort, encourage, warn, and pray for them, as time and occasion may require: and let us employ our time, talent, and influence, in every state and relation of life, to win over those without to seek the same blessings. And if we are favoured to see that part of the church, where we live, producing abundantly all the fruits of the Spirit, our joy will be more excited, than by any increase of riches; and our thanksgivings will accompany our supplications to the great Author of all our hopes and comforts. A life of this kind more resembles heaven, than any other which we can pass on earth.

NOTES.

CHAP. VIII. V. 1, 2. These verses are generally considered, as a continuation of the Spouse’s words in the preceding chapter; (Note, 11—13;) expressing a longing desire, that she might shew her fervent affection for her Beloved, with as little reserve, as if he were an infant brother, at her mother’s breasts. But they may be understood, as the fervent prayer presented by ancient believers, for the promised incarnation of the divine Saviour. In that mysterious dispensation, the Lord of glory, the Husband of the church, “became as her Brother:” and when the Man Jesus grew in wisdom, in attending on the ordinances of the church of Israel, he, as it were, “sucked the breasts of her mother.” The spouse, (representing

k ii. 6. Dent.
xxxiii. 27. Is.
xii. 4, 5. 2 Cor.
xii. 9.

l ii. 7. iii. 5.
• Heb. *why shoul'd*
ye stir up, or,
why awake, &c.

m iii. 6. vi. 10.
n iv. 8. Ps. xlv. 10.
11. cvii. 2—8. Is.
xl. 3. xliii. 19.

Jer. ii. 2. Rev.
xii. 6.

o 2 Chr. xxxii. 8.
Marg. Ps. lxiii.
8. Is. xxvi. 3, 4.

xxxvi. 6. Mic.
iii. 11. John xiii.
23. Acts xxvii.
23—25. 2 Cor.

xii. 9, 10. Eph.
i. 12, 13. 1 Pet.
i. 21.

p ii. 3. Hos. xii.
4. John i. 48—51.

q 1. iii. 4. 11. Is. xlix. 20—23. Rom. vii. 4. Gal. iv. 19.

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3 His ^k left hand *should be* under my head, and his right hand should embrace me.

4 I ^l charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, ^{*} that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* Love, until he please.

5 ¶ ^m Who is this that cometh up ⁿ from the wilderness, ^o leaning upon her Beloved? ^p I raised thee up under the apple-tree: there thy mother brought thee forth; ^q there she brought thee forth *that* bare thee.

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6 ¶ Set me ^r as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for ^s love is strong as death; ^t jealousy is [†] cruel as the grave: ^u the coals thereof are coals of fire, *which hath* a most vehement flame.

7 Many ^x waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: ^y if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.

Rom. xii. 20. x Is. xliii. 2. Matt. vii. 24, 25. Rom. viii. 28—39. vi. 31. Rom. xiii. 8—10.

4. John i. 48—51.

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Ex. xxviii. 2—12. 21. 29. 30. Is. xlix. 16. Jer. xxii. 24. Hag. ii. 23. Zech. iii. 9. 2 Tim. ii. 19.

v. 8. Ps. xlii. 1, 2. lxiii. 1. lxxxiv. 2. John xxi. 15—19.

Acts xx. 24. xxi. 13. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Phil. i. 20—23. Rev. xii. 11.

† Num. v. 14. xxv. 11. Deut. xxxii. 21. Prov. vi. 34. 2 Cor. xi. 2.

† Heb. *hard*.

u Ps. cxv. 4.

Prov. xxv. 22.

y Prov.

4. John i. 48—51.

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ancient believers,) declares her determination, when she found him, of whom Moses and the prophets had spoken, “without” (that is, come down from heaven, and appearing in these outer courts of the temple,) she would with the utmost confidence express her affection to him and delight in him, without fear of being rejected, or of being despised by men for so doing. She determines also to avow her faith in him, and seek for his presence in his ordinances, that she might be further instructed in the truth: assured that her holy love, spiritual worship, and cheerful obedience, would be more acceptable to him, than the richest and most highly flavoured cordials. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes*, i. 2. iii. 1—5, v. 4. iv. 10—16. v. 1. Is. vii. 14. ix. 6, 7. Gal. iv. 4—7. Heb. ii. 14, 15.)—*Who would instruct me.* (2) *Note*, 1 Tim. iii. 14, 15. Or, “Thou wouldest instruct me.” (*Note*, Matt. xi. 28—30.)

V. 3, 4. *Marg. and Marg. Ref.—See on Notes*, ii. 6, 7.

V. 5. The daughters of Jerusalem seem here to speak concerning the spouse; or the company of established believers, when in the most vigorous exercise of grace. By faith, hope, and love of Christ, they come up from this present evil world; which once, through the enchantments of sin and Satan, appeared to them a paradise: but now that the charm is broken, they know it to be a waste howling wilderness. They therefore leave earthly for heavenly things, and still mount upward in holy desires, affections, and conversation: leaning upon the power, truth, and love of Christ; and in his strength surmounting difficulties, resisting temptations, bearing afflictions, and walking, without yielding to weariness or fainting, in the ways of holy obedience. In this heavenly course, the established believer appears *wonderful* to the inexperienced enquirer, or feeble Christian, who can scarcely think it possible, that he can be enabled to follow an example so much above his present attainments. (*Marg. Ref. m—o.—Notes*, iii. 6. iv. 8. vi. 10. Ps. lxiii. 1—4. Gal. ii. 17—21, vv. 20, 21.)

Leaning, &c.] מתרפקה; used in this place alone. It seems to imply, dependence and confidence with love and satisfaction.—*I raised, &c.*] As the punctuation of the original makes the pronouns masculine; all who unreservedly adhere to it, suppose the spouse to speak in this sentence. But it is much more natural to consider it as the language of Christ. He raises up new converts, and matures his people, through his mediation and by his Spirit, giving efficacy to his word and ordinances. Thus they receive their spiritual birth, nourishment, and comfort, in the church, “the mother of us all.”—The word

rendered *brought thee forth*, may mean *pledged thee*: for the church, especially in the Sacraments, solemnly dedicates all her children to Christ. (*Marg. Ref. p, q.—Notes*, ii. 3. iii. 1—5, v. 4. John i. 47—51. Gal. iv. 21—31, v. 29.)

V. 6, 7. These verses seem to be the words of the spouse to Christ, intreating him to give her an assured confidence and an abiding place in his love, and protection by his power; setting her name, as with the deep impression of a seal, on his heart and on his arm; that she might neither lose her interest in his love, nor the comfort of it. In enforcing this request she represents the energy of holy love: if that were preserved in vigorous exercise, it would prove strong as death, and enable her to suffer every extremity, rather than renounce or dishonour him. But the very suspicion of not being the object of his love would be “cruel to her as the grave,” or more dreadful than death in his most tremendous forms. For love resembles fire kindled among coals, or charcoal, made of those kinds of wood, which emit the strongest heat and most vehement flame: and it is “a fire which no floods of water can quench;” that is, no temptations or sufferings can prevail against it: nay, if a man possess this love, no wealth can hire him to renounce it; nor can any thing purchase it, or compensate for the want of it. (*Marg. and Marg. Ref.—Notes*, v. 8. Ex. xxviii. 6—30. Ps. lxxxiv. 1, 2. Prov. vi. 27—35, vv. 32—35. Rom. viii. 32—39. 1 Cor. xiii. 4—13. 2 Cor. v. 13—15. xi. 1—6, vv. 1, 2. 1 John iv. 9—12.)—The word rendered *jealousy* may signify *zeal*. (*Note*, Jam. iii. 13—16.)—“The jealous zeal which I have for thee, and for thy glory, consumes me, even like the grave, and burns me up like the coals of some most vehement and extreme fire.” *Bp. Hall.*—“It should be thus translated, “which are the flames of the fire of the ‘‘LORD.’’ So the Hebrew word seems to signify, being compounded of three words, *fire, flame*, and the *LORD*. Some translate it, “Such flames are kindled only by the ‘‘LORD;” and then, if there be an allusion to the breastplate of the high priest in the beginning of the verse, I fancy the conclusion may allude to “the fire that went out from before the LORD,” (*Lev. ix. 24*), and devoured the sacrifices, as love doth all manner of difficulties. This fire was to burn perpetually upon the altar, and never be suffered to go out; (*Lev. vi. 12, 13*;) and therefore the best emblem of love that could be found.” *Bp. Patrick.* Wild beasts are not terrible to it, nor fire, nor precipices, nor the sea, nor the sword, nor the halter, ... but even the

^z *Ex. xvi. 46 55, 56. 61. John x. 16. Acts xv. 14* 8 ¶ We have ^a a little sister, and ^b she hath no breasts: ^c what shall we do for our sister, ^d in the day when she shall be spoken for?

^a *10. iv. 5. vii. 3. Ps. cxlvii. 19. 20. Acts vii. 38. Rom. iii. 1, 2. Eph. ii. 12.* 9 If she ^e be ^f a wall, ^g we will build upon her a palace of silver; and if she ^h be ⁱ a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar.

^b *Ps. ii. 8. lxxii. 17—19. Is. xlix. 6. lx. 1—5. 10. 11. Acts x. xi. 1—18. xvi. 9. xxii. 21. xxvi. 17, 18. Rom. x. 12—15. Eph. ii. 13—15. 19—22.* 10 I ^j am ^k a wall, and ^l my breasts like towers: ^m then was I in his eyes as one that found ⁿ favour.

^c *Luke xix. 44. 1 Pet. ii. 12.* ^d *ii. 9. Rev. xxi. 12—19.* 11 ¶ Solomon ^o had a vineyard at ^p Baal-hamon; ^q he let out the vineyard unto keepers; every one for the fruit thereof was to bring ^r a thousand pieces of silver.

^e *Is. lviii. 12. lx. 17. lxi. 4. Zech. vi. 12—15. Matt. xvi. 18. Acts xv. 16. 1 Cor. iii. 10—12. Eph. ii. 20—22. f Acts xiv. 27. g 9. h iv. 5. vii. 3, 4, 7, 8. Ez. xvi. 7. i Gen. vi. 8. Deut. vii. 7, 8. Prov. iii. 4. Is. lx. 10. Luke i. 30. Eph. i. 6—8. 1 Tim. i. 16. * Heb. peace. Rom. v. 1—10. k vii. 12. Ec. ii. 4, 5. Is. v. 1—7. Matt. xxi. 33—43. Mark xii. 1, &c.*

^l most impassable difficulties are got over by it; the hardest ^m things are presently mastered; the most frightful easily ⁿ surmounted; it is every where confident, overlooks all ^o things, overpowers all things.' *Maximus Tyrius*, quoted by *Bp. Patrick*.
V. 8, 9. The spouse, (or the church which then was,) seems here to intercede for the Gentiles, from among whom God intended to take a people for his name. The spouse therefore calls that future church, "a little sister, which hath no breasts." Though a few believers were even then found among the Gentiles; yet they had not the word of God, or the means of grace, and spiritual union with the promised Saviour. But in due time they would "be spoken for" by him: and what was the church of Israel to do for them at that time, as instruments of effecting the gracious purpose of God? To this question Christ answers, "If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver." If the commencement of this work, even the conversion of the Gentiles by the Spirit of Christ, through the preaching of apostles and evangelists, raised up from the nation of Israel, were likened to a wall built upon Him "the precious Foundation and Corner-stone," to become a part of a spiritual temple; they would be so multiplied, and enriched in process of time, that the Gentile church would become as a palace for the great King, builded of solid silver, and far more splendid than Solomon's temple. If the first preaching of the gospel to them was compared to the making of a door, through the wall of partition; that door should be preserved most effectually, as if cased with boards of durable cedar. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, 10. iv. 1—5, v. 5. vii. 3. *Ps. cxlvii. 19, 20. Ez. xvi. 52—63. John x. 14—18, v. 16. Acts xi. 1—18. xxvi. 16—18. Rom. iii. 1, 2. x. 12—17. 1 Cor. iii. 10—15. Eph. ii. 14—22. Rev. xxi. 9—21.*)

V. 10. The ancient church seems here thankfully to reflect on her privileges: she was, before the coming of the Messiah, as a wall built on the precious Foundation, a part of the glorious temple which was to be erected; and the lively oracles and ordinances, which she enjoyed, were her security, as well as the sustenance and comfort of her children: and she was thus distinguished, because "then," (even when this difference originated,) "she was in his eyes as one that found favour," or *peace*, with him. (*Marg. Ref.—See on Note*, 8, 9.—*Notes*, vii. 6—8. *Deut. vii. 6—8. Is. v. 1—4. xli. 8, 9. Jer. xxxi. 3—5, v. 3. Ez. xvi. 6*

^l *Luke xx. 9, &c. m Gen. xx. 16. Is. vii. 23. n i. 6. Prov. iv. 23. Acts xx. 28. 1 Tim. iv. 15, 16. o Ps. lxxii. 17—19. Rom. xiv. 7—9. 1 Cor. vi. 20. 2 Cor. v. 15. p 1 Thes. ii. 19, 20. 1 Tim. v. 17, 18. q ii. 13. iv. 16. vi. 2. 11. vii. 11, 12. Matt. xviii. 20. xxviii. 20. John xiv. 21—23. r i. 7. iii. 7—11. v. 9—16. Judg. xi. 38. xiv. 11. Ps. xiv. 14. s ii. 14. Ps. l. 15. John xiv. 13, 14. xv. 7. xvi. 24. t Heb. *Flee away*. u ii. 17. Luke xix. 12. Phil. i. 23. Rev. xxii. 20.*

12 My ^v vineyard, which is mine, is before me: ^w thou, O Solomon, ^x must have a thousand, and ^y those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred.

13 Thou that ^z dwellest in the gardens, ^a the companions hearken to thy voice: ^b cause me to hear it.

14 ^c Make ^d haste, my Beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spices.

—8. *Eph. i. 3—8. ii. 4—10. 2 Thes. ii. 13, 14. 1 Tim. i. 12—16. Tit. iii. 4—7.*

V. 11, 12. Solomon, probably, had a large vineyard, which he did not superintend himself, but let it out to keepers, each of whom paid him a thousand pieces of silver, or shekels, for the fruit, and they were supposed to clear two hundred. With allusion to this, the advantages or privileges of the ancient church are considered, according to frequent parables in Scripture, as a vineyard, entrusted by its owner, to the rulers, teachers, and congregation of Israel: and the spouse, or church, determines to keep this vineyard under her own immediate care; that it may "abound in fruits of righteousness," to the honour of her Beloved, and the rich benefit of all employed in the care of it. (*Notes*, *Ps. lxxx. 8—13. Is. v. 1—7. Matt. xxi. 33—44. Luke xiii. 6—9. John xv. 1—8. Phil. i. 9—11, v. 11.*) True believers in Israel understood these obligations, and had the vineyard "before them," as their grand concern; and it was their endeavour that much fruit might be produced. Thus the Lord received his revenue of praise: and the priests, Levites, prophets, and others, whose labours, prayers, and examples conduced to this end, were graciously recompensed. And when, (at the coming of Christ,) the stated teachers and rulers neglected their duty; apostles and evangelists were raised from the sound part of the ancient church, by whom the vineyard was successfully cultivated: and so the corrupt part of that church being excluded, the converted gentiles were made the principal part of the vineyard, admitted to share all its privileges, and even still more abundant blessings. (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, i. 5, 6. vii. 10—13. *Prov. iv. 23. Is. vii. 21—25, v. 23. Acts xx. 28. 1 Tim. iv. 11—16.*)

V. 13, 14. These verses close the conference between Christ and the spouse, and imply his personal absence from his people, during their continuance on earth. Christ first addresses the spouse, as "dwelling in the gardens," or vineyard, (*Note*, 11, 12,) the assemblies and ordinances of his saints.—The word rendered "companions" being masculine, cannot mean the attendants on the spouse, so frequently mentioned, but rather those who were "the friends" and companions "of the Bridegroom;" the spirits of just men made perfect; "an innumerable company of angels;" and such men as John the Baptist, the apostles, and the most eminent instruments of Christ, in establishing his church. (*Marg. Ref. r.—Notes*, i. 7, 8.

John iii. 27—36, v. 29. xv. 12—16. xx. 19—23. *Eph.* ii. 19—22, v. 20. *Heb.* xii. 22—25. *Rev.* xxi. 9—21, v. 14.) —‘Ask what thou wilt of me, and I tell thee before all thy companions, ... I will do it for thee.’ *Bp. Patrick.* —While the church professes her faith and love, and renders her worship, as in the presence of all the friends of her Beloved; the more she abounds in prayers and supplications, with thanksgivings, the greater measure of true prosperity and consolation she enjoys. Thus our Lord, just before his crucifixion, again and again exhorted his disconsolate disciples to “ask and receive, that their joy might be full.” (*Marg. Ref.—Notes*, ii. 14. *John* xiv. 7—14, vv. 13, 14. xv. 9—11, v. 11. xvi. 23, 24.) To this the spouse replies by craving his speedy return, not for a transient visit, but to take her to be wholly with him.—“The mountains of spices” seem to mean heaven and its exalted worship, of which all the incense and worship at the temple were a faint shadow. (*Notes*, ii. 17. iv. 6.)—‘Solomon here seems to long for the first coming of the Messiah, as St. John doth for his last, who concludes his book of Revelation in the same manner as Solomon doth this saying, “Come, Lord Jesus.”’ *Bp. Patrick.* (*Note*, *Rev.* xxii. 18—21, v. 20.)

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

V. 1—7.

The Incarnation of the Son of God was the grand object of the believing prayers of the ancient church; and it should be the theme of our grateful joyful praises. Blessed be God, he hath “sent forth his Son, made of a woman and made under the law.” (*Note*, *Gal.* iv. 4—7.) “The second Man is the Lord from heaven:” (*Note*, *1 Cor.* xv. 45—49 :) he dwells in our nature, and is not ashamed to call us brethren; and all the perfections of Deity conjoin with the tenderness of the most endeared relations in his humanity, to render him in all respects the meet object of our confidence and love, and to shew to us the divine character, in a manner most suited to our apprehension and imitation. Having finished his work *without*, he is now ascended “into heaven, to appear in the presence of God for us:” (*Notes*, *Heb.* ix. 11—14 :) but we may find him present to our faith in his holy ordinances; and there we may express our love, reverence, and submission, and render him our grateful worship, with the utmost freedom and assurance. He will not despise us for so doing, or even for our meanness and unworthiness: and we need not regard the contempt of those, who “blaspheme that worthy name by which we are called.” Let us then seek his gracious presence in his church, that his ordinances and instructions may be abundantly useful to our souls, and that our worship and holy obedience may be accepted by him. Then he will renew the pledges of his love, and we shall find it “good to be there;” and shall fear whatever may interrupt the pleasant rest of our souls in him. Thus faith and hope will grow into full assurance; and “leaning on” his power, truth, and love, and cleaving to him as “our Beloved,” we shall rise superior to this vain world, and have our heart and conversation with him in heaven; and others shall see and admire our indifference about earthly things, compared with “those above, where Jesus sitteth at the right hand of God.” (*Notes*, *Phil.* iii. 20, 21. *Col.* iii. 1—4.) Nor should we consider such attainments as out of our reach: let us but improve

our privilege of access to the Mercy-seat; and when we have obtained some liberty in pouring out our hearts before him, let us strive to draw nearer and nearer in fervency and importunity, wrestling for more and larger blessings; and we shall certainly obtain his effectual help.—His love to us sinners was “stronger than death;” nor could all “the floods of ungodly men” or evil spirits, or inexpressible sufferings, quench that vehement flame; and all the kingdoms of the world were utterly contemned, when offered as a bribe to induce him to desist from his gracious purpose. Thus should our love to him be vigorous and victorious, that we may be ready to renounce or suffer any thing for his sake, and that we may be armed against the terrors and the friendship of the world. Indeed love is the most powerful principle of activity: and where *that* prevails, all dangers and difficulties will be disregarded, and every contrary interest utterly contemned. If then we have true faith, it will “work by love” of Christ, and the effects will soon become manifest in our whole conduct. Sometimes indeed, the fear of coming short of his love, or the temptation to forsake him, may be very painful to us: but we shall earnestly pray to be fixed “as a seal on his heart and on his arm,” that being kept in his mercy and by his power, nothing in life or death may separate us from him.

V. 8—14.

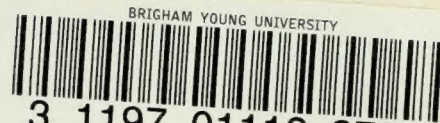
The more our hearts glow with love to Christ, the greater will be our pity for those “who sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death.” We are assured that he has a numerous people to gather into his fold, from among the Pagans, Jews, and every description of Anti-christians. These have not at present “the oracles of God,” or ‘the means of grace;’ or they find them as dry breasts, through ignorance, negligence, and unbelief. As the Lord then heard the prayers of his ancient church, as well as the intercession of his Son, for us sinners of the Gentiles, and has begun to build us upon “the foundation of his apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief Corner-stone,” that we may be “an habitation of God through the Spirit;” and as the gospel, having once been preached in our land, has wonderfully been continued among us to this present day; so let us lift up our prayers for its spread all over the earth. Let us not imitate the unbelieving Jews who spake *against* the poor Gentiles, when the gospel was sent among them: but let us continue to pray *in behalf of* that distinguished nation, that they may be again grafted into their own olive-tree.—Seeing we are “in the eyes of the Lord, as those that have found favour,” and have his holy word, as our security and consolation, let us learn to give the praise to his distinguishing grace. Let us also remember, that all our external privileges are talents committed to our trust: and woe be to all such in our congregations, as do not honour him in their lives, in some measure answerable to their obligations.—The Lord has heretofore taken his vineyard from those that rendered not the fruits in their season; and he will not continue it long to any who imitate their corrupt example. Let each of us then place our vineyard before us, and earnestly seek grace, that we may profit by every ordinance and advantage. (*P. O. Is.* v. 1—7. *Matt.* xxi. 33—46.) Let every Christian endeavour suitably to perform the duty of his station, that “men may see his good works, and glorify his heavenly Father;” and let him

not forget that the watchful and faithful ministers, under whom his soul thrives, are entitled to a share of his affection and regard. Let ministers also watch over their parts of the vineyard, as "those who must give account," and who seek their recompence from their gracious Lord alone. All this becomes those, "who dwell in the gardens;" and the fruit, that we produce to his glory, will certainly redound to our own advantage. If we are enabled to act in this manner, new enquirers will hearken to our voice, and be instructed and admonished by our prudent counsel; while angels and saints in heaven rejoice over the success

of our zealous endeavours, and our most condescending Lord will delight to hear our requests: and whilst we continue in prayer for whatever we want, our thanksgivings also will abound, and our joy be full; our souls will be more and more enriched, and we shall be enabled to look forward to death and judgment with satisfaction, saying, "Make haste my Beloved, and be thou like to a roe, or "to a young hart, upon the mountains of spices." May the Lord thus prepare the writer and every reader, for his service on earth, and for the felicity of his heavenly kingdom!

END OF VOL. III.

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